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WARM CHARD SALAD

SERVES 4 / PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES / COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES

This side salad is an old Italian recipe and very simple to make. Some cooks use balsamic vinegar while others prefer red wine vinegar; either is very good, but I prefer the balsamic for its richer flavor. This salad is especially pretty when made with the colorful Bright Lights variety of Swiss chard.

2 bunches green, red, or Bright Lights Swiss chard

½ cup water

3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, or to taste

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, or to taste

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

Salt to taste

1. Cut the leaves away from the stems. Stack several of them in a neat pile, and roll the leaves up like a cigar. Slice them crosswise to shred the leaves. Then cut the stems into 1-inch pieces.
2. In a large pan, cook the chard stems in the water over medium heat, covered, for about 4 minutes; then add the leaves and steam them until the water is gone or they turn tender, 5 to 8 minutes.

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3. Remove the pan from the heat and drain any remaining water if necessary. Let the chard cool.
4. Season it with the vinegar, olive oil, garlic, and salt. Toss lightly to coat the leaves, and serve.

