

Jewels Under the Kilt

In 2010 my husband and I moved to a 90 acre farm in Fergus, Ontario to begin pursuing our lifelong dream of leading a rural life. We chose the farm because it had frogs, it meant freedom and youth and images of putting our feet in the water searching for tadpoles. We got so excited about nature and space that another dream was created: being environmentally conscious farmers.

We eat a lot of nuts! We love them and they're healthy. We would buy 50 lbs at a shop, but the nuts didn't taste good. We tried roasting them, which tasted better but the process destroyed the health or nutritional benefits.

We were going to plant 5 nut trees for the family, but then we thought, why 5? So, we planted 100. The nuts tasted great. We loved living off the land. We gave them to our friends and neighbors, and for 2 years I would farm, cook and create recipes with our home grown nuts. It was during this time that I developed my patent-pending roasting process and created our maple roasted nut recipes. People loved them. Jewels Under the Kilt was born.

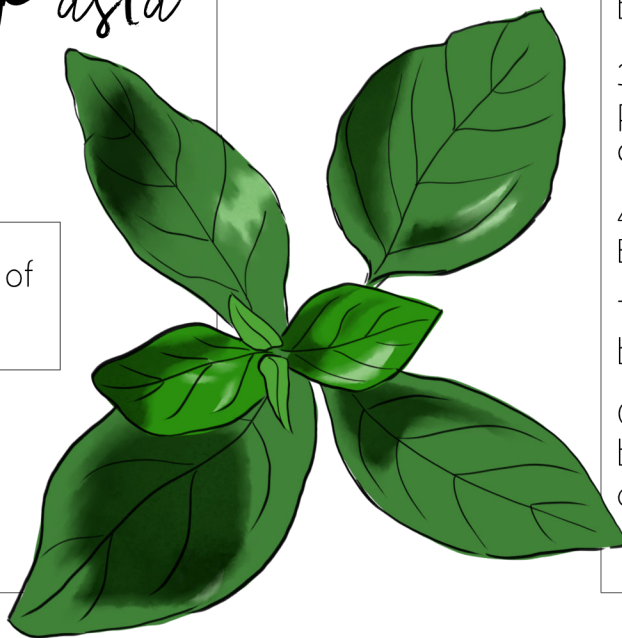
Legacy for Jessie...

Our 3rd dream. We have shared and brought our family together, our community together and even our country. Our daughter Jessie, who has Upsyndrome will have this as our legacy.

Broccoli Black Walnut Pesto Pasta

8 oz broccoli florets (remove larger stems)
2 large garlic cloves
1/2 cup Black Walnuts, chopped
2/3 packed cups fresh basil leaves, dry
1/3 packed cups fresh spinach, dry
1/4 cup Black Walnut Oil
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil, + more for serving
1 lemon, zested and juiced
Salt and pepper
1/2 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano, + more for serving

Yields approx. 2.5 cups of pesto



Instructions for the Pesto

1. Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil over high heat. Add 1/4 cup salt, then add the broccoli. Cook, stirring occasionally, until bright green and just tender, about 4 minutes. Use a spider or slotted spoon to transfer to a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking.
2. RESERVE the cooking water to use for the pasta. When broccoli is cool, using a salad spinner and/or paper towels, dry broccoli as much as possible without smashing it.
3. In the food processor, pulse the garlic until fine. Add the walnuts and pulse until they are in small pieces but not as small as sand. Add the basil, spinach, 2 Tablespoons of lemon juice. Pulse scraping the bowl often, until leaves are finely diced. Add the broccoli and quickly pulse until it is incorporated into the leaves but not turned to paste.
4. Slowly add the oil with the machine running.
5. Finish pesto with a quick pulse adding the cheese, lemon zest, and 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Pesto may be covered with plastic wrap and refrigerated at this point, until ready to serve.

Instructions for the Pasta

1. Use 1/2 to 1-pound pasta, such as medium shells or linguine. If you're making pasta for a salad I like to use the Gluten Free Vegan Pasta.
2. RESERVE 1/2 cup of the pasta water. Drain the pasta well and transfer to a large bowl.
3. While the pasta is hot, stir in the pesto. Use a generous 1/2 cup pesto for each 1/2 pound of pasta. If the mixture seems thick, moisten with the reserved pasta water or remaining lemon juice.
4. Season to taste with parmesan, salt and pepper and garnish with additional Black Walnuts.

Tip: The pesto will keep in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or if packed in Ziplock bags, it will freeze for use later.

One more customization idea! Try chilling the pasta and adding diced chicken, broccoli florets, diced tomatoes and/or other vegetables to create a delicious main dish pasta salad.