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## Zucchini Noodles + Red Pepper Pesto

### Ingredients:

3 zucchini  
1 fresh red chili pepper  
1 red pepper  
1 x 15.5-oz. can butter beans  
¼ cup unsalted cashews  
1 mozzarella ball (or a handful of mini ones)  
light olive oil  
2 portions of Red Pepper Pesto (*see below*)  
2 cups arugula

### Try This:

Add mini turkey meatballs—mix together 8 oz. ground turkey, 2 teaspoons garlic powder, 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley and the zest of ½ lemon. Season with salt and pepper. Roll into small tablespoon-sized balls. Place on a baking sheet and bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 15–20 minutes or until cooked through.

Trim the zucchini, then spiralize into long, thin strands (alternatively, shave into ribbons with a peeler, discarding the watery center.)

Cut the chili pepper in half lengthways and remove the seeds using a teaspoon, then finely dice. Remove the core and seeds from the red pepper, then slice into thin strips.

Drain and rinse the butter beans. Place in a bowl and mix through the chili pepper (to taste), red pepper, cashews, torn mozzarella and a splash of oil. Season.

To pack: Pile the zucchini noodles in one side of the lunchboxes and top with a dollop of pesto. Spoon the bean salad on the other side of the lunchboxes and top with arugula.



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### **Red pepper pesto**

Make the Green Pesto *below* but add 1 jarred roasted red pepper and 5 sun-dried tomatoes and omit the water and oil when blitzing.

Makes 4 Lunchbox portions

Pestos are perfect for using up leftover herbs, greens and nuts. Pine nuts are traditional but unsalted cashews will create a similar, creamy pesto.

#### **Ingredients:**

1 garlic clove (optional)  
1–2 oz. Parmesan  
40 fresh basil leaves  
½ cup pine nuts (or other nuts)  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
juice of 1–2 lemons

#### **Try this:**

- You can omit the Parmesan and use a splash of natural yogurt/almond milk for creaminess instead.
- Toasting the nuts will give a deeper color and flavor.
- Swap the basil for other soft herbs such as parsley/cilantro or use a mixture.
- Add a handful of arugula for pepperiness or spinach for a rich green flavor.
- Throw in a handful of seeds.
- Experiment with different cheeses—pecorino and Manchego both work well.
- Serve leftover pesto on toast topped with an egg at breakfast, or with crackers or raw slices of zucchini as a snack/starter.

Peel the garlic (if using). Turn on a food processor and drop the garlic on to the turning blades. Grate the Parmesan and add to the processor bowl along with the basil, pine nuts, oil and 3 tablespoons water. Blitz everything together for 2 minutes until broken down.

Add lemon juice to taste plus extra water, if needed, to reach your desired texture and flavor. The pesto should not be completely smooth but should run off the spoon like a thick sauce rather than a dip. Season well.

This can be kept in the fridge in an airtight container, covered with a thin layer of olive oil, for up to a week. It also freezes well for 3 months—place in ice-cube trays for individual portions and thaw before using.

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