

Beet Pesto



Ingredients:

- 1 cup red beets, chopped and roasted (about 1 medium beet)
- 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup walnuts, roasted
- 1/2 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- Salt to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Wash and scrub the beet and pat it dry. Chop it into 1/2" cubes and place it on a sheet of foil. Wrap the chopped beet in foil, making a foil packet.
3. Place the packet on a baking sheet.
4. Roast in the oven for 50 minutes, or until beets are soft and juices are seeping out.
5. Allow beets to cool completely.
6. Add all ingredients except for the oil to a food processor or blender and pulse several times.
7. Leaving the food processor (or blender) running, slowly add the olive oil until all ingredients are well combined. If the pesto is too thick for your blender to process, add a small amount of water until desired

Simple Kale Pesto

Ingredients:

- 2-3 cloves garlic or 1-1 1/2 tablespoons bottled chopped garlic
- 3 cups packed kale (about 1 small bunch)
- 3/4 cup toasted walnuts or pecans
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (about 1 lemon)
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese



Directions:

1. In a blender or food processor, blend salt, pepper, garlic, lemon juice, and nuts until finely chopped and well combined.
2. Add kale. Drizzle oil into mixture while blending and puree until pesto reaches desired consistency, stopping to scrape down the sides as necessary. If pesto is too thick, add more water or olive oil to thin. Stir in grated parmesan cheese, if using.
3. Serve over whole grain pasta, spread on whole wheat crackers, or serve as a fresh vegetable dip.

Change it Up: No kale on hand? Substitute with spinach, blanched broccoli, basil, parsley, garlic scapes, carrot tops or chives. For a Mexican inspired pesto, substitute some of the kale with cilantro and the nuts with pepitas.

Recipe adapted from Michigan Harvest of the Month/Michigan Fitness Foundation

Basil Pesto



Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup pine nuts
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3-4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1/2 tsp. grated lemon zest (optional)
- 1/2 tsp. salt (optional)
- 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper (optional)
- 4 packed cups fresh basil leaves
- 2/3 cup olive oil

Directions:

1. Blend pine nuts, Parmesan cheese, garlic, lemon zest, salt and pepper (if using) in food processor until finely chopped.
2. Add basil, and blend 1 minute, or until finely chopped, scraping down sides of bowl once or twice.
3. With motor running, add oil in steady stream, and process until smooth.

Makes 1 cup.

Tomato Pesto

Ingredients:

- 4 cups peeled, seeded, and coarsely chopped tomatoes
- 5 cloves minced garlic
- 30 large fresh basil leaves
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon and 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
- Sea salt



Directions:

1. Combine the tomatoes, garlic, basil, olive, oil, and vinegar in a blender and puree until smooth.
2. Add the cheese and blend briefly just to mix.
3. Transfer to a bowl and adjust seasonings to taste. Toss with hot pasta or slather on toasted bread.

Makes 8 servings

Use Your Pesto

- ⇒ Toss pesto with hot pasta for a meal.
- ⇒ Toss pesto with cold pasta for salads.
- ⇒ Top soup with pesto.
- ⇒ Spread pesto on your homemade pizza as the sauce.
- ⇒ Spread pesto on toasted baguette for an appetizer
- ⇒ Mix pesto with mayo for a sandwich spread
- ⇒ Mix pesto with plain hummus for a different flavor.
- ⇒ Store pesto for up to a week in the refrigerator. Freeze pesto in ice cube trays and store in freezer bags for up to 6 months. Some people like to leave the cheese out of the pesto if they plan to freeze it and then add once the pesto is thawed.