Sides / South Korea

Sigeumchi Namul (Korean Sesame Spinach)

Blanched spinach squeezed to silk and dressed in toasted sesame, garlic, and soy — the simplest banchan in the Korean table, and the one that disappears first from the bowl.

Time 20 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 300 g Fresh spinach (whole leaf, not baby)
- ☐ 10 ml Toasted sesame oil
- ☐ 3 g Salt
- ☐ 15 ml Soy sauce (tamari for gluten-free)
- ☐ 5 g Garlic cloves, minced
- ☐ 5 g Toasted sesame seeds

Let's make it.

01 Bring a large pot of generously salted boiling water to a rolling boil. Add the spinach all at once and blanch for 30–45 seconds — just until fully wilted and vivid green. Do not blanch longer. Immediately drain and transfer to a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking and set the color. After 1 minute, drain and squeeze the spinach firmly with both hands to remove as much water as possible. The squeezed bundle should be about a third of the original volume. Cut the bundle twice crosswise into thirds.

02 Place the cut spinach in a bowl. Add the soy sauce, toasted sesame oil, and minced raw garlic. Toss with your hands, working the dressing into every layer of the spinach. Taste and adjust — the spinach should be well-seasoned and savory, with the sesame oil perfuming every bite. The raw garlic will mellow slightly as the namul sits. For a milder version, very briefly sauté the garlic in the sesame oil before adding.

03 Transfer the seasoned spinach to a small serving bowl. Scatter the toasted sesame seeds over the top. Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled as a banchan alongside rice and other Korean dishes. Sigeumchi namul improves after 30 minutes as the flavors meld — it is an ideal make-ahead dish and keeps refrigerated for up to 3 days.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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