

Grilled Vegetables with Nutty Lemon Avocado Oil Sauce

As the weather warms up, grilling season begins. With several big grilling holidays coming up (not to mention just the days and nights when grilling out is just easier) it's easy to rely on the standard grill favorites. You know — hot dogs, burgers, and steaks, paired with scrumptious sides of your favorite mayo and starch loaded "salad."

Unfortunately, grilling season also comes with other challenges, such as the need to look good at the beach, which too many standard backyard barbecue dishes don't help. So, my plan this year is to start off the season right, without skimping on flavor. Yes, it's possible, and once you taste this herby, lemony, nutty sauce over your favorite grilled veggies, you'll know what I'm talking about.

Let's first talk about the sauce. It's a nutty blend of almonds and pumpkin seeds blended with fresh herbs, lemon, and avocado oil. It's not blended smooth, so it has a bit of crunch factor, but the velvety avocado oil adds to the mouthfeel, and lemon and herbs give it a fresh summery flavor that is amazing with charred veggies.

For the veggies, I used a few peppers, some asparagus, and even Brussels sprouts, but you can use whatever you have or like.

Zucchini and eggplant would be nice, and even sweet potatoes would take nicely to this sauce. You could also use it on meat or fish. The sauce itself is gluten-free, dairy-free, and Paleo friendly, and it's full of healthy fats, which compliment the veggies well.

Ingredients:

Your favorite grilling vegetables — such as onions, peppers, zucchini, asparagus, etc.

Extra virgin avocado oil for grilling

Sauce:

3/4 cup toasted almonds

1/4 cup toasted pumpkin seeds

1 small shallot, minced

1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves

2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Juice and zest of 1 lemon

1/2 cup extra-virgin avocado oil

Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

Directions:

Preheat a gas or charcoal grill over medium high heat. Prepare your veggies for grilling, cutting into pieces and putting smaller

pieces on skewers if necessary. Brush with avocado oil and grill until charred and tender. Remove from grill.

To make the sauce, put all of the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until nuts are finely chopped, but not pureed. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Spoon the sauce over top of the vegetables to serve. Alternatively, you can chop all of the veggies into bite sized pieces and toss with the sauce.