

Helergon Kitchen

Pesto Pasta Salad with Tomatoes & Mozzarella

15 min Prep time	**10 min** Cook time	**25 min** Total time
4 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Italian** Cuisine

Ingredients

Main Ingredients

- [ ] 12 oz short-shape pasta (rotini or farfalle)
- [ ] 2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- [ ] 1 cup fresh mozzarella pearls
- [ ] 1/2 cup pine nuts, toasted
- [ ] 1 cup fresh basil leaves
- [ ] 2 cloves garlic
- [ ] 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- [ ] 2 tbsp lemon juice
- [ ] Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

For the Dressing

- [ ] 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 1 tsp honey (optional for a touch of sweetness)

Instructions

1. Cook the pasta in salted boiling water until al dente, about 8–9 minutes; drain and rinse under cold water to stop cooking.
2. While the pasta cools, toast the pine nuts in a dry skillet over medium heat until golden, then set aside to cool.
3. In a food processor, combine basil, garlic, toasted pine nuts, Parmesan, honey (if using), and a pinch of salt. Pulse while slowly drizzling in olive oil until a smooth pesto forms.
4. Transfer the pesto to a large bowl, stir in lemon juice, then fold in the cooled pasta, halved tomatoes, and mozzarella pearls.
5. Season with salt and pepper, give everything a gentle toss, and let the salad rest for 10 minutes to let flavors meld.
6. Serve chilled or at room temperature, perhaps with an extra drizzle of olive oil and a few fresh basil leaves on top.

Nutrition per serving

420 kcal	12 g	45 g	18 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- If the pesto seems thick, add a splash of pasta cooking water to loosen it.
- Use ripe, heirloom tomatoes for best sweetness.
- For a heartier version, add grilled chicken or roasted chickpeas.