

## **Manchego Walnut Pesto**

In all my years of pesto-making, it never occurred to me to use any cheese but Parmesan. I'd futzed with the nuts, the herbs, and the oils, but last week for the first time ever I switched up the cheese. Manchego produces a creamy pesto, one that, when thinned with a bit of cooking water, slides easily over your favorite pasta.

Makes 1-1/2 cups

4 cups loosely-packed basil leaves  
1 cup walnuts  
4 medium garlic cloves, roughly chopped  
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt  
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
1 cup shredded Manchego cheese

Place the basil, nuts, garlic, salt and pepper in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse 5 times. Turn the machine on and slowly stream in the olive oil through the feed tube. Turn the machine off, scrape down the sides. Process about 5 seconds longer, or until emulsified. Transfer to a medium bowl and stir in the cheese. Tweak seasoning to taste.

Use right away, thinned with a little pasta cooking water.

(Pack leftovers into small containers, cover with a film of olive oil, and refrigerate or freeze for future use.)