

PASTA SALAD WITH PESTO

Serves 8 to 10

This salad is best served the day it is made; if it's been refrigerated, bring it to room temperature before serving. The pesto can be made a day ahead—just cook the garlic in a small saucepan of boiling water for 1 minute.

2 medium garlic cloves, unpeeled

Table salt

1 lbs farfalle (bow-tie pasta)

1/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

3 cups packed fresh basil leaves (about 4 ounces)

1 cup packed baby spinach (about 1 ounce)

3/4 cup pine nuts (3 3/4 ounces), toasted

2 tablespoons juice from 1 lemon

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 1/2 ounces Parmesan cheese, finely grated (about 3/4 cup), plus extra for serving

6 tablespoons mayonnaise

1 pint cherry tomatoes, quartered, or grape tomatoes halved (optional)

1. Bring 4 quarts water to a boil in a large pot. Add the garlic to the boiling water and let cook for 1 minute. Remove the garlic with a slotted spoon and rinse under cold water; set aside to cool. Stir 1 tablespoon salt and the pasta into the boiling water and cook, stirring often, until the pasta is just past al dente. Reserve 1/4 cup of the pasta cooking water, drain the pasta, toss with 1 tablespoon oil, spread in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet, and cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes.

2. Peel and mince the garlic or press it through a garlic press. Process the garlic, basil, spinach, 1/4 cup of the nuts, lemon juice, pepper, remaining 1/4 cup oil, and 1 teaspoon salt in a food processor until smooth, scraping down the sides of the work bowl as necessary. Add the Parmesan and mayonnaise and process until thoroughly combined. Transfer the mixture to a large serving bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to assemble the salad.

3. Toss the pasta with the pesto, adding the reserved pasta water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the pesto evenly coats the pasta. Fold in the remaining 1/2 cup nuts and the tomatoes (if using). Serve passing extra Parmesan separately.