

Microwave Cooked Pistachio Pesto & Hummus Quesadilla



TIPS:

1. **About this recipe:** Food usually comes to mind while I'm out on the bicycle. After a spectacularly colorful October ride, I came home to put together this recipe that combines the nutty flavors of [pistachio pesto](#) and [hummus](#) along with the fresh crunch of red bell pepper and creamy texture of avocado. Great stuff for a post-ride/workout meal or any lunch or dinner.

2. Determining avocado ripeness and how to ripen an avocado: This recipe calls for avocado (which you can either leave out or substitute with another ingredient like olives, sun dried tomatoes, roasted bell pepper if avocados are not available or not yet ripe). Avocados usually come to market underripe and firm. Avocados are ripe when you can press on the avocado skin with your thumb using a little more pressure than you'd use to grip a pencil firmly (left photo) and leave an indent where your thumb was as shown in circled area in the picture on the right.



To ripen firm avocados as quickly as possible at home, place them in a paper bag (NOT plastic bag - plastic bags don't allow for the air exchange needed for ripening; paper bags do), close the

bag loosely, and store them out of direct sunlight at room temperature for 1-2 days - or longer for extremely firm, unripe avocados.



Preparation Time: 5-10 minutes (provided you already have pistachio (or any) pesto and hummus on hand)

Cooking Time: About 30 seconds in the microwave oven

Ingredients (for 1)

Tortilla

Pisatachio Pesto (← click for a picture book recipe or use any other herb type spread)

Hummus (← click for a picture book recipe)

Favorite Sliced Cheese (I'm using sliced provolone cheese, but any cheese will work)

1/2 Bell Pepper (I like using red, yellow, or orange bell peppers for this recipe because they're sweeter and more flavorful than green bell peppers)

1/2 Ripe Avocado

1/2 Handful of Fresh Cilantro

Plain Kefir (fermented milk yogurt-like drink) or

Plain Yogurt (optional)

Balsamic (or any) **Vinegar** (optional)



Equipment

Cutting Board

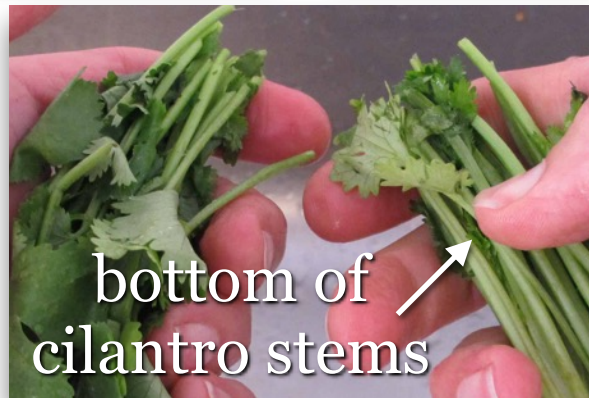
Microwave Safe Plate

Large Sharp (Chef's) Knife

Table Knife



1. Rinse and shake dry **1/2 handful of fresh cilantro** and twist off the **bottom of the cilantro stems** as shown in the second and third picture below.



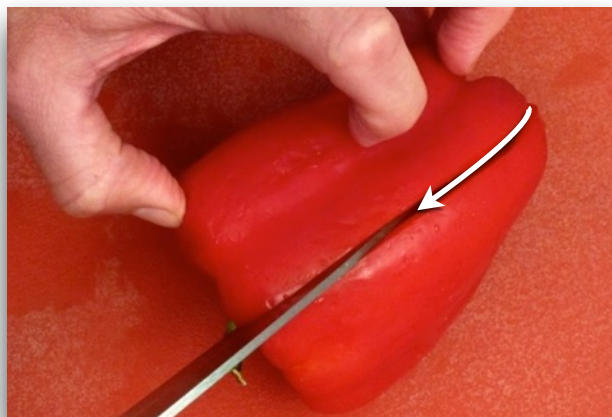
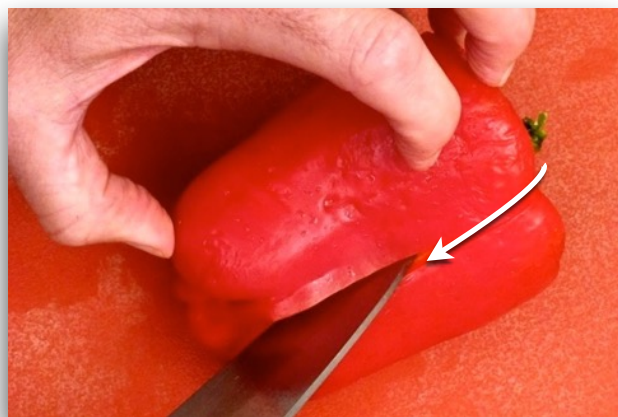
Cut and chop the **cilantro** into small flake pieces as shown below.



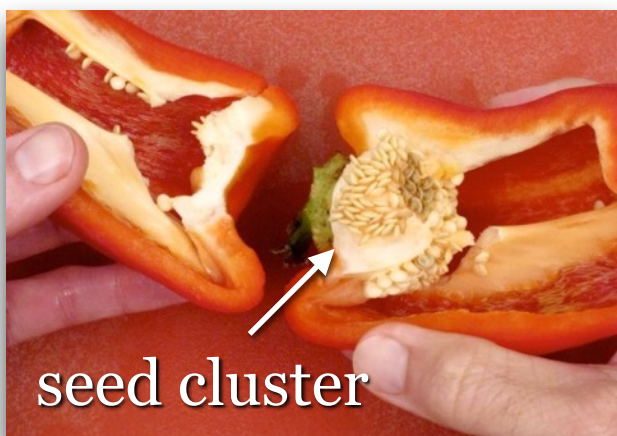
2. Give a **bell pepper** a hand-scrubbing rinse in the sink.



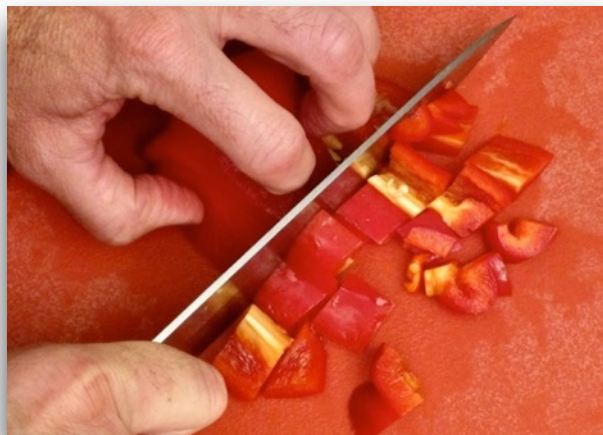
Cut the **pepper** in half lengthwise without cutting into the **seed cluster** in the **middle** of the **pepper**.



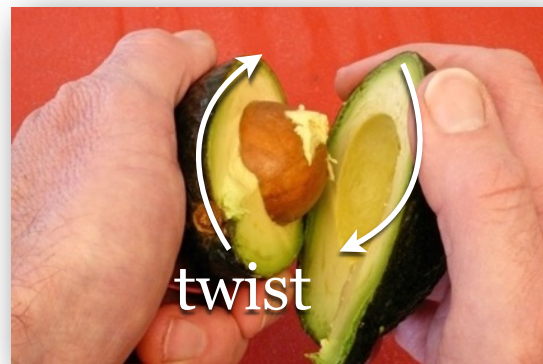
Pull the **pepper halves** apart and remove the **seed cluster**.



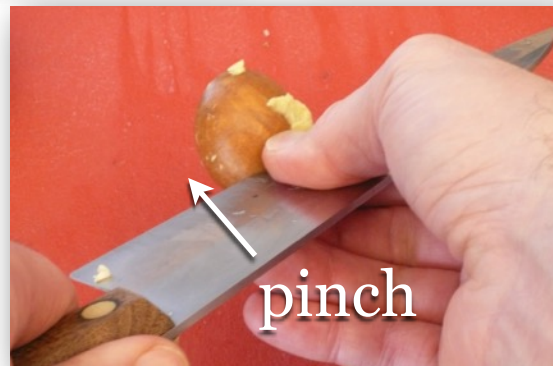
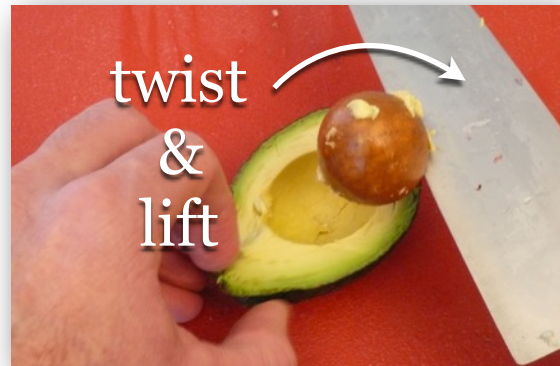
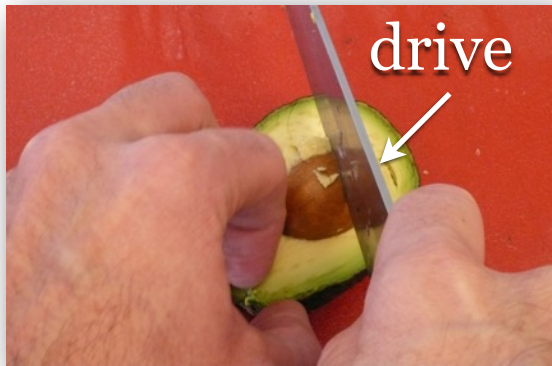
Cut **one of the pepper halves** lengthwise into strips $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (6-12 mm) wide, and then cut those strips in cross section into pieces also $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (6-12 mm) wide.



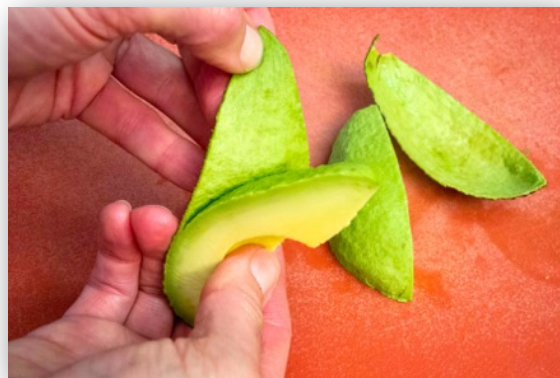
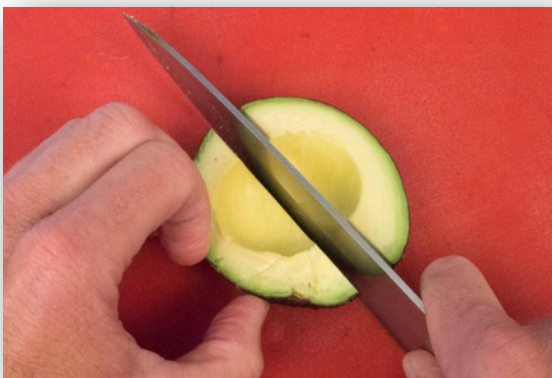
3. Cut a ripe **avocado** in half lengthwise around its **seed**, and twist the two **avocado halves** apart.



(**NOTE:** To make one serving, you'll only need the **avocado half** without the seed in it. If, however, you're making more than one serving, here's how to remove the **avocado seed**. Hold the **avocado half** with the **seed** still attached seed side up on the cutting board - *making sure your fingers are not in the intended knife path* - and then drive the long, sharp edge of the knife blade into the **seed**. Twist and lift the **seed** from the **avocado half**. Remove the **seed** from the knife by pinching down on the **seed** from the back, dull side of the knife blade as shown below.)



Cut **one of the avocado halves** lengthwise in half again, peel off the **skin**, and cut each **avocado quarter** lengthwise in half.



4. Use a table knife to spread a **generous layer of pistachio pesto** on **half a tortilla**.



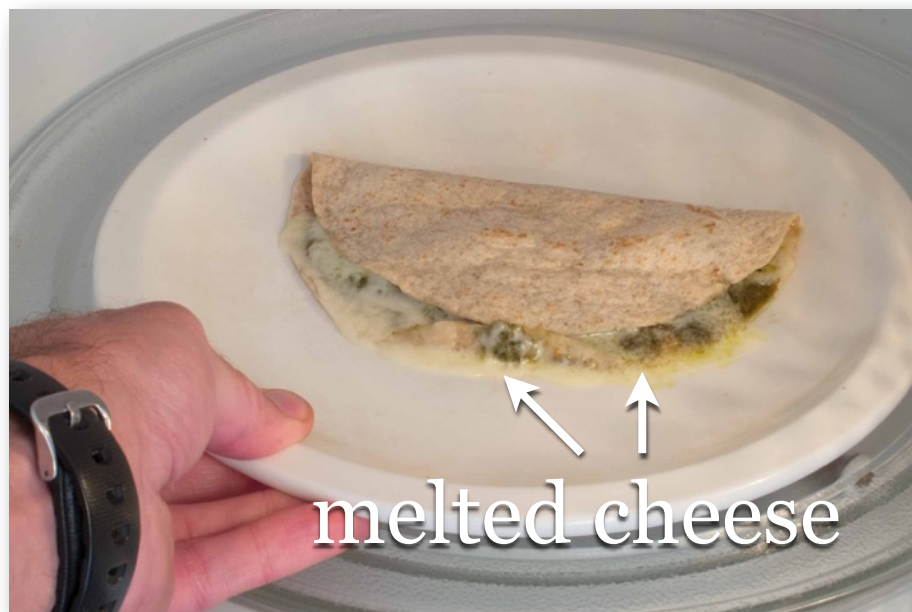
Put the **tortilla** on a *microwave safe plate*. Then cover the **pistachio pesto** on the **tortilla** with **a slice of cheese**, and fold the **tortilla** in half.



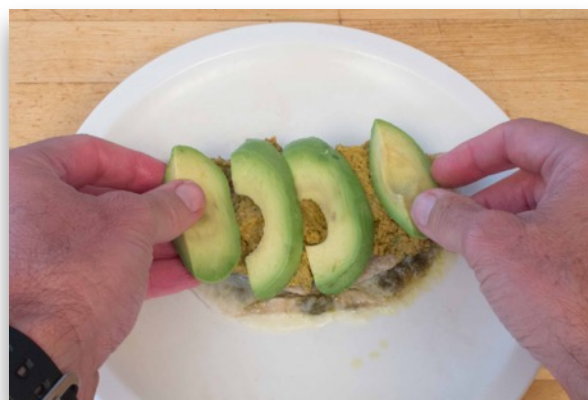
5. Put the **plate with the folded tortilla** on it in the middle of the microwave oven and cook for 30 seconds using your microwave oven's 100% POWER or HIGH heat setting. **NOTE:** I'm using a 1200 watt microwave oven in the pictures shown here. Cooking time will vary depending on your microwave oven wattage.



6. After warming the **tortilla**, make sure the **cheese** has melted, as shown in the picture below, and carefully remove the plate from the microwave oven. If the **cheese** has not yet melted in your **tortilla**, keep cooking in the microwave oven at 15-second intervals until the **cheese** has melted.



7. Top the **warmed tortilla** with a **generous layer of hummus, sliced avocado,...**



...chopped bell pepper, chopped cilantro,...



...and an optional **shot of balsamic** (or any) **vinegar** and/or **kefir** (or plain yogurt) until what you have looks about...



...like this.



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Gotta' Eat, Can't Cook

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