

Collard Green Olive Pesto

BY DANNY TOMA OF NAPLES, ITALY

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Yield Makes about 2 1/4 cups

Danny Toma of Naples, Italy, writes: "As an expatriate southerner working in Italy, I created this recipe to combine my Mississippi roots with my temporary Italian home."

This recipe makes a large quantity of pesto. Use half the pesto for 1 pound of cooked pasta and chill the rest in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Ingredients

1 3/4 lb collard greens
7 large brine-cured green olives (2 1/4 ounces), pitted
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1/3 cup water
1/2 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
Scant 1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 oz finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (1/2 cup)

Preparation

Bring a 6- to 8-quart pot of salted water to a boil. Meanwhile, cut stems and center ribs from collard greens and discard. Stir collards into water in batches, then simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 15 minutes. Transfer collards with tongs to a colander to drain, gently pressing on greens to extract excess water. (If making pasta, reserve water in pot for cooking pasta.) Coarsely chop collards.

Blend olives and garlic in a food processor until finely chopped. Add collards, water, vinegar, salt, cayenne, and pepper and pulse until finely chopped. With motor running, add oil in a slow stream. Turn off motor, then add cheese and pulse to combine.