

## Grits and Greens

**Time:** 20 minutes, not counting the grits time

Because the greens in this recipe are flash-wilted rather than stewed to death, tender young greens are essential. For example, baby collards no bigger than a corsage and vivid in hue have cooking properties very different from the dusty green, mature leaves that lie in the pot all day with a ham bone. The stems of collards, beet greens, and Swiss chard, diced small, have enchanting marrow-like properties and should be included. (Leave out fibrous kale stems.) The classic accompaniment to grits and greens is pork: a chop, a slab of ham, or a slice or two of roast will each perform nice, supporting work here. But the real beauty of this dish lies in its counterpoints: the brightness of the greens, the bite of garlic and red pepper, and the round, embracing mellowness of the grits that lift the flavors off your fork.

## Equipment Mise en Place

For this recipe you will need a large colander, a 3- or 4-quart Dutch oven with a lid, a slotted spoon, and a pair of tongs.

## Ingredients

1 pound young collards, beet greens, chard, kale, other tender greens (with spinach use 2 pounds)

1 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 tablespoon unsalted butter

4 large garlic cloves, very thinly sliced

1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt

Good-quality cider or wine vinegar

1 recipe hot, freshly prepared Anson Mills Antebellum Coarse or Carolina Quick Grits

## Directions

**1.** Wash the greens well and drain them in a colander. If using collards, beet greens, chard, or spinach, trim off and discard the tough part of the stems, then strip the leaves from the remaining stems. Keep the leaves whole. Dice stems and reserve. If using kale, strip the leaves and discard the stems; keep the leaves whole. Set aside.

**2.** Just before the grits are done, heat the oil and butter in a Dutch oven over low heat until the butter melts. Add the garlic and cook slowly, stirring constantly, until golden brown. With a slotted spoon, transfer the garlic to a small dish and set aside. Increase

Native Americans were the first to throw maize and greens together, and it was an inspired match—the two have been inseparable ever since. Before the Civil War, Southern cooks favored noble greens of European provenance: spinach, Swiss chard, and kale. Following the war, "ditch greens" were used in their stead. The greens in grits and greens have gone from feral to domestic, rags to riches—and back again. Ultimately, collards, brought to the lowcountry by African slaves, became the defining better half of this dish.

# Anson Mills

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the heat; add the reserved stems of collards, beet greens, or chard; cover the pot and cook slowly, until tender, tossing once or twice, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the leaves and cook until wilted, tossing frequently with tongs. (For kale, add the leaves to the pot and cook until wilted.) Stir in red pepper flakes and salt. Return the garlic slices to the pot and toss well. Sprinkle with vinegar and serve the greens with the hot grits as a side dish.

**Serves 4 to 6**