

GRILLED ZUCCHINI RIBBONS WITH PESTO AND WHITE BEANS

Prepared by: Ron Innes

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1 1/4 to 1 1/2 pounds zucchini, thinner longer ones are ideal here

Olive oil

Coarse or kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

1 lemon

1 3/4 cups (from 1 15-ounce can) small-to-medium-sized white beans, drained (I used – Goya's Great Northern beans)

1 garlic clove, peeled

A 2-ounce bundle of basil (this is the small clamshell size at most groceries)

1 to 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar

Coarsely grated parmesan, to taste

Prepare the zucchini: Trim ends and cut zucchini the long way into 1/4-inch strips. I use a mandoline for this but a knife works too. Spread out strips on a large tray and brush lightly with olive oil and season well with salt and pepper.

On a grill (I use the full heat, but have a dinky, small grill; you might find a more moderate heat better here) or a grill pan, grill zucchini in a single layer until grill marks appear underneath, then flip over and repeat the same on the other side. Transfer zucchini back to platter and squeeze lemon juice over it.

Meanwhile, in a food processor or blender, combine basil and garlic with a few good pinches of salt and a few grinds of black pepper until chopped. Drizzle in olive oil until it blends smoothly; you'll want about 4, sometimes 5, tablespoons. Add 1 tablespoon vinegar and blend until well-mixed; taste and add more vinegar, up to 1 more tablespoon, to taste. Season to taste.

Combine beans with about 2/3 of the dressing in a small bowl. In a larger bowl or serving platter, pour half of dressed beans in the bottom. Arrange grilled zucchini on top, twisting and turning it so that it looks extra ribbony. Spoon remaining beans in the spaces. Drizzle the remaining dressing over the platter, to taste.

Finish with a light blanket of parmesan and eat whenever you're ready. As assembled, it keeps well at room temperature for an hour, giving you time to do everything else.

Ron's Notes: "Don't use Bush's beans, use Goya. Be careful of the garlic. I would make this again."

