

Chef Shane Kelly

"Just keep it real, honey!"

SUNFLOWER MISO PESTO

Yield: About 1 cup

Basil is a plenty here in the middle of summer and everybody seems to love pesto...so I have a great pesto recipe for you with a few changes. First of all, I have added "miso" which is a rich, fermented, unpasteurized soybean paste that can be made with any legume or combination of legumes. It can range from sweet white to dark red but, I have used a "mellow white miso" here so that the pesto stays good and green in color. You can find the miso in most grocery stores' chilled vegetarian section or at your health food store. For you lactose-intolerant folks this is the perfect "cheesy" solution for your pesto and since it's fermented it's good for all our guts! And since pine nuts are outrageously expensive right now I have replaced them with the very nutrient-dense, affordable sunflower seed. You can freeze leftovers, serve it as a dollup in veggie soup, spread some on a sandwich, spread some on a thick slice of a cold cucumber, a little goes a long way on some grilled chicken, grilled veggies and of course, pasta...any way you spoon it up, it's delicious!

Ingredients:

2 medium cloves of garlic, skins removed
2 cups basil leaves, packed
2 rounded tablespoons of "Mellow White Miso"
5 tablespoons of toasted sunflower seeds
½ cup of extra virgin olive oil

Procedure:

1. In a small skillet over medium-high heat toast the sunflower seeds for 3-4 minutes until fragrant and lightly browned. Lay them out on a dish to cool.
2. Meanwhile be sure to wash the basil well to remove all sand and dirt. Pull the leaves from the stems and dry lightly with a paper towel or in a salad spinner.
3. In the bowl a food processor finely chop garlic cloves with 3-4 pulses. Add rest of the ingredients: basil, miso, sunflower seeds and olive oil. Puree until a smooth paste is created and all the ingredients are incorporated. Don't add salt because the miso is already salty.