

OLD MAN'S KALE PESTO PASTA CARBONARA

I am STILL fascinated with pesto and all things related. My interest in carbonara sealed the deal with this one. It is based on "OLD MAN's Basic Kale Pesto Pasta", but turns it into a full meal, protein and all. This is another one that is GREAT for advanced meal prep. I don't know how it freezes though; I ate it all before I got around to freezing it!

20210530 (Sunday): For the love of God, don't be like me and forget the lime, roma's, and onions! They really put this dish on the next level.

INGREDIENTS

Qty.	Unit	Item
1	16 oz. Pack	Regular Cut Bacon
1	2 oz. Tin	Anchovies
1	-----	Medium to Large Lime
3	-----	Extra Large Eggs
~1 ½	Lb	Kale Bunches (including stems and ribs)
6	Qt.	Water
1	TBSP	Morton's Kosher Salt
AR	-----	Ice, Ice, BABY!
½	Cup	Unsalted, Shelled, Dry Roasted Peanuts
¼	Cup	EVO of choice
1	TBSP	EVO of choice
1/3	Cup	Water
1	Good Sized Clove	Garlic
4	-----	Medium Roma Tomatoes
1	-----	Vidalia or Sweet Onion
AR	TBSP	Water
12	Oz.	No. 8 Spaghetti
2	TBSP	Butter
AR	-----	Fresh Ground Black Pepper

As far as the bacon goes, I am still on the Kunzler kick

If you get the pre-cut Kale greens, you will only need about 10.8 oz to 15.1 oz. A 12 oz. bag should work nicely

Pasta... I used to use angel hair pasta almost exclusively, but inspired by Carla Music's disdain for angel hair pasta, I have recently started trying bigger pastas. You know what? I REALLY like the No. 8 spaghetti! Don't have it? I am pretty sure any pasta would work here

If your water is funky, use bottled or distilled water

Insert standard disclaimer about salt here

SPECIAL TOOLS

- Spider
- Food Saver (or similar vacuum sealer)
- 1 quart vacuum seal bag
- Sous Vide machine

PREPARATION – UP TO ONE WEEK BEFORE

BACON CRUMBLES

- 1) Reposition two racks in your oven to the center-most positions
- 2) Heat oven to 200 deg. F
- 3) Break out two ½ sheet pans and two ½ sheet cooling racks and place one rack in each pan
- 4) Split the bacon between the two pans
- 5) Place the bacon in the oven and set a timer for 60 minutes
- 6) At 60 minutes, pull the bacon and flip
- 7) Put the bacon back in the oven, but swap the pans between the oven racks that they were on and rotate the pans 180 deg. so that the side that was previously towards the front of the oven is now towards the back
- 8) Set a timer for 60 minutes
- 9) At 60 minutes, pull the bacon. At this point, it may be cooked to your liking, so if it is, don't go any farther, but I generally go to at least 3 hours
- 10) If you decide to go on, flip the bacon. If not, skip to step 14
- 11) Put the bacon back in the oven, but swap the pans between the oven racks that they were on and rotate the pans 180 deg. so that the side that was previously towards the front of the oven is now towards the back
- 12) Set a timer for 60 minutes
- 13) At 60 minutes, pull the bacon
- 14) CAREFULLY (it will be fragile) remove the bacon to paper towels and put the cooling rack / sheet pan back in the oven
- 15) CAREFULLY (it will be fragile) pat excess grease from the bacon
- 16) Slice the bacon into very thin strips along the short axis.
- 17) Slice into very small pieces along the long axis
- 18) Continue to cut at various angles until you get the size crumble you are looking for
- 19) Put in a Tupperware container, label with the date, and put in the fridge until you need bacon crumbles
- 20) Pull the pan from the oven and let cool until handleable
- 21) Pour the bacon fat into a small jar through a fine mesh strainer. Use a silicon spatula to scrape all of the fat down towards the jar
- 22) Cover the jar, label with the date, and put in the fridge until you need bacon fat

PASTURIZED EGGS

- 1) Check Sous Vide water and replace if necessary
- 2) Heat the Sous Vide machine to 135 deg. F
- 3) If you are using farm fresh eggs, wash with soap and water and rinse well
- 4) Place the three eggs in the 1 quart vacuum seal bag space as far apart as possible
- 5) Pull a vacuum until the bulk of the air is out of the bag and the plastic is pressed up against the eggs, BUT be careful to not pull the vacuum so long that it crushes the eggs
- 6) Once the Sous Vide machine reaches temperature, add the egg pouch. Use a rack, weights, etc to ensure that the egg bag stays below the water line. Add water as required to cover the egg bag
- 7) When the Sous Vide machine recovers temperature, set a timer for 2 hours
- 8) Once the 2 hour timer has gone off, rinse the egg bag under cold water
- 9) Pat the egg bag dry and put in the fridge until needed

PREPARATION - UP TO ONE WEEK BEFORE OR DAY OF [I]

- 1) Add 6 quarts of water and 1 TBSP kosher salt to a large pot [ii]
- 2) Heat water to boiling
- 3) While water is boiling, weigh [iv] the kale, then rinse and pat dry
- 4) Remove the ribs/ stems from the kale [iii]
- 5) Weigh the kale [iv]
- 6) Prepare an ice bath in a large bowl
- 7) Setup a ½ sheet cooling rack in a ½ sheet pan
- 8) Once water has reached a rolling boil
 - a. Add a small batch of kale to water and boil for 30 seconds
 - b. Immediately transfer the kale to the ice bath using the spider
 - c. Use the spider to submerge the kale under the water
 - d. Pick the kale out of the ice bath and GENTLY squeeze out excess water back into bowl
 - e. Spread the kale over the ½ sheet cooling rack
 - f. Add ice to the ice bath as required
 - g. Repeat for the rest of the kale
- 9) Remove heat from the water and cover the pot with a lid
- 10) Place the anchovies in a single layer on a strainer over a 1 quart measuring cup
- 11) Allow the anchovies to drain for about 5 minutes, but do not pat dry
- 12) Rough chop the anchovies
- 13) Break off one large clove of garlic from a head. Remove the skin and tips and mince. This does not have to be fine as it is going in the food processor
- 14) Add ½ cups peanuts, ¼ cup + 1 TBSP EVO, 1/3 cup water, 1 garlic clove, and anchovies to food processor bowl
- 15) Give it a few pulses to get it going, then process until well blended
- 16) Crack the 3 pasteurized eggs in a small bowl and whisk until well incorporated
- 17) Add the eggs to the food processor bowl
- 18) Give it a few pulses to get it going, then process until well blended
- 19) Add kale a little bit at a time to the food processor
 - a. Give it a few pulses to get it going, then process until well blended

- b. Add 1 TBSP of water at a time if it gets too thick [v]
 - c. Scrape down the sides of the food processor bowl as required
 - d. Repeat for the rest of the kale
- 20) Add bacon crumbles and pulse until evenly distributed, but not pureed
- 21) Remove the pesto from the food processor
- a. If you are not making the pasta the same day, put in a Tupperware container and put in the fridge until needed
 - b. If you are making the pasta the same day, put the pesto in a bowl and cover until needed

PREPARATION – DAY OF

- 1) If you are making the pasta the same day as the pesto, return the water used to blanch the kale to a rolling boil. If not
 - a. Add 6 quarts of water and 1 TBSP kosher salt to a large pot [ii]
 - b. Heat water to boiling
- 2) Weigh out 12 oz. of pasta
- 3) Cook pasta to al dente according to the pasta directions [vi], stirring occasionally with a wood spoon
- 4) Reserve at least 2 cups of pasta water then drain the pasta
- 5) Reduce the pot heat to low
- 6) Add 2 TBSP butter to the pot and let melt
- 7) Return pasta to the pot and reduce heat to very low
- 8) Mix the pasta and butter until well incorporated
- 9) Add ~¼ portion of the pesto and ~¼ cup pasta water and stir with wood spoon until well incorporated
- 10) Repeat step 7 until all pesto mixed into pasta
- 11) Stir in additional pasta water 2 TBSP at a time until you get the consistency you are looking for
- 12) If you add a little too much pasta water, continue to heat the pesto pasta on very low uncovered until you get the consistency you are looking for
- 13) Mix in the juice of one lime
- 14) Remove heat and cover
- 15) Rinse and dice the Roma tomatoes
- 16) Rinse and dice the Vidalia onion
- 17) Plate and sprinkle with fresh ground black pepper
- 18) Garnish with the diced Roma's and Vidalia's
- 19) ENJOY!!!

CLOSING THOUGHTS

HOORAY!!!

NOTES

- i. I made mine the day of, but it took a total of about 2 hours from start to finish. The pesto supposedly stores fairly well for about a week in the fridge, so I think it is something that can be done before hand
- ii. My 7 quart pot was a perfect fit for this
- iii. Tearing with your hands works just fine for this!
- iv. This step is optional. I am putting it in for future use
- v. You want it smooth, but not watery. I think I like it a bit on the thicker / drier side, but do what you like!
- vi. 10 minutes in my case

PICTURES

