

ASPARAGUS

One of the first vegetables to be harvested in spring, asparagus has a rich flavor that can add to a variety of dishes. There is also a white variety which lacks pigment because the farmer keeps the stem covered in soil as it grows.

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BEST COOKING METHODS

- RAW
- STEAMED
- ROASTED
- GRILLED

RECIPE IDEAS

- ADD TO SOUP
- STIR FRY
- PASTA DISHES
- RISOTTO

STORAGE

- In the refrigerator standing up in an inch of water and covered with plastic
- In the freezer, chopped, placed in a sealed container (tupperware or ziplock)

NUTRITION

- High in folic acid
- Good source of fiber, potassium, vitamins B6, A and C, and thiamin.

TIPS

- Chop away and save white part of stem for later use in a creamy vegetable soup, or for making vegetable stock.
- Steam them for 5 minutes, and then toss with salt, pepper, and olive oil for a very easy, and nutritious side dish.

ASPARAGUS FRITTATA

serves 4

- **2 tbsp** unsalted butter
- **1** red onion (or 3 shallots), finely chopped,
- **1 lb** asparagus, cut diagonally into 1 inch peices
- **6** large eggs
- **3/4 c** ricotta or cottage cheese
- **1 tbsp** fresh chives, minced
- **1/4 tsp** dried tarragon
- **1 c** shredded gruyere or swiss cheese
- **Salt and pepper to taste**

HEAT THE BUTTER IN AN OVEN-PROOF PAN OVER MEDIUM HEAT. ADD ONION (OR SHALLOT) AND COOK, STIRRING OCCASSIONALLY, UNTIL THEY SOFTEN AND TURN TRANSLUCENT, ABOUT 3 MINUTES. ADD ASPARAGUS, SALT AND PEPPER, AND COOK AN ADDITIONAL 3 MINUTES. PREHEAT THE OVEN ON BROIL. BEAT THE EGGS AND RICOTTA (OR COTTAGE CHEESE) TOGETHER, THEN STIR IN THE CHIVES AND TARRAGON. POUR THE EGG MIXTURE INTO THE PAN AND COOK UNTIL ALMOST SET, BUT STILL RUNNY ON TOP, ABOUT 4-5 MINUTES. SPRINKLE THE GRUYERE OR SWISS OVER THE EGGS, THEN PLACE IN THE OVEN (ABOUT 6 INCHES BELOW THE BROILER), UNTIL THE CHEESE IS MELTED AND BROWNED, ABOUT 6-8 MINUTES. BE VERY CAREFUL REMOVING THE HOT PAN FROM THE OVEN (USE OVEN MITTS OR A THICK KITCHEN TOWEL). CUT FRITATTA INTO WEDGES TO SERVE.

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