

KALE PESTO WITH PIZZA OPTION

1 pound pizza dough – store bought
2 cups (8 ounces) mozzarella cheese – fresh or grated
1 cup lightly packed kale, chopped into small, bite-sized pieces
1 teaspoon olive oil
Optional garnishes: whatever you like, it your pizza

Kale Pesto (yields 1 ½ cups)

3 cups packed kale, preferably the Tuscan/lacinato variety, thick ribs removed and roughly chopped (about 1 small bunch)
¾ cup almonds (most traditional for this) pecans or walnuts – use what you have
2 tablespoons lemon juice (about 1 small lemon)
2 cloves garlic, depending on their size
1/2 cup grated cheese – (I prefer Romano, Parmesan is good too)
Salt & fresh
½ cup good quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Prepare your dough.

Pesto: In a food processor, add the garlic and nuts, process well. Add the kale and lemon juice, pinches of salt and fresh pepper, process. Then begin adding your olive oil while processing through the tube, add more than you think. Add lemon juice, garlic, salt and several twists of freshly ground black pepper. Turn on the food processor and drizzle in the oil and process until the pesto reaches your desired consistency, stopping to scrape down the sides as necessary. Add the cheese, process again and taste. Add more lemon juice, salt, pepper or more olive oil if necessary.

Prepare the pizza dough as directed. Top pizza with an even layer of pesto (you may end up with extra pesto, which would be great on pasta, toast or sandwiches. Sprinkle cheese over the top. Lastly, in a small bowl, toss 1 cup chopped kale with a little olive oil and a sprinkle of salt, lightly massage the kale then distribute the kale evenly over the top of the pizza.

Transfer the pizza to the oven. I like to bake it directly on parchment paper. It helps keep it crisp if you do not have a pizza stone. Bake until the crust is golden and the cheese on top is bubbly (about 10 to 12 minutes) depending on how you are cooking them. Keep a watchful eye. Slice and serve.