

Spring Greens Pesto

makes about 2 cups

1/2 cup dried mushrooms
3 tablespoons olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
250 grams or so greens in season
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup lightly toasted nuts (pine nuts, almonds or walnuts) **OR
Sunflower seeds**
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
1/2 lemon

Reconstitute the mushrooms in a small bowl or cup with just enough boiling water to cover. Set aside to cool in the water.

In a pan large enough to hold the greens, heat the oil and sauté the garlic briefly, then add the greens. If you are using a mix of greens, add the tougher ones (like kale and broccoli stems) before the tender ones, like spinach. Cook until wilted. The time on this can range widely: for only kale, it may take many minutes, while spinach alone will only take a few seconds. If the greens start to stick, add a splash of water.

Scrape the cooked greens into the blender and combine with the mushrooms and their juices, Parmesan, toasted nuts, salt and pepper, and finally, a squirt of lemon juice. If your blender has variable speeds, start slowly and increase gradually. Puree until silky smooth.

Serve over cooked pasta