

## Creamy Spinach & Artichoke Pasta

*Pasta is always demonized, but it does not have to be! When possible, I shoot for whole-wheat pasta in my recipes- which means the bran, endosperm, and germ are all included vs refined grains where the germ and bran are removed. Whole grains are packed with fiber, B vitamins (niacin, thiamin, Folate), magnesium, manganese, zinc, and iron. Give this creamy, garlicky whole-wheat pasta a try.*

**Ingredients:**

- 8 oz Whole-wheat rotini or penne
- 5 oz pkg Baby spinach, chopped (hack: I buy the chopped, frozen package and thaw it)
- 4 oz Fat-free cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup Skim milk
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp Garlic powder
- 1 tsp Ground black pepper
- 9 oz Frozen artichoke hearts, thawed, chopped (You can use the 15 oz can, rinsed and chopped as well but I liked that the frozen had less sodium)
- Optional Top with protein of choice, such as chicken, shrimp or seasoned tofu

**Directions:**

1. Cook whole-wheat pasta according to package then drain.
2. As pasta cooks, cook the spinach over medium-high heat in a large pan with a little water. Cook until wilted. If bought frozen, simply heat the spinach. Drain and set aside.
3. In the same large pan used for the spinach, prepare the sauce. Add cream cheese and milk. Heat over medium-high and whisk until the cream cheese is fully melted and mixture is smooth. Add the parmesan cheese, garlic powder, and black pepper. Continue to whisk until sauce is thickened. Stir in the spinach and artichokes and continue to heat until heated.
4. Once the pasta is cooked and drained and the sauce is prepared, combine the two by stirring the sauce into the pasta. Be gentle when stirring into the pasta, as the pasta can easily break.
5. Serve warm and feel free to top with cooked chicken, shrimp or tofu for extra protein. ENJOY!

Servings: 4  
 Serving size: About 1 1/3 cup

Creamy Spinach & Artichoke Pasta		
<b>Nutrition Facts</b>		
<small>Serving Size: 1 × 1.33 Cup</small>		
Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value*	
<b>Calories</b>	354.3 kcal	18 %
<b>Total Fat</b>	6.2 g	10 %
Saturated Fat	2.7 g	13 %
Trans Fat	0 g	
<b>Cholesterol</b>	13.4 mg	4 %
<b>Sodium</b>	472.5 mg	20 %
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b>	57.4 g	19 %
Dietary Fiber	10.8 g	43 %
Sugars	7.1 g	
<b>Protein</b>	19.1 g	38 %
Vitamin A	80 %	Vitamin C 17 %
Calcium	31 %	Iron 17 %
<small>* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.</small>		
<small>Full Info at <a href="http://cronometer.com">cronometer.com</a></small>		<small>&lt;/&gt;</small>