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6 POWERFUL PLANTS TO ADD TO YOUR 2013 DIET: SHARON RICHTER BREAKS DOWN THE BEST LEAFY GREENS ON THE MARKET

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Registered dietitian Sharon Richter is a human-sized crystal ball of nutrition knowledge. She's been featured on the The Today Show, CNN and Shape.com to name a few, educating the masses about what they should and should not be shoveling down the old gullet. So, seeing as how the new year is right around the corner, we asked her to shed some light on the dark leafy greens that will give you the best bang for your bite - and give us some simple strategies on how to easily incorporate these nutrient powerbombs into our daily diet.



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Spinach



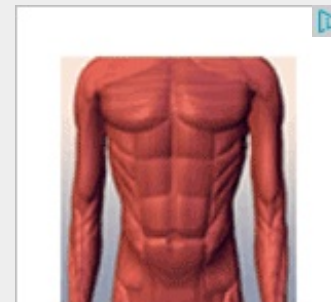
Nutrient content: Rich in vitamins K and A, a good source of fiber, and low in calories. Spinach contains non-heme iron—which, when consumed with vitamin C, increases absorption.

Taste: Spinach has a mild flavor and can be consumed raw in salads or, because it wilts nicely, can be steamed or lightly sautéed.

Cut down
a bit of belly fat
every day

by never eating
these 5 foods:

NEVER EAT ▶
BEYOND diet



15 Veggies That

Practical health benefits: The vitamin K found in spinach is essential for blood clotting and bone health while vitamin A protects eyesight.

Eating ideas: Make spinach dip with non-fat yogurt, diced water chestnuts, and vegetable soup mix. (Check out a similar recipe for [Classic Spinach Dip With Greek Yogurt](#)).

Arugula



Nutrient content: Contains calcium and vitamins A, C, and K.

Taste: Arugula has a peppery flavor and is best when consumed raw. When cooked, the enzymes that produce the anti-cancer benefits become less active.

Practical health benefits: As part of the cruciferous family, arugula has powerful cancer-prevention benefits.

Eating idea: Salad with roasted beets, smoked salmon, and lemon. (Check out a similar recipe for [Arugula Salad With Beets and Goat Cheese](#).)

Mâche

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Nutrient content: This green contains vitamins C and E, beta-carotene, and has more omega-3 fatty acids than any other leafy green.

Taste: Mâche grows in rosettes and is also known as “lamb's lettuce.” It is mild and slightly nutty in flavor and best to consume raw in salads.

Practical health benefits: The omega-3 fatty acids may help lower triglycerides while improving HDL cholesterol and help reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.

Eating idea: Salad with crushed walnuts, sliced pear, and sprinkle of goat cheese. (*Check out a similar recipe for [Mâche, Parmesan, Pear, and Walnut Salad](#) .*)

Kale





Nutrient content: Kale is a nutritional powerhouse. It is high in antioxidants, anti-inflammatory agents, beta-carotene, vitamins A and K, and fiber.

Taste: Kale comes in many varieties. Most are green, but some may be white, pink, or even deep purple. Different types have different leaves: flat, short, and curly. Kale can be slightly bitter and earthy. Each variety has a different flavor. It can be eaten raw or cooked or even baked into kale chips.

Practical health benefits: Kale is rich in antioxidants that are thought to have many anti-cancer health benefits. The fiber in kale binds with bile acids and can lower blood cholesterol levels to reduce the risk of heart disease, especially when kale is cooked instead of raw.

Eating idea: Roast with a little olive oil and sea salt. (*Check out these delicious [kale recipes.](#)*)

Romaine



Nutrient content: Contains vitamins A and C, fiber, and other phytonutrients.

Taste: Romaine is mild and slightly sweet in flavor. Because it has a high water content, romaine can easily be blended into smoothies with fruit for an additional nutrient boost.

Practical health benefits: Romaine is good for digestion. The fiber and high water content can be very cleansing for the digestive system.

Eating ideas: Use as a lettuce wrap with a slice of turkey, roasted red pepper, and Dijon mustard. (Check out a similar recipe for [Turkey Lettuce Wraps](#).)

Swiss chard



Nutrient content: Rich in vitamins K, A, and C. Chard is also a good source of magnesium and potassium and fiber.

Taste: Swiss chard is earthy. When boiled, acids are released, and the flavor becomes sweeter.

Practical health benefits: Some of the phytonutrients in Swiss chard are thought to help with blood sugar regulation.

Prep: Sautee with garlic, olive oil, and red pepper flakes. (*Check out these yummy [Swiss chard recipes](#).)*



Get more diet food tips from Sharon Richter by visiting her website, www.sharonrichter.com.

Sharon Richter is a Registered Dietitian who has established a private nutrition practice in Manhattan over the past ten years. Her objective is to help others achieve a healthier lifestyle by creating incremental goals that are both physically and mentally challenging and most importantly; achievable. Prior to her private practice, Sharon was the Director of Nutrition for The Tiger Schulmann Karate (TSK) organization. Sharon holds both

Masters and Bachelors of Science degrees in Clinical Nutrition from New York University. While obtaining her Masters, Sharon worked with Dr. Howard Shapiro where she counseled and conducted nutritional research for his best-selling diet books. A frequent contributor to various media venues, Sharon has provided dietetic expertise on The Today Show, Queer Eye, FoxNews, CNN, NBC Local News, NY1, NBC TheChannel 10 Show, WPIX Channel 11 News, Dr. Steve Show, Healthination, Neutrogena Online, Living, Today on Martha Stewart Radio, and The Good Life Show. She has been sited in several publications including: O The Oprah Magazine, Health, Women's Health, Shape, Fitness, OK, Cosmopolitan, Golf, Men's Vogue, Seventeen, Kiwi, Runners World, and The NY Post. Sharon has also written articles for Shape.com, iVillage, and ESPN W. As a lecturer, Sharon has spoken for large events for McDonald's, Nike Running Club, Kiehls, Booty Camp and Team Lipstick. In addition to her private practice, Sharon is an in-demand consultant for restaurants and nutritional products.

Tags: Sharon Richter, 6 most nutritious leafy greens, new year's resolutions, healthy food, spinach, arugula, mache, kale, romaine lettuce, swiss chard



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