



Feisty Tasmanian's Wild and Weedy Pesto

Recipe by Rees Campbell

 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- Tetragonia tetraganoides – warrigal greens
- Stinging nettle – native or feral
- Apium prostratum or insulare / native parsley or celery – introduced parsley is fine
- Chick weed
- Oxalis, sow thistle, mallow... any other edible green weed leaves
- lemon juice
- olive oil
- almond meal
- garlic
- native pepper, salt
- sour cream (optional)

DIRECTIONS

NOTE: The quantity of each ingredient will vary according to what you have growing at the time, and whether you want your pesto as a dip, a filling, or a sauce.

1. Prepare the greens. Wash everything carefully and separate the leaves you'll eat raw, from those you'll blanch. Discard any woody stems. (Cut stinging nettles leaves from the stems wearing rubber gloves and using kitchen scissors).
2. Blanch the warrigal greens and nettle by pouring boiling water over. Leave for a minute, or until the water turns greenish. Drain, then cool quickly by plunging into very cold water. Drain again. Squeeze water out of the blanched leaves by grabbing handfuls and squeezing together.
3. In a blender, place the blanched and the fresh green leaves, juice from 1 lemon, 1 tbsp olive oil and a small garlic clove per cup of squeezed greens. Blend for about 20 seconds, scrape down the sides and blend again until it is a paste.
4. Now add sufficient almond meal to hold it together as much as you want, some salt and pepper; and blitz again.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

- This pesto is brilliant as a **pasta sauce** if you make it quite runny.
- To make some interesting **potato croquettes**, make a fairly firm pesto. Take a spoonful of mashed potato – roll into a ball. Make a deep indent with finger or thumb, fill with pesto, then cover back over with the potato. Fry in a little oil or butter till crusty. Yummo. Or you can simply place a layer of pesto in mashed potato.
- As a **seafood sauce**, make it runny, and make sure you include a lot of apium (or parsley) leaves. Toss any seafood in this, then quickly it all cook in butter.
- As a **pesto dip** which is perfect on crackers or carrot and celery sticks – make the pesto quite firm, then stir in some sour cream. Sprinkle generously with paprika.
- This will also take heat, so you can spice it up with **chilli sauce** if that's your thing.



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