

***Roasted asparagus with cherry tomatoes, preserved lemon and pine nuts***

Makes 4 servings

1 cup mixed yellow and red small cherry tomatoes, cut in half

1 scallion—both white and green part, sliced into paper thin rounds

1 clove garlic, minced

½ teaspoon finely minced ginger, or grated on a fine microplane

¼ of a preserved lemon, pulp and pith removed and discarded, skin cut into ¼ inch dice

¼ teaspoon sugar

2 tablespoons chopped basil

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup + 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 pound asparagus

1 tablespoon toasted pine nuts

1. Preheat the oven to 450° F.
2. Put the tomatoes, scallions, garlic, ginger, preserved lemon, sugar and basil in a bowl. Add ¼ cup olive oil and toss well. Taste and adjust seasoning, adding salt and freshly ground black pepper if needed.
3. Trim the ends off the asparagus. I like to peel asparagus if the stalk is too thick. If you do peel them, remove only the lower stalk, leaving the tender head.

4. Lay the asparagus out on a baking sheet. Drizzle with the remaining olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roll the asparagus over several times to coat evenly. Roast 7 to 10 minutes, depending on the size of the asparagus. The thicker they are, the longer they will take. When done, they should be golden on one side, tender and slightly shriveled.
5. Transfer to a platter and spoon the tomato salad over the asparagus. Sprinkle with pine nuts.
6. Serve immediately.