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## From Thea's Kitchen

I'm not sure one should confess to their past lives, but once upon a time I had the good fortune of having been married to not one, but 'two' Italians. Both of these men had mother's and grandmother's who still cooked the good old fashioned way -- from scratch. These women were my mentors and I learned a lot about food and life spending time with them in the kitchen. Since both of my children are half Italian I felt it was important to carry on the tradition, so to speak (or eat as the case may be.) Not surprisingly, my son married a full blooded Italian girl, and guess what -- she likes to cook! The recipes that follow are from the Italian inspired side of my kitchen. The homemade egg nog was traditional on Christmas Day and on New Years, and the soup is a perfect first course with any winter meal.

### Strachiatelli Italian Spinach Soup

2 quarts of organic simmering chicken broth, preferably not defatted

1 large yellow onion thinly sliced

2 bags of organic spinach, washed, dried and coarsely chopped

3 free range egg yolks

3 Tbs. lemon juice

1/2 tsp. black pepper

1/2 tsp. white pepper

1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. nutmeg

1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano

Bring broth, onion, and spices (salt and peppers) to a boil and simmer until onions are transparent, add spinach and reduce heat to low. Separately whisk egg yolks adding lemon juice slowly, then add a few ladles of hot broth skimmed off the top slowly to equalize the temperature. Add egg mixture back to the pot slowly while gently whisking the broth. Adjust spices to taste. Simmer slowly for another 5 to 10 minutes. Whisk in cheese and serve hot. For more information on organics and whole foods visit [www.theaskitchen.com](http://www.theaskitchen.com)

### Home Made Egg Nog Let the Party Begin!

12 free range (preferably fertile) eggs, separated

1 1/2 cups confectioners sugar

4 cups whole organic milk

1 cup dark rum

1 cup bourbon or cognac

1/2 cup flavored rum

2 tsp. vanilla

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1/2 tsp. salt  
 2 cups organic whipping cream  
 1 tsp. ground nutmeg  
 1 tsp. orange peel

Beat egg yolks 'til blended. Gradually add 1/2 cup confectioners sugar beating at high speed 'til thick and lemon colored. Whisk in milk, alcohol, vanilla and salt. Set in fridge to chill. Meanwhile, whip the cream gradually with another 1/2 cup of sugar. Beat egg whites separately in a large bowl until soft peaks form then gradually add remaining 1/2 cup sugar beating stiff. Fold egg yolk mixture and whipped cream into egg whites. Add nutmeg and orange peel and stir

lightly. Store in large mouth quart glass containers overnight in fridge. Shake well (nutmeg and orange peel will settle) and serve. Makes approx. 1 gal.

People worry about eating raw eggs, but if you get your eggs from a reliable source, preferably fertile as these eggs have a higher nutritional value, and you soak them in alcohol overnight, you really need not worry about them making you sick (unless of course you drink too much of a good thing! But I can't help you with that one.)

Bon Appetite - Find more recipes at [www.theaskitchen.com](http://www.theaskitchen.com)

By Cynthia Stacey

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