

### **Spring Linguine**

*Pasta with Asparagus, Lemon Pesto and Crispy Shallots*

#### **Ingredients:**

*Makes 4 servings.*

#### ***Pasta***

1 lb. linguine  
Salt for boiling water

#### ***Sauce***

1 lb. fresh asparagus  
4 cloves garlic  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1/2 cup pistachios  
1/2 cup grated Asiago cheese  
1 cup basil leaves, packed  
1 lemon (1 T. zest and 2 T. juice)  
Salt to taste\*

#### ***Topping***

4 shallots, thinly sliced  
4 T. olive oil  
4 T. butter  
1 garlic clove, crushed

#### ***Garnishes: (optional)***

Basil leaves  
Lemon slices  
Shaved Asiago

#### **Directions:**

PREPARE THE SAUCE:

1. CLEAN the asparagus stalks by washing well; snap the stalks, discard the woody stem ends. Cut the tips of the asparagus from the stalk and set aside. Cut the remaining stems into 1-inch pieces.
2. STEAM the asparagus tips for 2 minutes or until tender, yet bright green. Immediately remove the tips to a bowl of ice water. The cold water will halt the cooking allowing the tips to retain their nice, bright green color. Set aside the blanched tips until the final dish assembly. Steam the 1-inch stalk pieces until tender and easily pierced with a knife's tip. Drain the asparagus in a colander.
3. ZEST the lemon, then juice. Grate the cheese with a fine grater.

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4. ASSEMBLE the sauce ingredients, (cooked asparagus stalks, garlic, olive oil, pistachios, Asiago cheese, basil, lemon zest and juice), in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse until the sauce is processed, yet with some texture remaining.

**MAKE THE CRISPY SHALLOTS:**

5. SLICE the shallots thinly, separate into individual rings. Saute with medium-high heat in the butter and oil. Stir frequently. Add one clove of crushed garlic just as the shallots are beginning to brown. Once the shallots brown, remove them from the oil with a slotted spoon to a plate lined with absorbent paper towels. Set aside and allow to cool. (Note: the shallots change from brown to burnt quickly; better to undercook than over cook the shallots.)

**COOK THE PASTA:**

7. BOIL the linguine (or your choice of pasta) in boiling water. Add salt to the water once boiling has started. Add the pasta and cook until *al dente* – or, just “tender to the tooth.” Drain.

**PLATE ASSEMBLY:**

8. POUR the Asparagus-Lemon-Pesto sauce over the drained, cooked pasta and toss until evenly distributed. Plate the pasta and top with shavings of Asiago cheese, and a generous sprinkle of crispy shallots. Garnish with fresh lemon slices and basil leaves.