

A kind woman I met in the grocery store gave me a crash course in making collards, and I've trusted her method ever since. She suggested frying them in bacon fat to reduce the cooking time. These have a terrific flavor and have become a staple in our meal rotation. I don't know why I wasted so much time feeling intimidated by this simple food. After all, as the woman told me—they're just collards.

For vegans and other non-pork lovers, simply omit the bacon.

INGREDIENTS

2 slices bacon, cut into one-inch pieces
1 medium onion, chopped
Cooking oil (I use extra virgin olive oil)
2 lbs. fresh collard greens, cleaned and chopped (I buy the big pillow bags, pre-washed)
A few shakes crushed red pepper
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1 cup water or broth (I used vegetable broth)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large, heavy-bottomed pan, cook bacon pieces until the fat renders and bacon begins to crisp. Add chopped onions and sauté until translucent.
2. Add collard greens, a few handfuls at a time, and stir them around so they soften and wilt. When there's room in the pan for more, add more. Add cooking oil to the middle of the pan as needed for cooking the remaining collards. Sprinkle with crushed red pepper and season with salt and pepper.
3. When all the greens are wilted, move them to the outside edges of the pan. Pour vinegar into the center of the pan, and stir with a wooden utensil to deglaze any burned bits from the bottom of the pan.
4. Add water or broth and reduce heat to low, then cover and simmer the greens for about an hour until tender.