

Want to take a walk on the wild side? It can be pesto-time year round if you know which edible "weeds" to harvest. Substitute these mineral-rich, free, and tasty WILD greens in your traditional basil pesto! After mixing up hundreds of batches of this easy recipe with folks of all ages, I am confident it is a delicious and accessible introduction to the delight of foraging, connecting us with Nature's abundance, and diversifying our diet. As always, be completely sure of your plant identification: when in doubt, leave it out.

*Green Blessings~
"Planty" Kim*

PLANTY KIM'S FAMOUS WILD GREENS PESTO

Ingredients:

2-3 medium garlic cloves

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup nuts or seeds (walnuts, pecans, pine nuts, almonds, sunflower, pumpkin...)

3 cups loosely packed greens (combo of seasonal yummy weeds—see list below)

$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup extra virgin olive oil

1 TBSP lemon juice

1 TBSP ume plum vinegar (or sea salt to taste)

1 TBSP nutritional yeast (I prefer this to parmesan cheese for a dairy-free option)

Preparation:

1. Blend garlic and nuts in food processor until coarsely chopped.
2. Add remainder of ingredients to food processor and blend till desired smoothness. Yields approximately one cup.
3. Eat on crackers, mixed into pasta, smeared on a frittata or fried egg sandwich, spread on nori rolls or pizza, get creative!
4. Any leftovers will keep in the fridge for a week or more. I like to triple the recipe and freeze some Wild Green Pesto in 4 ounce glass mason jars.

WILD GREENS of the NC Piedmont in Winter/Spring (to name a few): chickweed (*Stellaria media*), winter cress (*Cardamine hirsuta*), wild lettuce (*Lactuca* spp.), sow thistle (*Sonchus* spp.), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), wild garlic (*Allium vineale*), yellow dock (*Rumex crispus*), wide-leaf plantain (*Plantago major*), cleavers (*Gallium aparine*), catbriar shoots (*Smilax* spp.), violet (*Viola* spp.), wood sorrel (*Oxalis* spp.), resourceful people's pepper (*Lepidium campestre*), dayflower (*Commelina* spp.), and more!

WILD GREENS of the NC Piedmont in Summer/Autumn (to name a few): lambsquarter (*Chenopodium album*), purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*), galinsoga (*Galinisoga parviflora*), perilla (*Perilla frutescens*), ox-eye daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), self heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), corn salad (*Valerianella radiata*), wood-nettle (*Laportea canadensis*), lady's thumb (*Persicaria maculosa*), common mallow (*Malva neglecta*), honewort (*Cryptotaenia canadensis*), spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana*), and more!

Cultivated Greens can be added to the mix if desired:

parsley, cilantro, stinging nettle, lemon balm, thyme, rosemary, oregano, and of course, basil...