

Pesto Genovese

From *Moosewood Restaurant Cooks at Home*, pp.362.

Pesto is a bright green, basil based sauce that originated in Genoa, Italy. The word pesto comes from the Italian word “pestare” which means to crush, as it was typically made by crushing the ingredients with a mortar and pestle. Pesto will keep refrigerated for a week. When harvesting basil in late September and early October, you may consider making a large batch that you can freeze to use over the winter when basil is no longer in season. Freeze pesto in ice cube trays, store the pesto cubes in plastic bags, and then pop a pesto cube into savory dishes for an immediate flavor boost. When preparing pesto specifically for freezing, omit the cheese, and add it to the thawed pesto before serving. If you have Frozen leftover pesto with the cheese, whirl it briefly in the blender to improve its texture.

- **YIELD:** About 2 cups
- **TIME:** 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- **3 cups loosely packed fresh basil leaves**
- **1/3 cup pine nuts or chopped almonds (can omit)**
- **1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese**
- **3 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped**
- **1/2 cup olive oil**
- **Salt and ground pepper to taste**

PREPARATION

1. To make pesto, whirl all of the ingredients, except the oil, and a food processor or blender. (If you are using a blender, it may be necessary to pre chop the herbs and nuts by hand).
2. When everything is well chopped, add the oil in a thin stream to form a smooth paste.
3. Uses: As a sauce for pasta, as a topping on pizza, spread on crusty bread or on a cracker, or as a marinade for grilled vegetables, meat, or fish.

Buon Appetito!