

Doug's Pesto

Adapted from New Recipes from Moosewood Restaurant by The Moosewood Collective (1987)

2 ½ cups firmly packed fresh basil leaves

2 large garlic cloves

½ cup chopped almonds (or pine nuts)

¼ block of tofu (optional)

½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (1 oz.)

½ cup olive oil

Salt to taste

Blend all ingredients (but olive oil) in food processor or blender. Then, slowly add olive oil in a steady stream with motor running continuously.

Doug did not use the tofu in the last number of years in his batches of pesto that he would store in the freezer, using his basil harvest from each summer. However, it was a touch that made it smoother and whiter than if just the almonds were used. And this was a part of the original recipe he gave me.

One of my favorite memories is that Doug told me he had kept the motor of his blender running when he used the long handle of a wooden spoon to push the basil down to the blades. Accidentally, the spoon got caught in the blades and shards of the spoon got mixed in with the basil. I can imagine now his characteristic laugh as he told this story of this blunder that we all found funny in its 'oops' quality. The best part is that Justin remembers eating the pesto and finding big chunks of the wood in the dinner.