

Foodnity Recipes

Chicken Pesto Pasta Salad – Easy 25-Minute Recipe

10 min Prep time	**15 min** Cook time	**25 min** Total time
4 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Italian** Cuisine

Ingredients

Main Ingredients

- [ ] 12 oz tri-color rotini pasta
- [ ] 2 boneless chicken breasts, seasoned and grilled
- [ ] 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- [ ] 1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
- [ ] 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts
- [ ] 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

For the Pesto

- [ ] 2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
- [ ] 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- [ ] 2 tbsp pine nuts (reserve extra for garnish)
- [ ] 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- [ ] 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- [ ] 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- [ ] Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to boil, add the rotini, and cook until al dente; drain, rinse briefly with cool water, and set aside.
2. While the pasta cooks, heat a skillet over medium-high heat, add a drizzle of oil, and sear the seasoned chicken breasts until golden and cooked through, about 5-6 minutes per side. Let rest, then slice into bite-size strips.
3. Prepare the pesto: in a food processor combine basil, pine nuts, garlic, Parmesan, lemon juice, salt, and pepper; pulse, then stream in olive oil until smooth and glossy.
4. In a large bowl, toss the cooled pasta with the pesto, then fold in the sliced chicken, cherry tomatoes, olives, and toasted pine nuts. Adjust seasoning with a pinch more salt or lemon if needed.
5. Transfer to a serving platter, garnish with extra Parmesan and a drizzle of olive oil. Let the salad rest for ten minutes so flavors meld, then enjoy.

Nutrition per serving

420 kcal	28 g	38 g	18 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- If the pesto feels thick, thin with a splash of reserved pasta water.
- For a cooler salad, chill the tossed pasta for 15 minutes before serving.
- A handful of fresh arugula added just before serving adds peppery brightness.