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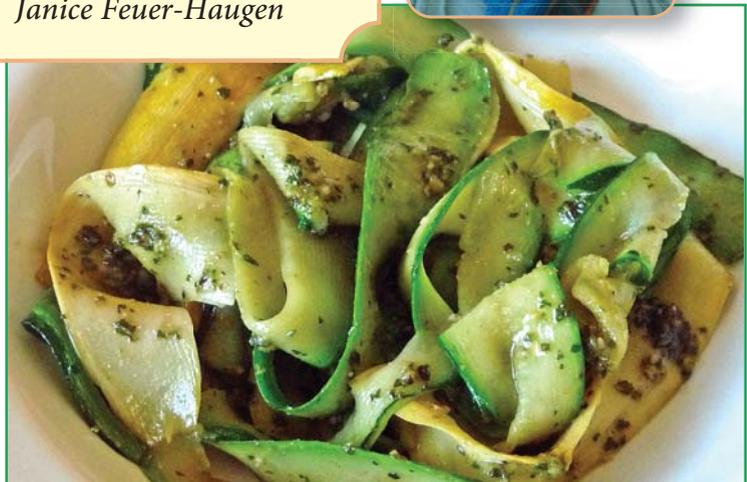


Summer Squash Ribbons *with Pesto*

NATURALLY DELICIOUS RECIPES • Janice Feuer-Haugen

WHEN YOU'RE AWASH IN SQUASH, *MAKE SUMMER SQUASH RIBBONS!*

Every summer finds farmers' markets and gardens awash (as in overflowing) with summer squash. Whether it's too hot to cook or too little time, let summer squash ribbons come to the rescue. With a jar of pesto in your fridge, easily made and fun to eat *Summer Squash Ribbons with Pesto* are ready to serve in just 15 minutes.



Relatively Speaking

Belonging to the *Cucurbitaceae* family of plants, summer squash are related to winter squashes, melons and cucumbers. Summer squash, unlike winter squash and melons, are harvested when immature, while the rind is still tender and edible. Summer squash, like cucumbers and melons, are best eaten fresh and shortly after harvest.

Although each summer squash variety often has a distinct shape, color, size and flavor, they share a number of things in common:

- All parts of summer squash, including the flesh, seeds and skin, are edible.
- Many summer-squash varieties produce edible flowers.
- Summer squash, being fragile, cannot be stored for long periods of time unless frozen.



Health Benefits

Virtually fat free, summer squash are low in calories and rich in dietary fiber. The flavonoid antioxidants like zeaxanthin, carotenes and lutein in summer squash may help slow down aging, prevent disease and eradicate harmful free radicals from our bodies. Summer squashes are high in mineral content including good amounts of iron, manganese and phosphorus. Plus their

potassium, zinc and magnesium assist in moderating blood pressure levels, healthy blood sugar regulation, and counteracting the effects of consuming excess sodium.

Tips for Choosing & Storing Summer Squash

- ♥ For the best flavor and texture choose firm cylindrical shaped summer squash 1–1½ inches in diameter with clear, shiny, unblemished skin.
- ♥ Choose scalloped-edged patty pans around 3 inches in diameter.
- ♥ Very small baby squash look great though often taste rather bitter.
- ♥ The huge squashes, the ones that get overlooked in the garden, have tough skin, hard seeds and stringy flesh, making them less than ideal for eating.
- ♥ Use care when handling summer squash, as their fragile skin can easily be punctured, leading to decay.
- ♥ Store unwashed summer squash in an airtight container in the refrigerator for about a week.

How to Make Summer Squash Ribbons

The width and length of your summer squash determines the size of your squash ribbons. So use the longer summer squash varieties rather than the short, round patty pans for your squash ribbons. Longer varieties include green and yellow zucchini, yellow crook-neck and, my favorite, Italiano Largo with its ridged skin

and firm texture. An incredibly sharp “Y” peeler (or a regular vegetable peeler) quickly and easily creates *Summer Squash Ribbons*. Here’s how:

1. Trim off a thin slice from both ends of the squash.
2. Place the squash flat on a cutting board. Holding onto the top of the squash with one hand, use the Y peeler in your other hand to peel off squash ribbons.
3. Peel off 3–4 ribbons on one side. Rotate the squash 90 degrees and peel off another 3–4 ribbons. Continue around the squash until you come to the heavily seeded core.



4. When enjoying the squash fresh, it’s okay to make squash ribbons from the core. However, when lightly sautéing the ribbons, reserve the squash ribbons from the core to eat fresh, as they quickly become mushy when heated.



begin preparing the summer squash ribbons.

Use both yellow and green squash for an especially lovely presentation. Though, of course, using just one color of squash also works.

Makes: 4 entrée servings

Active Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: About 30 minutes
(if you need to make pesto)

INGREDIENTS

2 pounds about 1–1 ½ inch wide summer squash, such as yellow squash and zucchini

1 tablespoon olive oil or avocado oil

¼ cup pesto of choice at room temperature

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Trim off a thin slice from both ends of the squash.
2. Place the squash flat on a cutting board. Holding onto the top of the squash with one hand, use a “Y” peeler (or a regular vegetable peeler) in your other hand to peel off squash ribbons.
3. Create 3–4 ribbons the entire length of the squash. Turn the squash 90 degrees and peel off another 3–4 ribbons. Continue peeling and turning until you come to the heavily-seeded center core. (You can make squash ribbons from the core to use fresh in salads. However, when lightly sautéed, they quickly become mushy.)
4. Heat the oil in a 12-inch sauté pan over medium-high heat. When the oil shows ripples, add the squash ribbons. After 1 minute, use a pair of tongs to gently toss and turn the squash. Continue cooking the squash ribbons for another 3–3 ½ minutes until softened, turning them every 30 seconds or so.
5. Turn off the heat. Add the pesto in dollops to the squash ribbons in the pan. Use the tongs to toss the ribbons and evenly distribute the pesto. Season lightly with salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

6. *Summer Squash Ribbons with Pesto* are best served hot.

SUMMER SQUASH RIBBONS WITH PESTO

Serve gluten-free *Summer Squash Ribbons* as you would serve pasta: as an entrée, as a separate course, as a side dish. Toss them with your favorite pesto, whether home-made or purchased. I used my own basil pesto in these photos. If you need to make pesto, do so before you

JANICE’S COOKING CLASSES IN BOZEMAN

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