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Asparagus-Pistachio Nut Pesto



Asparagus-Pistachio Nut Pesto Photo Susie Iventosch

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive

Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Directions

To blanch the asparagus, bring a small pot of water to a boil. Once the water is boiling, add the asparagus pieces all at once and blanch until bright green and tender-crisp, approximately 1 minute. Remove asparagus with a mesh strainer and place the pieces in the bowl of cold water.

Rinse the asparagus pieces a couple of times with cold water to thoroughly cool. Once cool, drain well and dry on paper towels. Set aside.

To a food processor, add the pistachio nuts, asparagus pieces, basil and cheese. Pulse the processor several times until the mixture is coarsely chopped.

Remove mixture from the processor to a bowl. Add the extra-virgin olive oil and fold to combine. Using a microplane zester, zest the lemon directly into the bowl and fold in until just combined. Season with kosher salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste.

Pesto can be stored in refrigerator for up to 10 days or frozen for future use.

Makes about 3 cups.

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Charles Vollmar

Pesto is traditionally an uncooked sauce made with fresh basil, garlic, pine nuts, Parmesan cheese and olive oil. It is not uncommon today to find pesto made from a myriad of ingredients from cilantro, arugula or mint to other green vegetables, such as this variation using fresh spring asparagus. This mixture is great tossed with cold pasta, as a crostini topping or as a condiment to grilled fish and spring vegetables. Use care to not over-process this mixture. It should remain crumbly or coarsely chopped.

Ingredients

1 pound asparagus, trimmed and cut diagonally

into 1" pieces

1/4 cup toasted pistachio nuts, coarsely chopped

8 medium fresh basil leaves, coarsely chopped

1/4 cup Pecorino Romano cheese, crumbled into pea-sized pieces

Zest of one lemon