



**HEY**

**PESTO**

**LYNNIE STEIN**

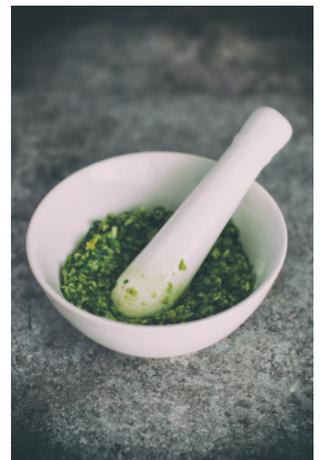
## Pesto – Linnie Stein

Looking for a quick alternative to pesto? Try basil oil...

**Basil oil.** The quickest and easiest substitute for pesto is to make a simple herb oil by finely chopping a bunch of basil leaves and stirring in enough extra virgin olive oil to give you a chunky paste.

To store the basil and make it gut-lovin' ...

### Hey Fermented Pesto!



## Pesto – Lynn Steen



Gather together 1 large bunch of leafy greens (such as edible wild greens, spinach, kale, basil, coriander or a mixture)

2 shallots

1/2 cup cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil (optional) Gives a taste more akin to bought pesto.

## Pesto – Linnie Stein

By using oil it will not store as long, refrigerated.

If requiring long storage, go sans oil! Remember, basic science lesson – oil and water don't mix.

With fermentation, the good bacteria produces its own liquid. And the oil can go rancid over time.

1/2 cup tiger nuts / crispy cashew nuts (feel free to substitute another type of seed / nut or mixture)

Good 'ole dash of Himalayan fine salt

Put all ingredients in a food processor and pulse until it reaches the desired consistency.

Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.

Put into oxygen -free ( Fido) type jar.

Cover and leave at room temperature for 2-3 days until small bubbles start appearing.

You may also hear a slight fizz.

Transfer to the fridge where it will keep for a couple of months. Longer if made without oil.

**To Serve ...** Stir through raw zucchini zoodles or pasta!

Dollop on top of roast pumpkin soup or any type of eggs for breakfast.

Spread on sourdough toast and top with scrambled eggs / tofu.

Dollop on top of a slow-cooked casserole just before serving.

Lightly stir through homemade fresh Gnocchi or top bruschetta, or cavatelli.

Thin with beet kvass, oil and drizzle for a salad dressing.

### **Pesto Vinaigrette**

- 1 tablespoon fermented pesto
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 teaspoons coconut vinegar
- 1 teaspoon kombucha mustard

In a screw top jar, secure lid and shake until combined.





## WHAT CAN I USE INSTEAD OF BASIL IN PESTO?

Don't limit yourself to basil pesto.

There are plenty of substitutes you can use for basil and still create a delicious pesto. The best substitutes for basil in pesto are either **leafy greens**, such as spinach, kale, arugula, watercress or even seaweed, or herbs, such as fresh parsley, cilantro, mint, oregano, sage, marjoram (a fave!) or tarragon to your basil base.

**Or leave the basil out entirely!** I like to add preserved citrus zest on occasion, or switch up the type of nuts I use – beet kvass soaked Brazil nuts / almonds and milk kefir soaked walnuts are fave's.



## **DOM'S FRESH PESTO**

My Italian friend Dom makes a beautiful pesto (and perfectly light, potato gnocchi to go along with it). His technique results in an incredibly special pesto.

A lot of Chopped Basil ONLY is the First Step to Dom's Pesto

Most of the pesto you purchase is different for a few reasons. First off, most of what you see is made by machine, usually a food processor or hand blender. This holds true even if it is homemade. Don't get me wrong, it usually tastes good, but because the ingredients aren't hand chopped you end up with a texture that is more like like a moist paste and there little to no definition between ingredients.

### **DON'T MURDER THE BASIL ... CHOP BY HAND (DOM'S WORDS)**

During my lesson I quickly began to realize chopping all the ingredients by hand is key because this prevents the ingredients from becoming a completely homogenized emulsion or paste. When you dress pasta with pesto that has been hand chopped the minuscule flecks of basil will separate from the olive oil in places, you get definition between ingredients, and bright flavour's pop in a way they don't when they've been blended into one.

### **CHOOSE THE RIGHT BASIL**



Pesto – Lynn Steen



Only young, small basil leaves. For us non-Italians it is easy to find Genovese basil in stores and at farmer's markets particularly in the summer, but chances are it wasn't picked young. I wouldn't worry about it too much, simply by hand chopping all your ingredients, you will see a major shift in personality of your pesto.

## TECHNIQUE

If you're serious about making good pesto using the hand-chop technique you'll need a sharp (preferably large, single blade) mezzaluna, or a good knife and keep it out of the dishwasher. The sharpness of your blade absolutely matters – you don't want to bruise or tear your basil. Whatever you use to chop, make sure it has a sharp blade or the basil will turn dark. Chopping the ingredients will take twenty minutes or so. Once you chop your ingredients, you'll form them into a cake. You add olive oil to this cake, and it's magic.

**Dom's technique:** Similar to Grandma's sauerkraut and veggie fermentation technique... chop a bit, add some ingredients, chop some more. I think part of the reason he does it this way (instead of chopping everything all at once) is because some things get chopped into oblivion, while some, not as much – it encourages spectrum of cut sizes throughout the pesto contributing to the overall texture. All told, the chopping will take a leisurely twenty to thirty minutes.

You'll also notice this recipe doesn't have any added salt (just the saltiness from the cheese), make sure pasta water is well salted if you are going to use this pesto on pasta or the overall flavor profile will fall flat. Also, be sure to adjust for seasoning before serving. With food this simple, you need to get the seasoning right. Trust your taste buds.

### What you need:

1 large bunch of basil, leaves only, washed and dried  
3 medium cloves of garlic  
one small handful of raw pine nuts or alternatives (Dom doesn't like my grated beet kvass Brazil nuts- but they are truly beautiful tasting and eye candy amongst the green)  
Nice for Christmas Pesto!!  
roughly 3/4 cup Parmesan, loosely packed and freshly grated  
A few tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil  
Special equipment: a mezzaluna for chopping (optional)

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### Here's how to do it:

#### Chop Ingredients

Start chopping the garlic along with about 1/3 of the basil leaves. Once this is loosely chopped add more basil, chop some more, add the rest of the basil, chop some more. The basil and garlic should be a very fine mince. Add about half the pine nuts, chop. Add the rest of the pine nuts, chop. Add half of the Parmesan, chop. Add the rest of the Parmesan, and chop. In the end you want a chop so fine that you can press all the ingredients into a basil “cake”. Transfer the pesto “cake” to a small bowl (not much bigger than the cake).

#### Form paste:

Cover the pesto “cake” with dash of olive oil. It doesn't take much, just a few tablespoons. At this point, you can set the pesto aside, or place it in the refrigerator until you are ready to use it. Just before serving, give the pesto a quick stir to incorporate some of the oil into the basil. Dom often thins the pesto with a splash of pasta water for more coverage, but for our gnocchi this wasn't necessary.



## STORING FRESH PESTO

Store any pesto you might use in the next day or two, refrigerated, under a thin film of olive oil. You can also freeze in ice cube trays. Thaw and toss with whatever gnocchi, ravioli, or other fave fresh made pasta you like – and a good splash of pasta water! Thanks Dom.

**To Serve ...** same as the fermented basil above.

Let me know if you try this and what you think!

Tutto bene!

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(with interesting, mouth-watering updates)

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