

Hand-Chopped Cilantro Pesto



TIP:

1. **Cilantro pesto** is a fantastically flavorful twist on more traditional pesto made with basil. And just like basil pesto, cilantro pesto goes great on pasta, rice, grains, freshly cooked or uncooked vegetables, or with meat, fish or chicken - imagination is your only limit.

2. I put together this easy hand-chopped recipe for those who don't have - or don't like cleaning - a food processor. At the same time, I'm a big fan of hand-chopped pestos for their coarser texture and, of course, fantastic flavor!

Preparation Time: 15-20 minutes

Ingredients

1 Bunch Fresh Cilantro

4-5 Garlic Cloves (I'm using packaged garlic cloves that have already been peeled but will show how to prepare fresh garlic cloves from a garlic bulb below)

Handful of Your Favorite Nuts (I'm using walnuts and pecans, but any nuts will work)

1/2 Teaspoon of Salt

Crunch of Black Pepper

Grated Parmesan Cheese (I'm actually using a mix of grated Italian cheeses)

Olive Oil

Shot of Apple Cider Vinegar (or any other vinegar)



Equipment

Water Basin

Cutting Board

Strainer or Colander

Large Sharp (Chef's) Knife

Bowl

Large Spoon



1. To clean the **fine sandy soil** that sometimes times sticks to **fresh cilantro leaves** (and is no fun to bite on later!), fill a basin about 1 / 2 full with cold tap water.



Then give the **cilantro** a good hand-scrubbing wash in the water, scoop the **clean cilantro** out of the water into a colander or strainer, and give it a squeeze dry.



2. If you're using **garlic cloves that have already been peeled**, skip to step 3 below. If you're using fresh garlic from a garlic bulb, pull 4-5 **garlic cloves** from a **garlic bulb**.



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 off the **garlic skins**.



3. Hold the **garlic cloves** securely to the cutting board with curled fingers, and let the side of the knife blade touch and glide along your curled knuckles as you cut the **garlic** into thin slices about 1 / 8 inch (3 mm) wide.



Finish by chopping the **garlic slices** into smaller pieces - *and cleaning off the knife blade safely as shown below* - until the **garlic** is chopped about as shown below.



4. Remove any **thick, tough cilantro stem ends** by hand as shown below. Thin stems are fine to eat.



5. Ball up the **cleaned cilantro** in your hand, and cut the **cilantro** into slices about 1/2 inch (12 mm) wide.



Keep chopping and scraping the **cilantro** together until it looks about as shown here.



6. Scrape the **chopped cilantro** together with the **chopped garlic** and...

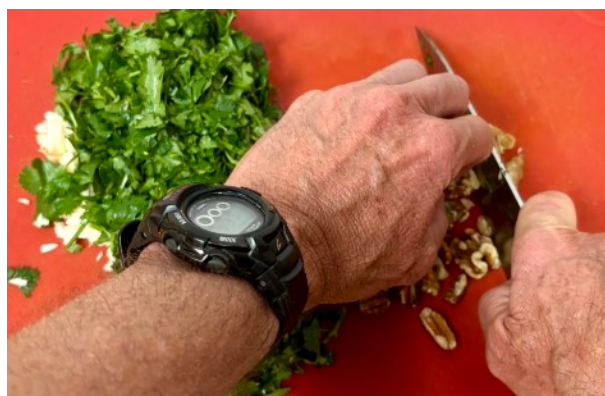


...put a **handful of nuts** on the cutting board (I'm using both walnuts and pecans).



Chop the **nuts** coarsely about as shown in the right

picture below.



Gather and chop the **cilantro**, **garlic** and **nuts** until what you have looks as shown...



...here.



7. Scrape the **chopped cilantro**, **garlic** and **nuts** into a

bowl and add...



...**1/2 teaspoon or as much salt** and **ground black pepper** as shown below,...



...a **good shot of olive oil**, about **1/2 as much of the oil you used of apple cider (or any) vinegar** and...



...about as much **grated cheese** as shown below.



8. Stir with a big spoon, add more **olive oil** if the ingredients look dry and crumbly, and keep stirring until what you have looks about like...



...this.



9. Store **leftover cilantro pesto** in a container and keep refrigerated for a least a week.



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