

Zucchini Noodles with Spinach Pesto, Feta, and Sunflower Seeds

Want pasta in the middle of the hot summer without having to turn on the stove? Here it is.

2 cups chopped spinach

½ cup pine nuts

2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped

1 large lemon, zested and juiced

½ cup grated Gruyère

1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

3 large ripe zucchini

¼ cup crumbled feta cheese, crumbled (we prefer French feta)

¼ cup sunflower seeds

Making the pesto. Add the spinach, pine nuts, garlic, and lemon zest and juice to the bowl of a food processor. Whirl them up until everything is broken down into small pieces. Add the Gruyère and run the processor. You should have a great-smelling paste by now. With the food processor running, slowly drizzle in the oil until you have rich green pesto.

Slicing the zucchini. Grab a zucchini with your left hand. Using a vegetable peeler, grate long, even strips of the zucchini until you have reached the fleshy center and can peel no longer. (You can eat the outer skin, of course.) Repeat with the remaining zucchini.

Assembling the dish. Toss the zucchini noodles so they are all separated. Plop a couple of tablespoons of pesto into the noodles and toss them together. If you want more pesto, add a tablespoon at a time. You don't want to overpower the zucchini. When you have dressed the noodles to your liking, add the feta and sunflower seeds. Toss and serve.

Feeds 4

FEEL LIKE PLAYING?

I love these zucchini noodles for a quick, hot-weather meal. You can toss them in some extra-virgin olive oil in a hot pan, dollop on some tomato sauce, and sprinkle them with Parmesan.