



**THE LAB**

Eight pages of things to make and do

**WARNING!**  
Wild garlic looks similar to a poisonous flower called lily of the valley but its smell is unmistakable. Crush the leaves to make sure it has a strong garlic scent.

# Forage and cook wild garlic pasta

Collect natural ingredients for this delicious, garlicky meal that serves four.

## What you need

- A tub or bag to collect the garlic
- Kitchen paper
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 6 tbsp sunflower seeds
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast (optional)
- Food processor or hand-held mixer
- 300g spaghetti or other pasta

## Instructions

- 1** First find your wild garlic. Head for a woodland or walk along a river bank with a grown-up and sniff the air – you'll smell the garlic before you see it. Follow your nose to its pungent leaves and white flowers, which will now be budding.
- 2** Check plants with the picture (left). You can also crush a leaf in your hand and smell it – there should be a strong garlic scent. Look for plants that haven't fully bloomed. Pick five or six handfuls of leaves, but spare plenty for the local wildlife.
- 3** Rinse the garlic leaves thoroughly and pat dry in kitchen paper. Pop them in a food processor, with lemon juice, olive oil, salt and sunflower seeds (and yeast, if desired). If you couldn't find enough leaves, add spinach and a garlic clove.
- 4** Pulse the ingredients until mixed thoroughly, scraping the sides when necessary. You should end up with a smooth, green, pesto-style sauce.
- 5** Cook pasta according to the packet instructions, scoop out three tablespoons of cooking water just before you drain. Mix the water with the pesto sauce, pour it over the pasta and serve hot.



A wild garlic plant.



Garlic pesto makes a delicious dressing for a variety of dishes.

## How does it work?

Wild garlic is one of the UK's tastiest plants. The plants appear in March and you can harvest them until June, after which the leaves become too bitter to enjoy. You can eat the leaves and white flowers, but check you have the correct plant first. The long, smooth-edged leaves of wild garlic grow from the base of the plant. Lily of the valley looks similar when not in flower, but its leaves grow from the stem. Its white flowers look like little bells. The best test of all, though, is wild garlic's very obvious garlicky smell.

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