

BAKED EGGS WITH SPINACH AND BRIOCHE

(adapted from Brunch: 100 Recipes from Five Points Restaurant)

2 Tbsp. olive oil

1 clove garlic, minced (I used 3)

2 bunches spinach (about 1 1/2 pounds), washed and stemmed
salt & pepper

2 Tbsp. butter

8 slices brioche, 1/2-inch thick each (I used good quality sliced whole grain bread)

12 large eggs (I used only one per person, which was 6)

1/4 cup creme fraiche (I used sourcream)

1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Preheat the oven to 400F. Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat and, when it shimmers, add the garlic. Cook the garlic until fragrant and golden, about 3 minutes, and add the spinach. (Don't worry about a little water clinging to the leaves; it will help steam the greens.) Reduce the heat to medium, add a pinch of salt and a few turns of freshly ground black pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the spinach is just wilted, about 3 minutes more. Transfer the spinach to a bowl to cool (it need not cool completely before you proceed, but you don't want it so hot it will start cooking the eggs before they get in the oven).

Toast the bread slices in a toaster and butter them as they are done.

Lightly butter four ramekins or a baking dish large enough to hold the brioche in one layer (I used a 9x13-inch pan). Arrange the brioche on the bottom of the dish(es) and evenly scatter the wilted spinach over the bread, making rough little nests to hold the eggs in place. Crack the eggs into the spinach nests and season them with salt and pepper. Drizzle creme fraiche over the dish(es), sprinkle with grated Parmesan, and set on the lowest shelf of the oven. Cook until the whites are just set but the yolks are still runny, about 12-15 minutes. (I baked mine until both whites and yolks were set.) Serve immediately.

To make gluten-free: substitute gluten-free bread for the brioche.

Serves 4.