
PAN-FRIED TROUT WITH ARUGULA, WALNUT, AND HONEY PESTO

I always associate fresh trout with spring. Trout seems to taste better early in the season when the waters are still cold. As a youngster I loved to go fishing with my friends—I couldn't wait to get home and cook what we caught, maybe with some sautéed new potatoes from my parents' garden. If we fished in the evening, then I'd be sure to have pan-fried trout with my eggs the next morning. I like to simply season trout with salt and pepper and sear it in butter and olive oil, but the arugula pesto is wonderful here too—arugula has a distinctively nutty, peppery flavor, which the honey and walnuts balance well with.

SERVES 4

4 (4–5 oz) trout fillets, skin on
2 Tbsp unsalted butter
1 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

PESTO
2 cups fresh arugula
½ cup Italian parsley
¼ cup chopped walnuts
1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
1 Tbsp honey
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Season the fillets with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Heat a 10-inch nonstick frying pan on medium-high heat. Add the butter and olive oil and let the foam subside. Place the fillets into the pan flesh side up and cook for 3 to 4 minutes. Turn over the fillets and cook for another 2 to 3 minutes or until the flesh just begins to flake when tested with a fork.

While the trout is cooking, process the pesto ingredients in a food processor or blender. Don't make the sauce too smooth—some texture should remain. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Plate the trout, one fillet per person, and top with the pesto.

