

Asparagus with Walnut-Orange Pesto and Citronette

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Servings: 8

salt

2 pounds medium asparagus, thick ends snapped off

2 oranges

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

3 cloves garlic

2 tablespoons sugar

1 cup plus 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons freshly ground Pecorino Romano cheese

freshly ground black pepper

Bring eight quarts of water to a boil in a large pasta pot. Set a large ice bath nearby.

When the water comes to a boil, add two tablespoons of salt. Add the asparagus to the boiling water and cook until just softened, 1 minute. Using tongs, transfer the asparagus to the ice bath. When it has cooled, drain and set aside.

To make the pesto: Juice one of the oranges, removing any seeds, and set the juice aside for later. Chop what is left of the juiced orange (pith, rind, interior fruit and all) along with the remaining orange (again removing any seeds), and place the chopped orange in the bowl of a food processor.

Add the walnuts, garlic, sugar, one cup of the olive oil and 1/4 cup of the pecorino to the processor, and blend until smooth. Transfer the pesto to a bowl, and season it with salt and pepper to taste. If it's too thick, add up to 1/4 cup of the reserved juice to loosen it up. (This pesto will last for one week in the refrigerator if the surface is covered with a layer of oil.)

To make the citronette: Place the reserved orange juice and the remaining 1/4 cup of olive oil in a small bowl, and whisk to form a thin emulsion.

To plate: Arrange the cooked asparagus on a serving platter. Spoon the walnut-orange pesto over the stems. Drizzle the orange citronette over all. Sprinkle with the remaining two tablespoons of pecorino and serve.

Per Serving (excluding unknown items): 315 Calories; 31g Fat (87.0% calories from fat); 2g Protein; 8g Carbohydrate; 1g Dietary Fiber; 0mg Cholesterol; trace Sodium. Exchanges: 0 Grain(Starch); 0 Lean Meat; 0 Vegetable; 0 Fruit; 6 Fat; 0 Other Carbohydrates.