



Pesto With Hazelnuts, Almonds, Pine Nuts or Pistachios

This recipe is made with roasted hazelnuts which is a nice change. They are always available at Farmer's Markets in the Lower Mainland. But you could use toasted slivered almonds, or Mediterranean pine nuts (they are pricey) or pistachio nuts. I really dislike the weird aftertaste of the pine nuts imported from China, so I don't recommend using them. The addition of the lemon juice lends a nice acidity and also holds the beautiful green colour of the pesto. Don't you just think pesto is all about summer, I do and I have been fortunate enough to have pesto on Troffie pasta in Liguria where it was invented. Yum, yum!

1/4 cup toasted hazelnuts, slivered almonds,** (if using pine nuts or pistachios they don't need roasting)
2 cups fresh basil leaves, loosely packed
3 garlic cloves, chopped
Juice of one lemon, approximately 1 Tbsp.
1/4 cup grated Parmigiano Reggiano
Kosher salt & freshly ground pepper to taste
1/2 cup EVOO

In food processor, process the nuts, basil, garlic, lemon juice & Parmigiano Reggiano until chopped coarsely; season with salt & pepper. With the machine running, slowly pour in the EVOO & process until smooth. Cover & refrigerate until ready to use. If you want to keep the pesto for a day or so pour on a thin layer of EVOO then cover & place in the fridge.

The pesto is great on potato gnocchi & pasta. I like to use Troffie pasta when I find it. It is a traditional short pasta shape used in Liguria where pesto originated. If you can get or you grow smaller basil leaves, all the better.

Roasting Hazelnuts:

Spread hazelnuts (that have been shelled) in a shallow baking pan & roast at 275 F for 20 – 30 minutes, until the skins crack & the meat turns light gold. To remove the skins, pour hot nuts into the centre of a kitchen towel, pull the towel around the nuts & twist tightly. Let steam for about 5 minutes. Vigorously rub the warm nuts in the towel until most of the skins are removed. Cool before using.

Roasting Almonds:

Place the almonds in an oven-proof pan large enough so the almonds are in one layer; place in a preheated 350F oven for 8 - 10 minutes, stirring often until lightly golden. Cool before using.

Phyllis

