Published on *Kitchen Gardeners International* (http://kgi.org)

Fresh Basil Pesto

Tue, 11/17/2009 - 09:13 -- Roger Doiron
Introduction:

Pesto originates from Genoa, Italy where even today many families still prepare their own using their famous small-leafed basil and a large marble mortar and wooden pestle (hence the name). If you haven't tried making pesto the old-fashioned way at least once, do. The grinding action of the pestle gives the pesto a smoother texture while bringing out all the flavor of the various ingredients. For those looking to make larger quantities, a food processor works just fine. Keep in mind that ground basil oxidizes quickly turning a slightly brownish color so work efficiently and store your finished product with a protective layer of olive oil. A small quantity of parsley can be added to basil before grinding or processing, if a greener color is desired. Pesto freezes very well, so be sure to fill up an ice-cube tray for use in winter pasta dishes or soups.

Preparation:

1. If your basil leaves are noticeably dirty, wash them in cold water and pat dry. Otherwise, simple rub off any surface dirt or dust.2. Put basil, olive oil, pine nuts, garlic, and an ample pinch of salt in the food processor and process until creamy.3. Transfer to a bowl and stir in the grated cheeses. Then mix in the softened butter. Serve on pasta or vegetables.Note: In Genoa, they use equal quantities of Parmesan cheese and of a special, mildly tangy Sardinian cheese, Pecorino Sardo, made of sheep's milk. Although it is not considered authentic, pesto made be used with Pecorino Romano which is often more readily available in stores. If you do make this substitution, you will need to adjust the balance between the two cheeses: 3 parts Parmigiano to 1 part Romano.

Image (optional):

Crops:
basil [1]
Cuisine:
Italian [2]
Recipe Type:
sauces [3]
Ingredients:

- 2 cups tightly packed fresh basil leaves
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons pine nuts (walnuts may also be used)
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled -pinch of salt
- 1/3 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

- 1/3 cup freshly grated Pecorino Sardo cheese (see note below)
- 3 tablespoons butter at room temperature

Group content visibility:
Use group defaults
Promoted text:
Making Fresh Basil Pesto

Source URL: http://kgi.org/recipes/fresh-basil-pesto

Links:
[1] http://kgi.org/crops/basil
[2] http://kgi.org/cuisine/italian
[3] http://kgi.org/recipe-type/sauces