

Versatile Vegetable & Beet Green Pesto Salad

I often like to base my lunch or dinner options on a whim and on whats available in the garden, fridge or what looks great at the market. You can use fresh veggies, roasted veggies, or leftover veggies in this recipe. The bowl is your palate so have fun. This salad utilizes the greens of beet tops for the pesto but you can also use radish tops, dandelion greens, tender herbs or a combination. I use white beans in this recipe but feel free to use your favorite bean. You can serve alone or top with a grilled chicken breast.

For the salad:

4 cups of vegetables such as cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, cooked beets, blanched green beans, corn, tomatoes, cucumbers...

2 cups of hearty leafy greens such as kale or collards, julienned

1 15-ounce can white beans, drained

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar or white wine vinegar

For the pesto:

4 cups beet greens (about one bunch)

1/2 cup basil, parsley or cilantro

4 garlic cloves

1/4 cup chopped walnuts

1/2 cup grated parmesan (optional)

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/2 cup olive oil

1. Chop vegetables into bite size pieces and place in large bowl with hearty greens, beans and vinegar. Toss and set aside.

2. Place pesto ingredients except olive oil into a food processor. Process for 30 seconds. With the processor running, slowly pour in the olive oil until the pesto is thoroughly pureed.

3. Take about half of the pesto and fold into vegetable mixture. Continue adding pesto until desired consistency. You may have some pesto leftover so save in the fridge or freeze.

4. Serve and enjoy!

Time: About 20-30 minutes

Yield: About 6 servings