



Torta di Verdura

After stocking up on Italian greens, try this flavorful recipe for a delicious tastebud getaway.

iStock photo Want to use more Italian veggies? Check out this pizza recipe.

Torta di Verdura (Vegetable Pie) is a humble recipe. It's basically greens, cheese and a thin pastry shell. The specific greens used vary, depending on what's available to the cook. This recipe calls for bietole, the most common Italian green, but borage, some wild weeds, spinach and chard could easily be employed.

Ingredients

Dough

1/2 pound of flour 1 T. olive oil 1 tsp. salt

Filling

4 to 5 pounds raw bietole greens (or spinach, chard or wild greens) 3/4 pound ricotta 2 eggs 2 ounces grated parmesan cheese 2 T. marjoram 1 tsp. salt 1 T. olive oil

Preparation

Dough

On a wooden board, add water and mix to achieve a plastic consistency. Leave the lump of dough under a bowl for an hour.

Wash the greens and remove any fleshy stems. The greens will shrink to perhaps 3 to 4 pounds after cleaning. Cook the greens in boiling salted water for 8 minutes, then drain thoroughly, chop well and allow to cool. In a large bowl, combine the prepared greens, ricotta, eggs, parmesan, marjoram, oil and salt, and mix together.

Pastry Shell

Roll the dough into a thin sheet with a rolling pin. Oil a medium-sized baking pan, and cover the bottom and sides of the pan with the thin dough. Perfection is not required, and cutting the overlapping edges with a knife and pressing with fingers easily produces an acceptable result.

Fill in the greens and cheese mixture over the bottom dough, filling the pan amply and packing the mixture well with a fork. Cover the top with the remaining pieces of thin dough, piecing the dough pieces together as best as possible. Cover the top with a thin layer of olive oil.

Preheat the oven to 320 degrees F. Place the pan in the oven for 20 minutes or long enough for the upper crust to become golden. Torte di Verdure is delicious served warm from the oven, cold the next day and re-heated the day after.

Recipe from Rick Gush's Orto Italiano! article in July/August 2009 Hobby Farms.