



JOE'S REAL LIGURIAN PESTO

Joe Bozzano

Please, if at all possible, make this pesto in a mortar. The resulting flavor will be markedly better. If you want to grow you own basil, plant Genovese basil seeds; for obvious reasons, this variety makes the best pesto. Since Taggiasca extra virgin olive oil can be difficult to find (this will not always be the case), you may substitute a high quality, fruity extra virgin olive oil. In finishing this recipe, if for some reason the flavor isn't as bright, as you want, a little squeeze of fresh lemon juice can help.

Ingredients:

4 bunches basil

1 ounce pine nuts

3 cloves garlic

Pinch of coarse sea salt

1 1/2 ounces Parmeggiano-Reggiano, grated

1 1/2 ounces of Pecorino Romano cheese

1/4 cup Taggiasca extra virgin olive oil

Stem the basil, wash, and dry on a tea towel or paper towels, being careful not to squash the leaves. When the leaves are dry, put them in the mortar, add the garlic and the sea salt, and crush with a wooden pestle. When a paste forms, add the pine nuts and continue crushing until well incorporated. Drizzle in the olive oil, continuing to mix using the pestle. Stir in the cheese and taste for seasoning. Add another pinch of salt if necessary. If serving with pasta, reserve some of the pasta cooking water and add with the pesto when dressing.
(Traditional pesto pasta is served with boiled potatoes and green beans.)