

Roasted Vegetable Orzo

Roasted veggies are a favorite of mine. When roasted in a high heat oven, almost any vegetable transforms into something magical — crispy, caramelized, and slightly sweet. It's also a pretty easy, minimal cleanup side dish for any meal.

But the best part is that you can use them as part of another meal as well, like this super easy orzo. If you're not familiar, orzo is a pasta that looks kind of like rice. It cooks pretty fast, and can take on all kinds of flavors, like you'll see here.

You'll start by roasting your favorite veggies. I used asparagus, peppers, and zucchini, but you can use almost anything here, so pick your favorite and toss with some Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil and seasoning. The seasoning blend I chose for this one is the Everyday Blend, a versatile citrusy blend I got from Ava Jane's Kitchen. It's not spicy or overpowering, but instead enough to add some zip to your veggies.

While those are cooking, cook your orzo and make the dressing. The dressing is nothing fancy, just some Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil, lemon juice, and parsley. At the end, you'll toss it all together with a bit of fresh mozzarella.

Besides the veggies, there are tons of variations you can do here. Use whatever herbs you want, change the cheese (feta or goat cheese would be delicious here) or add cooked chicken or shrimp to make it more of a filling meal. I like to eat it warm, but it's good cold straight from the fridge, kind of like a pasta salad. It's a great side to take to a cookout, and now that it's barbecue season, you need a stockpile of great recipes so you don't have to rely on potato salad.

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Serves 4

Prep time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

Vegetables:

1 tablespoon Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil
3 cups chopped mixed vegetables of your choice — asparagus, peppers, zucchini, etc.
1 teaspoon Everyday Blend seasoning

Orzo:

1/2 cup fresh chopped parsley
1/4 cup Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil
Juice of 1/2 lemon
2 cups cooked orzo pasta
4 ounces mozzarella, chopped

Colima Sea Salt, to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Toss the vegetables with Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil and Everyday Blend seasoning.

Roast for 20-30 minutes until lightly caramelized.

Whisk the Ava Jane's Kitchen Avocado Oil with the lemon juice, garlic, and parsley.

While vegetables are roasting, toss the orzo ingredients in a large bowl. Add veggies when done. Toss well, and season with Colima Sea Salt and fresh ground pepper.

Serve warm.