

BASIL + SUPER GREENS PESTO

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Pesto is one of those well-loved, comfort food condiments with a long culinary history. Its first iteration appeared in ancient Roman times and later developed into what we recognize as traditional Genovese pesto with the use of basil leaves. Today, pesto is creatively made from any variety of herbs, nuts, seasonings, and other ingredients offering a wide variety of flavors to tantalize our tastebuds.

This recipe for **Basil and Super Greens Pesto** features health- and brain-boosting, nutrient-dense ingredients - walnuts, super greens, and herbaceous basil - to make a delicious, quick, and easy sauce that elevates plain meals to "wow" in a hurry! No walnuts available? Use pine nuts or pistachios instead.

Fresh pesto is best used the day it is made. However, it will keep for a few days in the refrigerator if covered tightly to seal out air. Press plastic wrap tightly over the top and push out as much surface air as possible. Pesto may lose its bright green color after refrigeration. Stir before serving.

Serving ideas:

- Add a dollop to grilled / roasted / sauteed chicken, fish and seafood, tofu, vegetables, soups or stews, and eggs
- Toss with whole wheat or gluten-free pasta, spiralized noodles, brown rice, or white beans
- Use as a spread for sandwiches or wraps
- Add as a condiment on cheese trays
- Stir into creamy yogurt dips and serve with veggies

Makes: about 1 cup

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup walnuts

2 cups lightly packed, chopped fresh basil leaves

2 cups lightly packed, chopped super greens (kale, spinach, Swiss chard, and/or beet greens)

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 clove garlic, peeled

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1/4 cup shredded Parmesan, Romano, Fontina or Gruyere cheeses (vegan cheese can be used)

1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place walnuts into a small sauté pan and toast over medium-low heat on the stovetop. Do not add oil or other liquid. Stir or shake the pan occasionally. Toast for about 3 - 5 minutes, until they

are fragrant and lightly browned; careful not to burn. Remove walnuts from pan and allow to cool.

2. When cool, add the nuts, basil leaves, super greens, olive oil, garlic and lemon juice to the bowl of a food processor or blender. Process until incorporated but still chunky, stopping to scrape down the sides of the bowl occasionally.
3. Add the cheese, salt and pepper. Process until well combined. Pesto will have texture but should be somewhat uniform and thick in consistency.
4. Transfer to a serving dish and serve immediately, or within 30 minutes.