



Spring Green Pesto

Pesto is a popular sauce for pasta and wonderful accompaniment to spread on crackers and such like. Here Anna shows you how to make pesto from foraged Spring greens that are common to fields, hedgerows and shady streams. The method here works well when out and about with a group however you can of course forage the greens and then take them home and let a blender do the processing for you.

Note: see Spring Green Foraging video and written download for information on the plants foraged and used in this recipe.

Ages

All ages

Duration

Allow at least 40 minutes

How To

- Wash the nettle tips and put in a bowl for snipping
- Snip nettles with scissors
- Crush seeds or nuts (here cashew nuts) in pestle and mortar
- Wash the wild garlic
- Into the chopped nettles add the washed wild garlic, hawthorn leaves and silver bramble tips
- Do some more snipping of that
- Add some of the crushed cashew nuts, some olive oil and lemon juice
- Massage the mixture well for several minutes to really massage the nettle and crush the sting
- Add sea salt
- Add remaining crushed cashew nuts
- Spread pesto on oatcakes and decorate with a few edible Spring flowers. Here Anna uses a few blackthorn blossom

Equipment Needed

Ingredients:

- Nettle tips
- Wild Garlic
- Silver Bramble tips
- Hawthorn leaves

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- Some seeds or nuts (here we use cashew nuts)
- Oil (here we use olive oil)
- Sea Salt
- Lemon juice
- Oatcakes
- Water

Equipment:

- Scissors
- Bowls
- Pestle and mortar
- Salad whizzer
- Knife (for spreading)
- Spoon (for mixing and massaging)
- Cup and small scissors for children

Variations

- Cook some pasta, instead of spreading on oatcakes
- If at home, you can put the ingredients in a blender and whizz it up and just occasionally have a little taste to see if it needs more salt, more oil or more lemon juice
- Decorate with a few edible Spring flowers. Here Anna uses a few blackthorn blossom

Teacher Tricks and Tips

- The children will really enjoy getting involved with every part of the activity, so the more crushing and snipping and stirring, the better, in terms of making the preparation of wild food interesting for the children.
- Put a few nettles in a cup with a small pair of scissors and you can have several children all helping to snip nettles at once and then add them back into the pot.

Invisible Learning

- Deepening relationship to plants and their gifts
- Deepening relationship to place

Hazards to Highlight

- Be aware of the stings for children - whilst they'll do no lasting damage, they can cause discomfort for the day. Remember the juice from nettle leaves soothes the stings.
- Be sure that you've clearly and correctly identified the plants you're foraging.

Risk Assessment Considerations

These are the risk assessment consideration documents to be referred to for this activity.

- Plant Based Activities
- Site risk assessment (specific to your site)

Links

- Safe Foraging Practice
- Respectful Harvest
- Spring Green Foraging
- Nourishing Nettle Tips

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Tags

- Foraging, wild food, nettles, wild garlic, hawthorn, bramble, spring greens