

Pesto

Whether herbs or greens, pesto is a great way to preserve the fresh flavors of the season and can be kept frozen to enjoy the whole year through.

- fresh garlic (5-10 cloves, to taste), peeled
- 1/2 cup nuts (pine, walnuts, etc.), toasted or seeds (pepita, sunflower, etc.)
- 5 cups fresh herbs (basil, cilantro, parsley, etc.) or blanched and drained greens (kale, etc.)
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil plus extra for topping
- 1 cup freshly grated hard cheese (parmesan, romano, asiago, etc.)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- lemon zest, optional

While traditionally made with a mortar and pestle, a food processor makes quick work of pesto.

Place garlic cloves and nuts or seeds in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Pulse until finely chopped. Add in the fresh herbs or greens and pulse until finely chopped and combined with the nuts and garlic.

Scrape into a mixing bowl. Stir in the olive oil, cheese, salt and pepper and lemon zest if using.

Place in a plastic container with a well-fitting lid. Drizzle with olive oil to just cover the top. Place in freezer. Use as needed.

To toast nuts: Place in a single layer on a cookie sheet and roast in a 300-degree oven for a few minutes, until just beginning to lightly brown. Nuts will burn easily, so keep an eye on them while roasting.

To blanch greens: Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Remove tough stems and discard. Roughly chop the greens and place in boiling water for about 5 minutes. Place in a bowl with ice water to stop cooking. Drain well and squeeze out extra moisture before making pesto.