Asparagus Pesto with fresh Tomatoes

NIBBLEDISH CONTRIBUTOR

Ingredients

1 bunch asparagus
1/4 cup pine nuts
3 cloves garlic
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pepper
1/3 cup olive oil
8-10 leaves fresh basil
2/3 cup Parmigiano Reggiano Cheese grated
1 cup rough chopped tomatoes
Whole wheat penne pasta

Instructions

Start boiling water for pasta. Snap off woody ends of asparagus. Cut asparagus in two inch pieces and steam over the boiling pasta water until bright green, about 4 minutes. Quickly remove from steam and run cold water (from the tap is fine) over the asparagus to stop the cooking. Discard water.

In a food processor, pulse in the pine nuts, garlic and salt until finely chopped. Then add the asparagus, basil and oil until you like the texture. Transfer this mixture to a bowl and mix in cheese. Add the pepper and more salt to taste and finish it off with the tomatoes for a hit of brightness.

Somewhere along the line, cook your pasta, but the pesto keeps really well in the fridge for almost 2 weeks. It is also very good on sandwiches and in scrambled eggs.