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5-INGREDIENT KALE PESTO PASTA

SERVES 4 TO 6

Not including the kitchen staples of olive oil, salt, and pepper, this pesto is only five ingredients, but it rates 100 on the flavor scale! If you love simplicity, this dish is for you. If not, well, add some sun-dried tomatoes for an extra tangy punch.

1 pound **linguine**
4 cups (about 1 bunch) chopped **curly kale leaves**
½ cup **raw cashews** (see Tip, page 11)
½ cup **olive oil**
3 **garlic cloves**, minced
2 tablespoons **lemon juice**
1 teaspoon **sea salt**
Freshly ground **black pepper**
Crushed red pepper flakes (optional)

MAKE IT GLUTEN-FREE: Use gluten-free pasta.

Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook to al dente according to the package directions. Drain the pasta and return it to the pot, off the heat.

Meanwhile, in a food processor, combine the kale, cashews, olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, and salt and process until smooth. Season with black pepper.

Toss the pesto with the pasta. Portion onto plates and top each serving with a pinch of red pepper flakes, if desired.

TIP

Blending nuts with water is a technique I use often to make luscious, dairy-free creams that serve as a base for sauces, soups, or desserts. If you have a high-powered blender (see page 17), you can blend your nuts raw without any kind of soaking. If you do not have a high-powered blender, you can try using them raw, but if you have trouble, soak the nuts overnight or in boiling water for 10 minutes, then drain them before blending. This will soften them and ensure a silky-smooth cream once blended.

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