

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! Get to know the unique qualities and flavor of each plant (mild, tangy, spicy, bitter, or even sweet) so you can decide what proportions to use in your recipe to meet your taste buds' pleasure. 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 them out. Please see my safe and sustainable foraging guidelines at AbundanceHealingArts.com.

*Green Blessings~
"Planty" Kim*

PLANTY KIM'S FAMOUS WILD GREENS PESTO

Ingredients:

- 2-3 medium garlic cloves, cultivated or wild (field garlic bulbs, *Allium vineale*)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ 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 (or if you're lucky, hickory nut or acorn oil)
- 1 TBSP lemon juice (trifoliate orange fruit—don't plant!--can sub, or tangy oxalis)
- 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 1.5 cups.
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. I like freeze any extra in 4 or 8 ounce glass mason jars—great way to preserve your wild greens.

WILD GREENS of the NC Piedmont in Winter/Spring (to name a few):

chickweed (*Stellaria media*), winter cress (*Cardamine hirsuta*), creasy greens (*Barbarea verna*), wild lettuce (*Lactuca spp.*), sow thistle (*Sonchus spp.*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), field garlic (*Allium vineale*), just a few yellow dock leaves b/c better cooked (*Rumex crispus*), plantain (*Plantago spp.*), cleavers (*Gallium aparine*), catbriar shoots (*Smilax spp.*), violet (*Viola spp.*), wood sorrel (*Oxalis spp.*), resourceful people's pepper (*Lepidium virginicum*), ox-eye daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), self heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), tender young mulberry leaves (*Morus spp.*), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), 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 (*Galisoga parviflora*), perilla (*Perilla frutescens*), self heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), corn salad (*Valerianella radiata*), wood-nettle (*Laportea canadensis*), lady's thumb (*Persicaria maculosa*), common mallow (*Malva neglecta*), spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana*), and more!

Cultivated Greens can be added to the mix if desired:

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

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