INGREDIENTS

2 bunches fresh asparagus
plenty of good olive oil
salt and pepper
juice from two lemons

METHOD

Wash the asparagus thoroughly—especially the tips. They should be swished in a bowl of water to rinse out any sandy soil they held on to as they grew upwards.

Break off any tough ends of the asparagus by snapping them. To do this, put one hand at the very bottom of the stalk and slowly move the other hand up from the bottom, bending gently as you go. You will be able to feel where the stalk begins to bend and is ready to snap. This is the point where the woody, tough part of the stalk ends and the tender part begins. Snap off the tough bottoms and discard them.

Cut the tender parts of the stalks into a few pieces.

Put enough olive oil into a wide sauté pan or pot to cover the bottom. Turn the heat up to high, and when the oil begins to shimmer, toss in all the asparagus at once. Use tongs or a wooden spoon to stir fry until the stalks are still bright green and crisp, but tender. This will take about 2 minutes at the most, depending on the thickness of your stalks. You can taste them as you go, and when they are almost tender, but still quite crisp and crunchy, turn off the heat. (They will continue to cook a bit more from the residual heat.) Do not overcook!

Pour in the lemon juice and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Toss to combine and enjoy right away.