Pesto

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

- 3 cups fresh basil leaves
- 1/2 cup toasted pine nuts
- 1/2 cup pecorino romano cheese (grated)
- 1/2 cup parmesan cheese (grated)
- 3 cloves fresh garlic
- 2/3 cup olive oil (or more)

Instructions

The pesto is fantastic in pasta dishes. For a great appetizer or snack add two tablespoons to 1.5 cups of hummus mix well and serve with vegetables and pita bread.

If you are hardcore you can throw on a toga and make this with a huge mortar and pestle. Personally, I use a blender. (And I'm sure a food processor would be even more convenient.)

1. Toast the pine nuts lightly in a 350F/177C oven. Let cool.

2. Chop up the basil (if the leaves are large) and push all the basil to the bottom of the blender. Add olive oil and pulse blend with the basil. Use a chopstick or spatula to keep scraping the sides down and compressing all the ingredients.

3. Add the garlic cloves, more oil, pulse and scrape.

4. Then add the pine nuts, more oil, keep blending and scraping.

5. Add all the cheese, and add the rest of the oil (or extra oil).

6. Blend well until all the ingredients are homogenized. I enjoy a pesto paste, which requires less oil, but if you prefer more of a sauce texture, you can add as much oil as necessary. The pesto should be a bright green. As it oxidizes, it will turn a darker shade of green.

Store in an air-tight 16 fl oz/474 ml jar. Will keep for up to a month. (I've never tried freezing it, but if anyone does so successfully, let me know.)