

## **Ribbony Asparagus Salad with Lemon and Parmesan**

When it is as fresh as you can get it now, there's no reason to cook it, not when you can turn it into a pile of ribbons and twist them around like spaghetti on your fork.

There are no exact measurements in this recipe. Everything is to taste, so taste as you go along to make sure you're getting all the Parmesan, nutty, and lemony flavors you want.

1/4 cup pine nuts or sliced almonds, toasted\* and cooled  
1 pound FRESH asparagus, rinsed  
1 lemon, halved  
Olive oil  
Coarse salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
1 to 2 ounces Parmesan cheese

No need to snap off the tough ends of your asparagus. Lay a single stalk on its side on a cutting board. Holding onto the tough end, use a good vegetable peeler (a Y-shaped peeler is easiest, but I've used a standard one successfully) to shave off thin asparagus ribbons from stalk to tip, peeling away from the tough end in your hand. Discard the tough ends once you're done peeling. Gently pile your ribbons on a medium-sized serving platter. Squeeze some lemon juice over the asparagus, drizzle it with a bit of olive oil and sprinkle it with salt and pepper. Toss gently and then use your peeler to shave curls of Parmesan right off the block, over the asparagus. Sprinkle with some toasted nuts. Repeat with remaining asparagus, a third of the remaining bundle at a time. Eat immediately.

\* I toast mine in a single layer on a baking sheet at 350 for 5 to 10 minutes. It's really important, especially with pine nuts, that you stay close and toss them frequently because they love to burn, but if you move them around a bit, you can get a wonderful, even coffee coffee color on them and an intensely nutty flavor. It makes even unfancy nuts taste amazing.