

SUZANNE BROWN



SUMMER™



Basil

Used in Italian classics like pesto and pizza, Asian dishes like Pad Thai and basil beef.

TIPS:

6-8 hours of sunlight each day.
Water regularly, but don't over-water.

When your plant begins to produce flowers, pinch them off to encourage leafy growth.

To harvest, pinch or cut the leaves off from the top, or if you need whole stems, cut just above a pair of leaves.

If you want to dry your basil for winter cooking, hang small bunches upside down in a dry, well-ventilated room for about a week.

You can also freeze leaves by placing small batches in airtight bags and placing in the freezer.

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Homemade Pesto

4 cups fresh basil leaves, well packed

4 cloves garlic, lightly crushed and peeled

1-cup pine nuts or walnuts (or a combination of the two), lightly toasted if you prefer.

1 1/2 cups freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano or Pecorino cheese (or a combination of the two)

1 - 1 1/2 cups olive oil

Salt and pepper, to taste

Place basil leaves, garlic and nuts in food processor and process until finely chopped.

Add cheese and pulse until combined. While machine is still running, slowly add olive oil

and salt and pepper. Store pesto in an airtight container with a thin coating of olive oil on top

to keep the sauce from turning brown. Pesto will keep well in the refrigerator for about a week.

If you want to freeze batches of pesto, omit the cheese; you can add it once it's thawed.

Makes about 3-1/2 cups