

Lemon-Basil Sorbet

¼ c loosely packed sweet basil (about 18 1½ -inch leaves)
1 c. water
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1 c. plus 2 Tbsp. sugar
Zest of 2 lemons
1 c. fresh lemon juice (about 6 lemons)
1 Tbsp. vodka

Purée basil leaves with 1 c. water in a blender or food processor. Blend very well until leaves are superfine. Strain leaves through a fine strainer, pressing all water from leaves, then discarding leaves.

Combine 1 c. water and sugar. Mix until sugar is completely dissolved.

Combine basil water, sugar water, lemon juice, lemon zest and vodka and chill in refrigerator overnight or until mixture is below 40°F. Freeze in sorbet maker.

Classic Basil Pesto

Makes 6 servings

2 cups packed fresh basil leaves	½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 garlic cloves, minced	½ cup grated pecorino or Romano cheese
½ cup pine nuts, lightly toasted	¾ tsp. salt, if needed
1¼ cups extra-virgin olive oil	

Place basil, garlic and cooled nuts in a food processor and process 15 seconds. With machine on, pour oil through feed tube in a steady stream until almost 1 cup of oil has been used. With machine still running, add cheeses. Add as much of the remaining oil as is needed to reach the thickness desired. Taste and season with salt, if needed.

Adapted from *365 Easy Italian Recipes* by Rick Marzullo O'Connell

Chilled Cucumber Yogurt Soup

Makes 6 servings

4 c. cucumber, peeled, seeded and chopped	Several fresh mint leaves
2 c. water	1 Tbs. honey
2 c. plain low fat yogurt	1½ tsp. salt
1 clove garlic	¼ tsp. dill weed, dried or ¾ tsp. fresh
Green onion tops or fresh chives for garnish	

Purée all ingredients except green onions or chives in blender. Chill thoroughly. Garnish.

From *Herbal Harvest Collection* by The Herb Society of America South Texas Unit.

Dill Vinegar Salad Dressing

½ c. white wine vinegar	2 tsp. agave nectar or sugar
¼ c. packed fresh dill	½ tsp. paprika
½ c. salad oil	½ tsp. dry mustard
2 clove garlic	¼ tsp. salt

Purée all ingredients except green onions or chives in blender.

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Honey Mint Butter

Makes approximately 3 cups.

1 lb. unsalted butter, softened	1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 c. honey	Zest from 2 large oranges
½ c. chopped mint	¼ c. chopped pecans

Blend butter and honey together. Mix in rest of ingredients.

Variation: Use lemony herbs like lemon balm, lemon basil or lemon verbena and add lemon or lime zest.

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Green Bean, Mint and Feta Salad

Makes 8 servings as a salad

1½ lbs. fresh green beans, cut in half crosswise	½ tsp. minced garlic
4 qt. boiling water	¼ tsp. freshly ground pepper
¾ c olive oil	Salt to taste
½ c. packed fresh mint leaves, finely chopped	1 c. chopped red onions
¼ c. white wine vinegar	1 c. feta cheese
	1 c. toasted walnuts or pecans

Cook green beans until crisp tender in boiling water, about 4 minutes. Drain well and plunge into ice water to stop cooking. Drain well and pat dry. Make dressing with oil, mint, vinegar, garlic and pepper. Blend in food processor or blender. Arrange beans in bowl. Sprinkle with onions and cheese (and nuts optional). Toss with dressing before serving.

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Cilantro Pesto

Makes about 1 cup pesto

2 cups packed fresh cilantro leaves	½ cup pecans, lightly toasted
2 garlic cloves, minced	½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 tsp. lime zest	1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbsp fresh lime juice	¾ tsp. salt, if needed
¼ of a small jalapeno, seeded	

Place all but cheese and oil in a food processor and process 15 seconds. With machine on, pour oil through feed tube in a steady stream most of oil has been used. With machine still running, add cheese. Add as much of the remaining oil as is needed to reach the thickness desired. Taste and season with salt, if needed.