

Season:	Year round
From the garden:	Fresh herbs, garlic, lemon
Type:	Side dish
Difficulty:	Easy
Country of origin:	Italy
Serves:	30 small tastes
Source:	Joanne Harland

Equipment

- Measuring cups and spoons
- Small frying pan
- Wooden spoon
- Lemon juicer
- Box grater
- Cook's knife
- Chopping board
- Food processor or stick blender
- Bowls to serve

Ingredients

- 3-4 cups herbs (packed firmly) – e.g. parsley, coriander, basil, mint
 - 1.5 cups toasted sunflower seeds, or other nuts
 - 3 cloves garlic
 - 1 lemon
 - 3/4 cup olive oil
 - ½ teaspoon salt, to taste
 - ½ cup Parmesan or tasty cheddar cheese
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How to make it

1. Toast the sunflower seeds in a frypan until browned, stirring regularly so they don't burn – scoop them out into a bowl and let them cool.
2. Pick the leaves off the herbs, removing the stalks that you don't want to use (e.g. mint and basil stalks. Parsley and coriander stalks can be used.)
3. Zest and juice the lemon.
4. Peel and chop the garlic.
5. Grate the cheese on the fine part of the grater.
6. Put the sunflower seeds in the food processor and pulse until they are rough crumbs or put in a medium bowl and blend with the stick blender.
7. Add parsley (or herbs), salt, 1 teaspoon of the lemon zest, lemon juice and garlic, whiz until finely chopped and smooth. Add the cheese, then pour in oil slowly while blending until it reaches the desired consistency.

Notes:

- Pesto means "to pound, to crush" in Italian. It's traditionally made with basil, pine nuts & parmesan cheese but you can make it with herbs, greens (eg. spinach or rocket). Pine nuts are expensive but other nuts or seeds work well and you can use any semi-hard cheese instead of parmesan.
- Pesto is delicious served with crackers, pita breads, flat breads or with carrot/celery sticks. It goes very well with tomatoes. You can also put it in your sandwiches, stir it through pasta or dollop it on top of a pizza. Pesto can be frozen in small containers for later use.

Skills:

 Chopping, **zesting***

* Zest: To remove the outer coloured part of the peel of citrus fruit to flavour a dish. This can be done with a vegetable peeler then chopped up, with a zesting tool that removes fine shreds of zest, or on a fine grater. Avoid pith (the white part under the top coloured layer) as this is bitter.