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Basil Pesto

Pesto, which is Italian for “pounded”, is an uncooked sauce that can be used to perk up pastas, chicken, beef, vegetable soups, rice, couscous, mashed potatoes, and just about anything else you like it on! It is traditionally made with basil, although some make pesto with other herbs such as mint or cilantro. Pesto freezes well and provides a welcome scent of summer to a winter meal. By freezing it in ice cube trays, you can pop out a cube, thaw it and have an individual portion of pesto ready in no time.

3 cups basil leaves, gently rinsed and patted dry

10 large garlic cloves, peeled

5 tablespoons dry roasted pine nuts (if you are roasting them yourself as opposed to buying them already roasted, cool them completely)

1/3 cup best quality extra virgin olive oil

½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese

Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Place the basil leaves, garlic cloves, and nuts in a food processor and chop finely.

With the food processor running, add 1/3 cup olive oil in a thin stream until blended.

Transfer the mixture to a bowl and add ½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese and salt and pepper to taste.

Use immediately or freeze in ice cube trays to thaw and use later

Makes about 1 cup pesto.

Victoria Wesseler

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