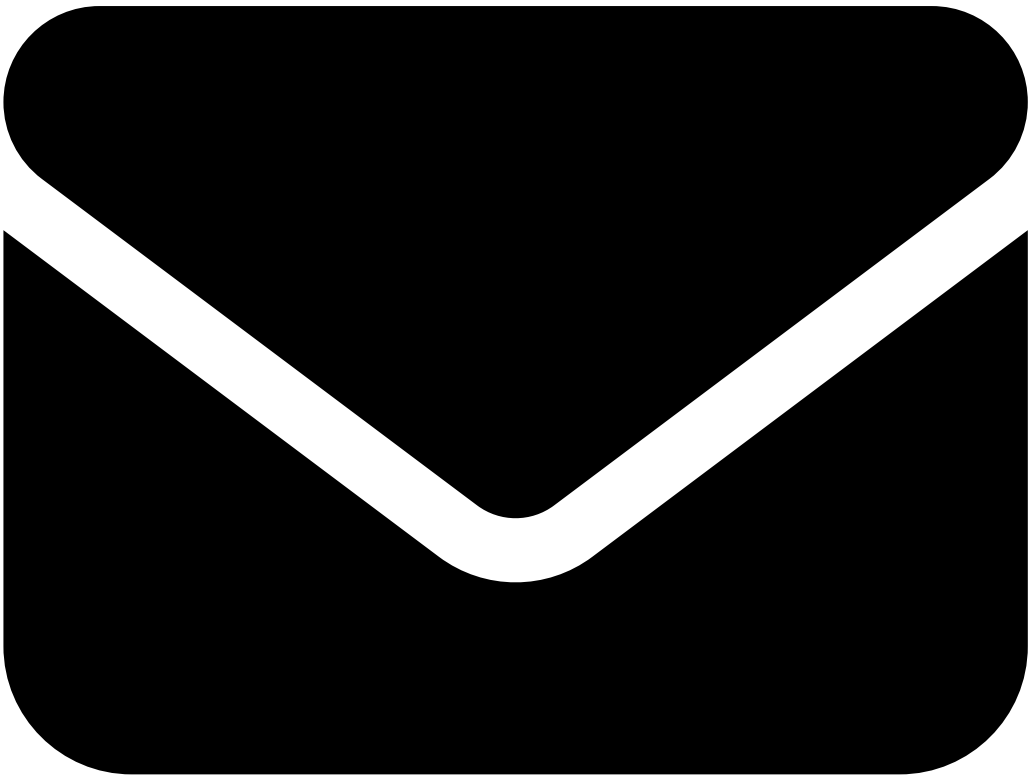
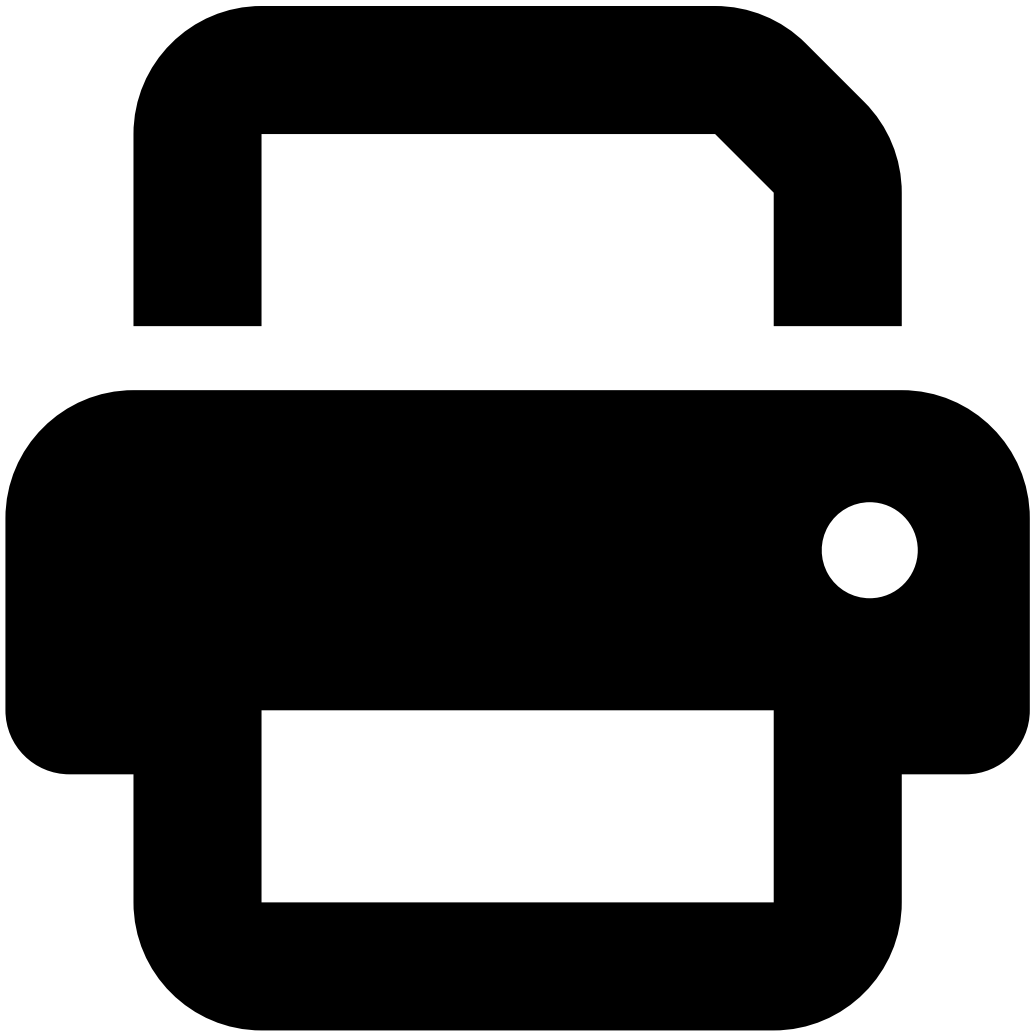
Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta

Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta This post may contain affiliate links, that help support this blog. If you make a purchase through these links, I may earn a commission—at no cost to you. For more information read my disclosure policy.



SMS



Fresh lemons are one of my favorite ingredients to cook with during the summer. Every year, my lemon tree produces more lemons than I can use. This Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta is one of my favorite ways to enjoy them.

I served this pesto with **busiate**, a traditional pasta from Sicily. Its twisted shape holds the sauce beautifully. If you can’t find busiate, use fusilli, casarecce, or linguine.

This recipe is different from classic basil pesto. Fresh lemon zest and lemon juice take center stage. Pistachios add a rich, nutty flavor. Parmesan cheese, garlic, and extra virgin olive oil bring everything together.

I made the pesto with a mortar and pestle. This traditional method creates a rustic texture and great flavor. If you prefer, you can use a food processor instead.

After the pesto is mixed with hot pasta, add a little reserved

pasta water. The starchy water helps create a smooth, silky sauce. It also helps the pesto coat the pasta evenly.

This easy pasta recipe is fresh, bright, and full of Sicilian flavor. It’s perfect for busy weeknights, summer dinners, or anytime you’re craving a simple Italian meal.**Helpful Tips**

Before you begin, here are a few tips to help you make the best lemon pistachio pesto pasta.

- **Use organic lemons.** Since you’ll be using the zest, organic, unwaxed lemons will give you the freshest flavor.
- **Save the pasta water.** The starchy water helps create a smooth, silky sauce that coats the pasta beautifully.
- **Use good olive oil.** This recipe has only a few ingredients, so quality makes a big difference.
- **Choose your method.** A mortar and pestle creates a rustic pesto with great texture. A food processor makes a smoother, creamier sauce.
- **Adjust the consistency.** If the pesto is too thick, stir in a little pasta water or olive oil until it reaches your desired consistency.
- **Serve right away.** This pesto tastes best while it’s fresh and the pasta is still warm.

Storage

Store leftover pesto in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to **4 days**. Pour a thin layer of extra virgin olive oil over the top before sealing to help keep it fresh.

If you’ve already mixed the pesto with pasta, refrigerate the leftovers for up to **3 days**. Reheat gently with a splash of water or olive oil to loosen the sauce.

Ways to Use Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto

This fresh, citrusy pesto is delicious in many ways. Try it:

- Tossed with your favorite pasta
- Spread on crostini or toasted bread
- Served with grilled shrimp, salmon, or white fish
- Spooned over grilled or roasted chicken
- Drizzled over roasted vegetables
- Spread on sandwiches or panini
- Stirred into creamy risotto
- Served as part of an antipasto platter

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use almonds instead of pistachios?

Yes. Blanched almonds are the traditional choice in many Sicilian recipes. Pistachios give the pesto a richer flavor and a beautiful green color.

Can I make this pesto without cheese?

Yes. The cheese adds richness, but the pesto is still fresh and flavorful without it.

What pasta shape works best?

Short pasta shapes like busiate, fusilli, and gemelli hold the pesto well. Linguine is another great choice.

Can I make the pesto ahead of time?

Yes. Make the pesto up to two days in advance. Store it in the refrigerator with a thin layer of olive oil on top to help keep it fresh.

More Italian Pasta Recipes You'll Love

If you enjoyed this Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta, be sure to try these favorites from the blog:

- Authentic Cacio e Pepe
- Spaghetti alla Gricia
- Spaghetti Puttanesca
- Pasta e Fagioli
- Creamy Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

I'd Love to Hear From You!

If you make this Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta, I'd love to know what you think! Leave a comment below and let me know your favorite way to use this bright, fresh pesto. If you enjoyed the recipe, a □□□□□ rating helps others discover it and supports my blog. Happy cooking!!!

Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta

This Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta is a fresh and vibrant Italian dish made with lemon zest, lemon juice,

pistachios, Parmesan cheese, garlic, and extra virgin olive oil. Inspired by the flavors of Sicily, this simple pesto is tossed with pasta for a creamy, flavorful meal that tastes like summer. Traditionally made with a mortar and pestle, the pesto can also be prepared quickly with a food processor. Perfect for a weeknight dinner, entertaining, or anytime you want a taste of authentic Italian cooking.

- 2 medium organic lemons (zest and juice)
- 1/2 cup shelled unsalted pistachios
- 1 garlic clove
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4-5 fresh basil leaves
- salt and pepper to taste

For the Pasta

- 12 oz. your favorite pasta
- 1-11/2 cups reserved pasta water
- Extra Parmesan for serving
- Chopped pistachios , Fresh basil ,Lemon zest for garnish

1. ## Make the Pesto

   Using a mortar and pestle, crush the pistachios with the garlic, basil, and a pinch of salt until a coarse paste forms. Add the lemon zest and continue grinding. Stir in the Parmesan, then slowly drizzle in the olive oil while working the mixture until combined. Add the lemon juice and season with black pepper and additional salt if needed.

   Alternatively, combine all of the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until smooth, adding the olive oil gradually.

2. ## Cook the Pasta

   Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta until al dente according to the package directions. Before draining, reserve 1 cup of the pasta water.

3. ## Toss Everything Together

   Transfer the pesto to a large serving bowl. Add the hot pasta and begin tossing, adding reserved pasta water a little at a time until the sauce becomes smooth and glossy, coating every piece of pasta.

   Serve immediately with extra Parmesan, chopped pistachios, fresh basil, and a little lemon zest.

Main Course
Italian
Sicilian Lemon Pistachio Pesto Pasta