



Wild at Heart

Wild Garlic Pesto

Make a wild pesto from Wild Garlic!

From March to June, British woodlands are blanketed in wild garlic, fresh and perfect for picking and adding to your cooking throughout spring.



Wild garlic, native to Britain, grows in old woodlands across the country.

The leaves – called ‘ramsons’ - appear in March and are best picked young for adding to soups, sauces, or a curry, or for making a tasty pesto.

The delicate white flowers bloom from April to June – the flowers are also edible, and can be added to salads or sandwiches for a pungent tangy flavour.

Wild garlic is so abundant in the spring months that you can save yourself buying garlic through the season. You can also freeze the leaves to have fresh, wild garlic all throughout the year!

Wild garlic has a long history of being used in traditional medicine here in the UK. The leaves would be boiled and the garlicky water used as a disinfectant for wounds. Eating wild garlic, especially raw, is thought to lower cholesterol and blood pressure, ease indigestion and sooth breathing problems.



Sheffield & Rotherham

Guidelines for Foraging – think about nature, only collect things that are in abundance, only take what you need, leave plenty for wildlife, so as not to have a detrimental effect on the plant and the ecosystem.

All wild plants are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). It is illegal to dig up or remove a whole plant from the land on which it is growing without permission from the landowner or occupier.

When foraging wild garlic, there is usually a large abundance, but this still applies –only pick as much as you need, and as a rule of thumb, leave enough that someone else coming past wouldn't notice that someone had been and removed anything. Only pick the leaves or flowers, never uproot the bulbs in the wild.

A note on safety:

Before the flowers come through, wild garlic leaves look quite similar to Lily of the Valley, which is poisonous. When crushed, if it doesn't smell of garlic, don't eat it, and if in any doubt, don't eat it!

Wild Garlic Pesto recipe:

1. Wash 150g of wild garlic leaves, finely chop 1 garlic clove, and juice half a lemon.
2. Put the wild garlic leaves, chopped garlic, lemon juice, 50g grated parmesan and 50g pine nuts or walnuts into a food processor. Mix in 150ml olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
3. Blitz into a smooth paste.
4. Serve with chunks of bread, spread on herby scones, or mix into cooked pasta. Enjoy!



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Be wild, whatever your age

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