

Basil and Cheese Dip

Put about 3 cups (lightly packed) washed basil leaves in a plastic bag or glass bowl with a cover. Microwave for about 30 seconds. Dump the hot basil from the bag into a blender. Add 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, 1/4 cup cool water, 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper. Process until finely pureed. (As a variation, you can add about 1/2 cup diced (1/4-inch) Gruyère cheese and stir well.) Serve with bagel chips, Melba Toast, or potato chips. The dip stays brilliant green and keeps for a few days in the refrigerator.

Makes About 1 Cup