Quick Light Meals

Pesto Pasta with Caprese Salad

Here is another favorite summer meal that takes very little time to make. It can be made vegan; forgo the Parmesan cheese in the pesto or sub a vegan Parmesan. Toasted cashews make your pesto very creamy, so I use them for vegan pesto. Any toasted nut will work in pesto though.

Pesto Pasta

Pasta
3 bunches basil
1 bunch parsley
1 cup toasted nuts
3 cloves garlic (more or less depending on your taste)
Juice of one lemon
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
Olive oil
Salt and pepper

Boil a pot of water for pasta. I like a short noodle pasta like fusilli or torchietti. Add the rest of the ingredients, except for olive oil and salt and pepper, to a food processor. Purée while slowly pouring in the olive oil until you reach the consistency you like. Salt and pepper to taste. Stir into warm pasta.

Caprese Salad

Tomatoes
Fresh mozzarella or vegan cheese
Basil
Olive oil
Balsamic vinegar
Salt and pepper

Slice tomatoes and arrange them flat on a platter. I love to splurge on the delicious heirloom variety, like the ones pictured. Top with slices of fresh mozzarella and sprinkle with basil leaves, either whole or chopped, your preference. Drizzle with olive oil then lightly sprinkle with balsamic vinegar. Salt and pepper to taste.