



Makes 14 cups
Preparation Time: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

¼ cup raw cashews

2 cups packed fresh basil + a few leaves for garnish

1 cup sliced leek

2 tablespoons nutritional yeast

2 teaspoons lemon juice

⅓ teaspoon sea salt + salt to taste

2 to 4 tablespoons unsweetened, unflavored plant-based milk

12 oz. dry whole grain rotini or penne pasta

2 15-oz. cans no-salt-added navy beans, rinsed and drained (3 cups)

1 medium yellow summer squash, halved lengthwise and sliced ½ inch thick

8 baby pattypan squash (1" to 2" diameter) or 1 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise and sliced

3 cups whole cherry or grape tomatoes (any color)

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Basil-Leek Pesto Pasta with Cherry Tomatoes and Summer Squash

Take pesto pasta to new heights with this summery dish, which pairs smoky grilled cherry tomatoes and yellow summer squash with creamy basil pesto. This fresh dish explodes with flavor and has a slightly different take on pesto; cashews stand in for pine nuts, raw leek adds subtle onion notes, and nutritional yeast gives it that decadent cheesy taste. A tender medley of grilled baby pattypan squash, summer squash, and cherry tomatoes gets a boost from a splash of vinegar before going on the grill. Season with salt and pepper, and serve for a quick and easy meal the whole family will enjoy.

Tips

Gluten-Free: To make this gluten-free, use gluten-free rotini or penne pasta.

Stovetop: To cook the veggies on the stovetop, use a skillet or stovetop grill pan.

For more inspiration, check out these tasty ideas:

- [Green Bean Pasta with Cashew Pesto](#)
- [Broccoli Pasta Salad with Red Pepper Pesto](#)
- [Linguine with Mushroom Pesto](#)
- [Creamy Chickpea Pasta with Peas](#)

By Ellen Boeke

- 1 To make basil-leek pesto, in a small saucepan combine cashews and 2 cups water. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer 10 minutes; drain. Place cashews in a food processor; add 2 cups packed fresh basil, leeks, nutritional yeast, lemon juice, and ⅓ teaspoon sea salt. Process until nearly smooth, adding unsweetened, unflavored plant milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, to reach desired consistency, stopping to scrape down sides of processor as needed.
- 2 Prepare pasta according to package directions. Reserve 1 cup cooking water. Drain pasta. Return pasta to pot. Add beans and pesto; toss to coat, adding enough of the reserved cooking water to make creamy.
- 3 Meanwhile, in a bowl toss together yellow squash, pattypan squash cut into wedges, tomatoes, and vinegar; season with salt and pepper. Place vegetables in a grill basket over medium; grill, covered, 8 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. (Alternatively, cook on the stove over medium in a grill pan or skillet, adding water, 1 to 2 tablespoons at a time, as needed to prevent sticking.) Toss vegetables with pasta. Garnish with fresh basil leaves.