

PESTO SALMON WITH MEDITERRANEAN COUSCOUS

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Pesto Salmon with Mediterranean Couscous

I had the privilege of studying abroad in Italy during the fall semester of my junior year in college. Hands down, one of the best experiences of my life. The food, people and sites are truly something one must experience! While I was there, I got to take a cooking class with an Italian chef, and if manners weren't important to me, I would have licked every plate clean. One of my favorite dishes he made was a pesto salmon pasta. I had had pesto countless times, and salmon countless times, but I never had those two together, and it was divine! Needless to say, it was the first dish I made my family when I returned to the US. Now when I make salmon, I rarely do anything other than pesto. It's SO easy, and SO good. I also love Mediterranean food, so a Mediterranean couscous salad is one of my favorite things to pair with it. I hope you enjoy this as much as I do!

- Butter (room temperature)
- Jar of Pesto (You can totally make your own pesto, but for simplicity sake, I buy the jar.)
- Fresh Salmon Fillets
- Fresh Lemon Juice
- Salt
- Pepper
- 2 Cups Dried Pearl Couscous (prepared according to the package instructions)
- 1/3 Cup Feta Cheese
- 1/4 Cup Red Onion (Diced)
- 1/3 Cup English Cucumber (Chopped)
- 1/3 Cup Grape or Cherry Tomatoes (Quartered)
- 1/3 Cup Kalamata Olives (Sliced)
- 2 Cups Packed basil leaves
- 1 Garlic Clove
- 1/2 Cup Olive Oil
- 2 Tbsp. Red Wine Vinegar
- 3/4 tsp. Kosher Salt
- 2 Tbsp. Fresh Lemon Juice

1. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Season your salmon fillets with salt and pepper.
3. Add the pesto sauce to top of salmon, making sure to spread it over the entire fillet.
4. Add a squeeze of fresh lemon juice over your fillets.
5. Top each fillet with 1 Tbsp. of butter.
6. Depending on the thickness of your salmon, the cooking time will vary, but probably take approximately 15 minutes.

Mediterranean Couscous Salad and dressing

1. Combine all the ingredients for the basil dressing (basil, garlic, olive oil, red wine vinegar, Kosher Salt and lemon juice) and blend until smooth in a blender. Set aside.
2. Prepare the couscous, and once finished cooking, spread out on a sheet pan to cool.
3. Once couscous has cooled, rinse the couscous under warm water to separate and toss in a bowl with all the other ingredients and the basil dressing.

This dish is super versatile, in that you can add whatever ingredients you'd like! Also, I don't really measure out the mixed in ingredients -- I just eyeball it.

Enjoy!