

PESTO

When one thinks of “pesto”, the delicious aromas of fresh basil and garlic almost immediately come to mind. The word “pesto” actually comes from the Italian verb “pestare” which means “to crush”. While the creamy parmesan and pine nut pasta sauce originates from the famous basil-growing region of Liguria, other regions in Italy have their own take on pesto, some using sun-dried tomatoes (Sicily) and others using grilled red-peppers (Calabria). Others still make use of almonds instead of pine nuts. Pesto lends itself well to experimentation with endless possibilities.

Serves: 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 to 10 minutes

Start-to-finish: 5 to 10 minutes

Advanced prep: Can be kept refrigerated for up to 3 days in an airtight container. Cover sauce with a thin layer of olive oil to avoid it drying out.

Special equipment: Food processor

	Traditional Basil Pesto	Red Pepper Pesto	Shitake Pesto	Artichoke Pesto
Ingredients:				
Pine nuts/Almonds/Walnuts	100 gm	100 gm	100 gm	100 gm
Parmesean, grated	50 gm	50 gm	50 gm	50 gm
Olive oil	5 T	5 T	5 T	5 T
Garlic	2 medium cloves	2 medium cloves	2 medium cloves	2 medium cloves
Parsley, chopped	1 T	1 T	1 T	1 T
Salt and pepper	to taste	to taste	to taste	to taste
Variations:				
Fresh basil leaves	70 gm			
Red peppers: seeded, sliced + sauteed		2 medium		
Shitake mushrooms, sauteed			250 gm	
Marinated artichokes, drained				180 gm

1. **Red Pepper or Shiitake Pesto:** slice and sauté peppers or mushrooms in a saucepan with 1 tablespoon of olive oil until cooked.
2. Place all the ingredients into the food processor.
3. Process until all ingredients are well mixed and form a paste.
4. Spoon onto hot pasta, toss and serve.