

Pesto Pasta

Quick and delicious homemade pesto pasta with fresh basil, garlic, and parmesan. Ready in 20 minutes - perfect Italian comfort food recipe.

10 min

PREP

10 min

COOK

20 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Ingredients

- 1 pack pasta
- 3 tbsp heavy cream

Instructions

- 1 Cook the pasta**

Fill a large pot with water and add 1 tablespoon salt. Bring to a rolling boil over high heat.
- 2** Add 1 pack pasta to the boiling water and cook according to package directions until al dente, about 8-10 minutes. Test a piece - it should be tender but still have a slight bite.
- 3** Reserve 1 cup of the starchy pasta cooking water in a measuring cup before draining.
- 4** Drain the pasta in a colander but do not rinse - the surface starch helps the sauce cling.
- 5 Combine with pesto**

Heat a large skillet or the empty pasta pot over low heat. Add 3 tablespoons pesto and warm gently for 30 seconds without letting it bubble.
- 6** Add the drained pasta to the pan with pesto. Toss constantly while gradually adding 1/4 cup of the reserved pasta water until the sauce coats each strand evenly.
- 7** Add more pasta water 1 tablespoon at a time if the pasta looks dry - the finished dish should be glossy and creamy, not sticky or dry.
- 8** Remove from heat and serve immediately in warmed bowls.

Tips

Use the freshest basil possible - wilted or old basil will result in a less vibrant flavor and color in your pesto sauce.

Reserve at least 1 cup of pasta cooking water before draining. The starchy water helps create a silky sauce that clings perfectly to the pasta.

Don't rinse your pasta after draining unless you're serving it cold. The surface starch helps the pesto sauce adhere better.

Toast pine nuts lightly in a dry pan before adding to pesto for enhanced nutty flavor and crunch.

Add fresh basil leaves as garnish just before serving to prevent them from wilting or turning black from the heat.

Gently warm the pesto rather than cooking it over high heat to preserve the bright green color and fresh basil flavor.

For the best texture, slightly undercook your pasta by 1 minute since it will continue cooking when mixed with the warm pesto sauce.

Store any leftover pesto with a thin layer of olive oil on top to prevent oxidation and browning.