

# Celebrate St. Patty's Day with Greens

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What is the first thing that comes to mind at the mention of St. Patrick's Day? The color green, of course! Green decorations, green attire, green accessories, and even green beer. But what about green food? Shouldn't the St. Patty's Day celebration extend to the kitchen as well? The green decorations that have become characteristic of this holiday are rarely utilized on our plates. The easiest way to include greens is to dress up the foods we already love. No matter what your favorite food is, veggies can be an easy addition. Add spinach into your favorite soup, sliced cucumbers and lettuce onto sandwiches, and chopped peppers, spinach, and broccoli to pizza. If you want to try something new consider kale, zucchini, Brussels sprouts, Swiss

chard, leeks, or mustard greens. Herbs such as cilantro, basil, parsley, sage, and mint are all greens that will enhance the flavors of healthy foods without adding salt, fat, sugar or calories. Vibrant green vegetables are nutritionally dense, providing the body with a wide variety of necessary vitamins and minerals. This makes them a great green accessory to dress up your St. Patty's Day! Ditch the green beer and try adding green to your St. Patrick's Day in a different way this year!

## St. Patty's Day Pasta Primavera

### Ingredients:

1 bunch basil  
½ cup plus 2 T. olive oil  
3 cups low sodium chicken broth  
2 cloves garlic

1 bunch green onions, chopped  
1 large leek, chopped  
2 zucchini, diced  
1 cup peas

1 bunch asparagus, diced  
½ cup Parmesan cheese  
Fresh ground pepper to taste  
1 lb. fettuccine

### Directions:

Bring a large pot water to a boil. Holding the basil by the stems, carefully dip the leaves in the boiling water for just a few seconds, and immediately immerse in ice water. Drain and pick the basil leaves from the stems; add to a blender with 1/2 cup olive oil, 1 cup chicken broth, and garlic. Blend until smooth and reserve.

In a large saucepan, cook the green onions and leeks in 2 tbsp olive oil over medium heat for about 10 minutes, or until tender. Add a large pinch of pepper, peas, zucchini, asparagus, and 2 cups broth. Turn the heat up to high and braise the vegetables, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes, or until tender. Turn off heat.

Cook the pasta and drain well. Transfer into a large pasta or mixing bowl. Pour over the vegetables and the basil mixture. Toss to coat the pasta. Add the cheese, toss again, and enjoy!

If you'd like to learn more about healthy eating and how to incorporate more greens into your diet this St. Patrick's Day, visit a registered dietitian and/or check out [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).



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