

## Basil Mint Pesto Pasta Salad

I use a lot of fresh herbs when I cook, and because they are so expensive, I've tried growing them over the years with not a lot of success. The one I'd like to grow lots of, but also always seems to turn out the worst, is basil. Basil has always been difficult for me to grow, and even when I buy it, it seems to go bad if I don't use it up within a day.

For some reason, I continue to try to grow basil, and this year, my efforts have paid off — I have two beautiful plants that are big and bushy. I've used the basil in almost everything, but my favorite use for lots of basil is making pesto.

Before I even knew what I was going to do with it, I made a big batch of pesto, using not only the basil that I grew, but some mint. Some almonds, garlic, lemon, and avocado oil, and I had pesto worthy of eating with a spoon.

Pasta is the obvious choice for pesto, but since it's hot and humid here, I wasn't looking for a hot dish. Luckily, pasta is great cold too, so I made a big batch of pasta salad that we munched on for days.

My fridge was kinda sparse when I made this, but luckily most of the flavor comes from the pesto. I added some roasted peppers and it was just enough for some texture and flavor. If I made it again, and planned ahead, I'd probably add some olives or sun dried tomatoes. You could also easily add some shredded chicken for protein if you like, and some cubes of fresh mozzarella would be pretty good here too. Pretty much anything you like with pesto, you could add to this and make it your own creation.

## Basil Mint Pesto Pasta Salad

Serves 4

Prep time: 20 minutes

### Ingredients:

#### Pesto:

2 cups packed basil leaves  
1/2 cup packed mint leaves  
1/2 cup toasted almonds  
2 cloves garlic  
Juice and zest of 1 lemon  
1/2 cup Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil  
Colima Sea Salt

#### Pasta Salad:

1/2 pound pasta, such as macaroni, penne, or cavatappi  
1/2 cup chopped roasted peppers

Colima Sea Salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

Directions:

For the pesto, put the basil, mint, almonds, garlic, and lemon in a food processor. Pulse until chopped and then slowly stream the oil in. Season to taste with the Colima Sea Salt.

Cook the pasta to al dente according to the package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water. Toss with the pesto and peppers, and season with salt and pepper. Serve at room temperature or chill and eat cold.