

## **Recipe for Cheddar Scallion Polenta, two ways**

I love the combination of cheese, scallions, spinach, and black pepper here, flavorings that work equally well in the soft-style polenta as they do when you fry up the firmer squares the following day. On day two, prepare your eggs however you like, but a nice loose yolk oozing over the crispy polenta patties? Magical.

Makes about 10 servings over 2 meals (4 servings soft polenta, 6 servings crisp)

1-1/2 cups polenta (coarse cornmeal)  
1 bunch scallions, trimmed, thinly sliced into rings  
6 ounces sharp white Cheddar, grated (about 1-1/4 cups)  
1 tablespoon unsalted butter  
1 cup baby spinach, rough-chopped  
7 big grinds freshly cracked black pepper  
Olive oil  
6 eggs

In a large, preferably nonstick saucepan, bring 6 cups generously salted water to a boil. Stream in the polenta, reduce the heat, and cook uncovered at a gentle gurgle until thick, stirring frequently. This will take about 20 to 25 minutes. Meanwhile, coat a 9" square baking pan with nonstick spray and set aside.

When the polenta is ready, remove from the heat. Fold in half the scallions, the cheese, butter, spinach, and black pepper. Scrape half of this mixture into the prepared baking sheet and smooth the top. Let cool to room temperature (about 15 minutes). Then cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

Meanwhile, eat the soft polenta that remains in the saucepan, sprinkled with the remaining scallions.

The next day, cut the firm polenta into 6 large squares. Shallow-fry the squares until very crisp on both sides in a generous glug of olive oil. Nudge the squares aside, and fry a few eggs while you're at it. Drape the eggs over the polenta. There. Heaven and earth and the bright yellow sun, all in happy harmony.