

## *Spinach and Date Fritters*

This was a favorite side dish of the Elizabethan nobility.

### **Ingredients**

1 lb. fresh spinach  
2 eggs  
1/4 tsp. salt  
1/8 tsp. fresh ground pepper  
1/4 tsp. brown sugar  
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/4 tsp. ground ginger  
1/2 cup bread crumbs  
2 Tbs. currants  
1/4 cup pitted dates  
oil  
1/2 cup all-purpose flour  
1/2 cup plus 2 Tbs. ale—Try Samuel Smith Nut Brown Ale

### **Utensils**

knife and cutting board  
measuring cup  
measuring spoons  
bottle opener  
heavy cookpot with a lid  
colander  
wooden spoon  
2 mixing bowls  
heavy frying pan  
slotted spoon  
plate  
paper towels  
serving plate

Finely mince the dates. Wash and trim the spinach, but do not drain it. Place the wet spinach in the cookpot and cover with the lid. Steam the spinach on the stove over medium heat 1 to 2 minutes or until the leaves begin to wilt. Drain the spinach in a colander and let cool to room temperature. Finely chop the spinach and place it between paper towels. Squeeze out any excess moisture. Place the eggs in a mixing bowl and beat lightly. Add the breadcrumbs, salt, pepper, brown sugar, cinnamon, and ginger. Mix well. Add the dates, currants, and chopped spinach. Stir well. In another mixing bowl combine the flour and ale to form the batter. The batter should have the consistency of thick pancake batter. Shape the spinach mixture into small patties. The dish can be prepared up to this point in advance. Heat 1/2 inch of oil in a heavy frying pan on the stove over medium high heat. The oil is ready when it is sizzling. Place paper towels on a plate. Place the spinach patties a few at a time into the batter. Use a slotted spoon to remove them from the batter and place them in the hot oil. Fry the fritters in the oil 3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Use a slotted spoon, remove them from the oil and place them on the paper towel-covered plate. Serve hot. Makes 20 small fritters.