



A strata is essentially a savory bread pudding. This dish is made the night before so when you wake up on Sunday morning all you have to do is preheat the oven and take the dish from the refrigerator and put it into the oven. How easy can that be and oh boy is it good. It also makes a great brunch dish with a side salad.

## Lazy Sunday Spinach and Cheese Strata

Serves 6-8

### Spinach Ingredients -

1 (10-oz.) package frozen spinach, thawed  
1-1/2 cups finely chopped onion (1 large)  
3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg  
Optional: A pinch or two of cayenne pepper (we love everything with a little spice)

### Strata Ingredients -

8 cups cubed (1 inch) French or Italian bread (1/2 pound)  
6 ounces coarsely grated Gruyere cheese (2 cups)  
2 ounces finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (1 cup)

### Custard Filling Ingredients -

2-1/4 cups milk  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
9 large eggs  
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard  
Optional: We have added cooked bacon and left-over baked ham

### Spinach Instructions -

Squeeze the spinach to remove as much liquid as possible, then finely chop. Sauté the onion in butter in a large heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring until onion is soft, approximately 4 to 5 minutes. Add 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, cayenne pepper, and nutmeg. Continue to cook and stir one minute more. Stir in spinach and then remove from heat.

### Prepare Strata Instructions -

Spread one third of bread cubes in a buttered 3-quart gratin dish or other shallow ceramic baking dish and top evenly with one third of spinach mixture. Sprinkle with one third of each cheese. Repeat layering twice (ending with cheeses).

### Prepare Custard Filling Instructions -

Whisk together milk, eggs, mustard, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper in a large bowl and pour evenly over strata.

Chill strata, covered with plastic wrap, at least 8 hours (for bread to absorb custard).  
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Let strata stand at room temperature 30 minutes. Bake strata, uncovered, in middle of oven until puffed, golden brown, and cooked through 45 to 55 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

### Wine Pairing Suggestion -

Lawrence Dunham Vineyards Grenache. Choose a medium-bodied, peppery wine like an unoaked Grenache.