

Foraging - Wild Garlic Pesto Pasta

Recommended for ages 11 – 16+years old

Outdoor lesson foraging for wild garlic for our students increases their social, emotional wellbeing. The wild garlic is brought back to the catering classroom for preparation, producing wild garlic pesto which is served with pasta for student and staff lunch.

To forage for wild garlic you will need:

- Accessible outdoor environment where outdoor garlic grows.
- Gloves (used to pick the wild garlic)
- Bowl (to place wild garlic in once picked)
- Food processor.
- Saucepan.
- Ingredients: - Hazelnuts/Pine nuts, Basil, Oil and Pasta.

Step by step instructions for collecting Wild Garlic

Firstly you and your students should learn how to identify Wild Garlic. Wild garlic is an unmistakable plant - the garlicky smell alone can be a tell-tale sign!

Otherwise, look for rounded clusters of star-like, white flowers borne on straight green stems. Its leaves are grey-green, oval and narrow, and grow around the base of the stem.

However, take extra care in areas where Lilly-of the-Valley grows as the two plants have similar leaf shape and colour.

If in doubt, tear a leaf and smell it. If it smells of garlic- it is garlic.

Hygiene: when foraging outdoors ensure you/students wear protective gloves when harvesting the wild garlic, placing in storage container.

On returning to the catering classroom, ensure the wild garlic is thoroughly washed, removing any insects and soil.

Wild garlic is best used straight after picking as it contains highest level of nutrients.

If you are unable to prepare the leaves immediately, keep them refrigerated.

Wild garlic pesto recipe

Ingredients:

- 150g young wild garlic leaves and/ or young nettle leaves
- 50g Parmesan cheese
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1/2 lemon zest and juice
- 50g pine nuts, toasted

Equipment:

- a pestle and mortar or food processor plus additional ingredients,
- 150ml rapeseed oil

Method:

STEP 1

Rinse and roughly chop the wild garlic leaves.

STEP 2

Blitz the wild garlic leaves, parmesan, garlic, lemon zest and pine nuts to a rough paste in a food processor. Season and with the motor running slowly, add almost all the oil.

Taste, season and add a few squeezes of lemon juice.

Alternately, use pestle and mortar instead of the food processor and following the same steps as described.

STEP 3

Transfer the pesto to a clean jar and top with the remaining oil. Will keep in the fridge for two weeks.

Stir into cooked pasta and serve with rocket and lemon-juice.