



Sautéed Swiss Chard With Garlic

Swiss chard is one of my favorite side dishes. A member of the beet family, chard is commonly available in both white and red-ribbed varieties. For gardeners, there's even a rainbow variety in vibrant shades of yellow, red and green that brightens up any kitchen garden.

This dish is quick and easy to make and you can do most of the preparation ahead of time. In fact, chard is one of those vegetables that tastes great lukewarm or at room temperature, so you can easily prepare the whole dish earlier in the day if desired. Or, if you prefer to serve it hot, do everything but the final cooking ahead of time and then, just before dinner, sauté in oil until hot.

2 lb	Swiss chard
	Salt
2 tbsp	good-quality olive oil
2 cloves	garlic, finely chopped
	Freshly ground pepper

Wash chard and pat dry. Using a knife, separate leaves from the central rib or stem by cutting along each side of the rib. Cut ribs into 1-inch lengths. Slice leaves into 2-inch ribbons. (If chard is very young and ribs are thin and tender, you can omit this step. Simply slice the entire leaf into ribbons or leave whole if small.)

Fill a medium-sized pot with about 2 inches of water. Bring to boil and season with about 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Add chard ribs and cook, partially covered, until tender but quite firm. Then add leaves, tossing well to coat all leaves with the salted water, and continue cooking, stirring often, until stems and leaves are tender. Drain well.

In large sauté pan, heat olive oil until hot. Add garlic and sauté for about a minute until garlic starts to color. Add chard and cook, stirring often, for about 2 or 3 minutes until hot and coated with oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Makes about 4 servings.