

# Chicken, Baby Artichoke & Spinach Casserole

*with Gouda Béchamel*

This recipe is a farewell to winter, combining the heartiness of a traditional casserole with the freshness of spring vegetables. Artichokes, a member of the thistle family, are actually flower buds, harvested in early spring before they bloom. Their freshness cuts the rich creaminess of the Gouda béchamel in this tasty dish.



## Ingredients

- 2 Ounces Baby Spinach
- 2 Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts
- 2 Cloves Garlic
- 2 Ounces Gouda Cheese
- 1 Bunch Parsley
- 1 Yellow Onion
- 4 Baby Artichokes
- 1 Tablespoon White Wine Vinegar
- 1 Cup Low-Fat Milk
- 2 Tablespoons Butter
- 3 Tablespoons Flour
- 1 Teaspoon Hungarian Paprika
- ¼ Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese
- 2 Ounces Egg Noodles
- ¼ Cup Panko Breadcrumbs

**Makes 2 Servings**

**About 695 Calories Per Serving**



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**Recipe #363**



## Instructions



### *Prepare the ingredients:*

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Wash and dry the fresh produce. Heat a medium pot of salted water to boiling on high. Roughly chop the spinach. Peel and mince the garlic. Grate the Gouda cheese. Pick the parsley leaves off the stems; discard the stems and roughly chop the leaves. Peel and small dice the onion. Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces.



### *Prepare the artichokes:*

Trim away and discard the very end of the **baby artichoke** stems. Trim off the top inch of the artichokes (enough to remove the pointed, sharp tops). Peel off the tough outer leaves until you reach the tender middle leaves. Using a paring knife, cut off the outer skin of the stems. Cut the artichokes in half lengthwise and add to a bowl of cold water along with the **white wine vinegar**.



### *Cook the pasta:*

Once the water is boiling, add the **egg noodles** and cook 3 to 4 minutes, or until almost completely tender. Remove from heat, reserve **¼ cup of pasta water** then drain the noodles thoroughly. Transfer the noodles to a bowl. Wipe out the pan.



### *Sauté the chicken, onions & artichokes:*

Season the **chicken** with salt and pepper. In a large pan, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the chicken to the pan and cook 2 to 3 minutes, or until the chicken is about halfway cooked through. Add the **artichokes** and **onions**. Cook, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes, or until the onions have softened and the chicken is cooked through. Season with salt and pepper to taste.



### *Make the béchamel sauce:*

In the pot used to cook the pasta, melt the **butter** on medium. Add the **garlic** and cook, stirring frequently, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until fragrant. Add the **flour** and cook, stirring constantly, 1 minute, or until golden. Gradually add the **milk**, whisking constantly, until combined and no lumps remain. Add the **spinach, paprika, Gouda** and **Parmesan** cheeses. Whisk until the cheeses have completely melted. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste.



### *Bake the casserole:*

To the pot of béchamel, add the **chicken and vegetables**. Rinse the **cooked noodles** under cold water to loosen them then add to the pot. Stir to combine. (If the sauce seems too thick, add up to **¼ cup of the reserved pasta water** to thin it out.) Transfer the **chicken-noodle mixture** to a medium baking dish. In a small bowl, toss the **panko breadcrumbs** with a **drizzle of olive oil**. Evenly sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over the casserole. Bake 8 to 10 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven and let stand for about 2 minutes before serving. Garnish with the **parsley**. Enjoy!