[Recipe] The Best Gluten-Free Creamy Roasted Red Pepper Pesto Pasta

by LAUNIE KETTLER

The Best IBS Pasta Recipe You'll Ever Make

When you think of simple and quick dinners, this should jump to the top of your “to make” list. It’s deceptively flavorful for something with so few ingredients. It’s smoky from the peppers and salty from the parmesan. There’s also a hint of creaminess from the nondairy cream.

As a bonus, it’s absolutely stunning too.

You can purchase roasted red peppers in the store, but making them yourself is a snap! Just throw them in a hot oven until they blister, and let them steam in a paper bag for a few minutes. And with the weather turning colder, who doesn’t want an excuse to turn the oven on?

Also, making them yourself means that you get to control the flavorful base of this wonderful meal. Bonus: Your kitchen will smell amazing!

Red peppers don’t just tickle your olfactory senses though.

They are low in calories and high in vitamin A, which is wonderful for its high level of antioxidants. Vitamin A also keeps skin hydrated and youthful. The health benefits don’t stop there though! This powerful little vitamin helps the heart and eyes along with other vital organs.

Red peppers also have high levels of vitamin C, which helps skin to retain its dewy glow.

Also, their red color comes from capsaicin, which helps control bad cholesterol. Capsaicin is also good for controlling diabetes and overall helps to ease pain and inflammation. (And it gives this gorgeous pesto its lustrous hue!)

Adding more health benefits to the mix is the parmesan. This tangy little-aged cheese has the lowest amount of lactose of all the cheeses. This means it’s easy on the digestive system. Also, it’s loaded with protein! Just one ounce of parmesan has 40 percent of the daily recommended amount of calcium. Oh, and it’s delicious. So very, very, delicious.

So, when you’re looking for a fast and quick meal that will make your kitchen smell like a slice of heaven, reach for some red peppers.

Creamy Roasted Red Pepper Pesto Pasta

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

- 2 large red peppers, halved lengthwise
- 2 cups fresh basil (plus additional basil for garnish)
- 2/3 cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup shredded parmesan
- ¼ cup non-dairy cream or milk
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon garlic-infused oil (optional)
- 1 lb. gluten-free pasta

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Place red peppers cut side down on a large, rimmed baking sheet.
3. Roast for 20 minutes.
4. Flip the peppers, and roast for an additional 10-15 minutes or until skin is lightly charred.
5. Place the peppers in a paper bag, and let them steam for 10 minutes.
6. Using paper towels, wipe the skins off.
7. Remove seeds, and roughly chop the peppers.
8. Combine the peppers, basil, nuts, parmesan, cream, and oil, in a food processor fitted with a metal blade, or a blender.
9. Process the pesto until smooth.
10. Cook pasta according to package directions, and drain.
11. Toss pasta with the pesto in a large bowl, and garnish with basil.
12. Serve immediately.

Photos by Launie Kettler.