

FRESH BASIL PESTO



We usually have an abundance of fresh basil each year, both in our herb garden and stuck around the vegetable garden also. The best way to make the pesto is to pick the leaves, clean, wash and dry them and then make it right away.

Our recipe is pretty traditional and we use the pesto in a variety of ways-pasta, soups, pizza, bruschetta, and sauces. We will often leave out the parmesan cheese until we know if our guests are dairy-free like Julia Anne.

INGREDIENTS:

6-8 cups cleaned fresh basil leaves
½ cup pine nuts
3-4 garlic cloves
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
½ cup grated parmesan cheese (optional)
Salt and fresh-ground pepper

DIRECTIONS:

In the food processor (or mortar and pestle), crush and mash up the garlic cloves, add the pine nuts and crush them too. Add small portions of the basil and pulse the processor until the basil is mixed in well. Slowly drizzle the olive oil until the sauce is smooth. Add the salt and pepper to your own taste. If you want the cheese in it add it now and blend it in until smooth.

The pesto freezes well and we use it all winter. You can use ice cube trays and transfer to a container or baggie once it is frozen. Or you can use the smallest plastic ware container and freeze. If you are freezing, do not add the cheese until you defrost and use it. But there is nothing better than using it right away!