

Nutty Cilantro Pesto



TIPS:

1. I'm a big fan of the uniquely fresh citrusy flavor of cilantro and recently started using it to make pesto when basil was out of season. Like basil pesto, I use this nutty cilantro pesto regularly on toast, as a sandwich spread, with pasta, grains, freshly cooked or uncooked vegetables (great with freshly cooked corn on the cob), and freshly cooked fish or chicken - just about anything.

2. The hardest part about making cilantro - or any - pesto is crushing the garlic to make the garlic cloves easy to peel and making sure the cilantro leaves are well rinsed to avoid getting an annoying crunch for the sandy soil that usually sometimes sticks to the leaves when the cilantro is harvested. This recipe shows how to deal with both problems as quickly and easily as possible.

Preparation Time: 15-20 minutes

Ingredients

1 Big Bunch Fresh Cilantro

1/2 - 3/4 Garlic Bulb

1/2 Teaspoon of Salt

1 Teaspoon Ground Turmeric

1 Teaspoon Ground Ginger

Crunch of Black Pepper

Olive Oil

2 Cups of Your Favorite Nuts (I usually use a combination of lightly salted roasted almonds and lightly salted peanuts, as shown below, but any nuts will work)

1 Jalapeño Pepper (optional but adds an

added punch of spicy flavor)

Shot of Apple Cider Vinegar

Shot of Balsamic Vinegar (optional but adds depth of flavor)



Equipment

Food Processor with an “S”-Shaped Processor

Knife Blade

Water Basin

Cutting Board

Strainer or Colander

Large Sharp (Chef's) Knife

Spatula

Measuring Cup

Teaspoon



1. Put the “S”-shaped knife blade onto the spindle in the food processor bowl, and make sure both the bowl and blade are snugly seated in place.



2. To clean the **fine sandy soil** that often times sticks to **fresh cilantro leaves**, first fill

a basin about 1/2 full with cold tap water.



Then add the **cilantro**, complete with **stems**, to the water. Give the **cilantro** a good hand-agitated rinse, and let the **cilantro** rest in the water so that any **soil** loosened from the **cilantro leaves** can settle to the bottom of the basin.



3. While the **cilantro** rests in the water, pull 1/2 - 3/4 of the **garlic cloves** from a **garlic bulb** so that you have about as many **garlic cloves** as shown in the picture on the right.



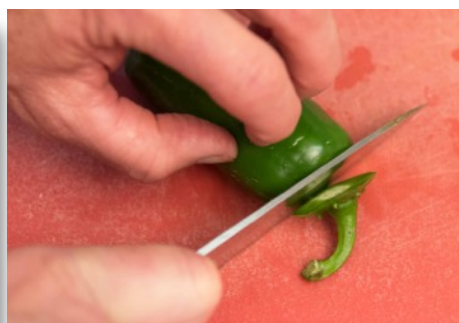
Put the **garlic cloves** on the cutting board and cover them, one **garlic clove** a time, with the flat side of a wide bladed (chef's) knife. Press on the top flat side of the knife with the heel of your hand until you hear and feel the **garlic skins** pop open. Then peel the **skin** from the **garlic cloves**.



4. Scoop the **rinsed cilantro** out of the water into a colander or strainer. (The small inset picture below shows the sandy soil on the bottom of the basin left over from cleaning the cilantro leaves.)



5. Give a **fresh jalapeño** a good hand scrubbing rinse with cold water. Then cut off the **stem** and cut the **jalapeño** in cross section into 4-5 pieces.



6. Pour **2 cups of nuts** into the food processor, snap on the processor top, and process the **nuts** until they become the consistency of **coarse nut butter** as shown in the third picture below.



7. Add the **cleaned cilantro**, **1/2 teaspoon of salt** (or as much salt as shown below in the picture to the right),...



...garlic cloves from step 3, 1 mounded teaspoon of both ground turmeric and ground ginger,...



...a good crunch of black pepper, cut jalapeño pepper (optional),



...good pour of apple cider vinegar, balsamic vinegar (optional), and olive oil.



8. Snap the food processor bowl top in place, turn on the processor, and...



...let the processor work until the **ingredients** become well mixed together about as shown below. (**NOTE:** *If your **nutty cilantro pesto** turns out thicker than what is shown in the larger picture below, add a little more **olive oil** and/or **vinegar** (optional) to thin it out as shown in the insert picture.*)



9. Use a spatula to scoop the **nutty cilantro pesto** into a container and...



...store in the refrigerator or freezer (if freezing, use a plastic, not glass, container as shown in the photo on the right).

