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Spring Pea Pesto Pasta

Serves 4

A good pasta dish can transform everyday ingredients into something extraordinary any day of the week. Springtime flavors inspire this fresh take on pasta. We think your family will love this super-quick, spring pea pesto pasta dish. *Buon appetito!*

Spring Pea Pesto Ingredients:

1/2 cup frozen peas
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
1/2 teaspoon Kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup packed fresh basil leaves
1 tablespoon packed fresh mint leaves
juice of 1/2 lemon (about 2 tablespoons)
1 small clove fresh garlic

Pasta:

1 lb thin spaghetti

Garnish:

1 pint Sun Gold tomatoes, halved
8 oz burrata cheese
Mint leaves, chiffonade
Basil leaves, chiffonade
Lemon zest

Directions:

1. Gather all of the pesto ingredients together. Be sure to thoroughly wash all of the fresh herbs! Pulse the pesto ingredients together in a food processor. Taste test the pesto, and adjust the salt and pepper accordingly. If needed, add more olive oil for a thinner consistency. Enjoy pesto immediately, or keep covered and refrigerated (or even frozen) until ready to use.
2. Slice the tomatoes in half with a small paring knife. Roll the basil and mint leaves and cut in a chiffonade cut for a garnish.
3. Cook the pasta according to the package instructions. Drain, reserve about 1 cup of the pasta cooking water. For better pasta, salt the water! The cooking water should be “like the sea” – start with about 1 teaspoon coarse kosher salt per quart of water. This seems like a lot of salt, and it is, but most of this will be discarded when the pasta is drained. Test the pasta frequently as it approaches completion. Pasta should be cooked to *al dente* – “to the tooth” – tender, yet chewy, not at all mushy. The easiest way to check for doneness, is to remove a piece of pasta and test between your teeth. Or, cut a piece of test pasta, and check the cross section view. The smallest white dot, or white line at the center of the pasta piece indicates doneness is nearly at hand.
4. Mix the pesto with the drained and cooked pasta, stir with tongs until the pasta is well-coated with the pesto. Add reserved pasta water, to thin the sauce, if needed.
5. Garnish the pasta with the tomato halves, pieces of fresh burrata, mint, and basil leaves. Enjoy!