

Spinach and walnut pesto

Takes about 15 minutes, serves 4 and uses 1 pot, a colander and a blender.

INGREDIENTS

400g dried pasta (I used wholemeal)
260g Spinach leaves
25g basil leaves
2 cloves Garlic, peeled
1 lemon, zest only
½ lemon, juice only
75g walnuts
3-5 tablespoons olive oil
120g pecorino or parmesan, finely grated

DIRECTIONS

I've written this recipe with the assumption that you're making it for the first time. However, if you feel confident, or have made this once or twice already, then you should be able to throw it together in the time it takes your pasta takes to cook.

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil.

Meanwhile, fill your kettle and boil it. Put your spinach and basil leaves in a colander, place it in the sink then pour the entire kettle of boiled water over it. Use a wooden spoon to move the spinach around a bit to allow the water out and squeeze it against the side. When cool enough, use your hand to squeeze as much water out of the leaves as possible.

Add your pasta to the boiling water and cook as per the pack instructions.

Place in a blender the squeezed spinach, basil, garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice, walnuts and 3 tablespoons of olive oil. Turn on a low speed and if the ingredients stick to the side, stop and scrape them down. If they persistently don't mix, then add a bit more olive oil, 1 tablespoon at a time. You will probably need to scrape down the sides a few times until the ingredients get really broken down and well blended.

When your pasta is cooked, turn off the heat, drain, return to the pan and then mix in the pesto. Serve with the grated cheese on the side and freshly ground salt and pepper.

