

Quinoa Tabouleh

Ingredients:

1 cup black or red quinoa, rinsed
2 cups water
1 pint cherry tomatoes
1 red pepper, chopped
1 cucumber, seeded and finely diced
1 bunch curly parsley, chopped
10 mint leaves, finely chopped
one small red onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
juice of two lemons
1/4 cup olive oil (more to taste)
3 cloves of garlic
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
salt and pepper to taste
splash of white wine vinegar or red wine vinegar

Directions:

1. To make the quinoa, first rinse one cup of quinoa in a mesh colander under running water. That washes away the bitter saponins on the surface.
2. Dump the rinsed quinoa into a medium sized pan on the stove. Add two cups of water and bring the mixture to a boil.
3. Cover and simmer for fifteen to twenty minutes, until the water is absorbed. Once it's done, remove from heat and fluff the quinoa with a fork.
4. Let the quinoa cool, then toss in the rest of your ingredients.
5. Add more olive oil, salt or pepper, and/or vinegar to taste.
6. If you have time, cover and let the salad chill in the refrigerator for a few hours or overnight, to let the flavors blend together.

Optional Ingredients: Feta (we use Mermaid Farm)

Southwest Quinoa Salad

Ingredients:

1 teaspoon vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
3/4 cup uncooked quinoa
1 1/2 cups vegetable broth
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup sautéed winter squash, cubed
2 (15 ounce) cans black beans, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro

Directions:

1. Heat the oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat.
2. Stir in the onion and garlic, and sautéed until lightly browned.
3. Mix quinoa into the saucepan and cover with vegetable broth. Season with cumin, cayenne pepper, salt, and pepper.
4. Bring the mixture to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes,
5. Stir in winter squashed into the saucepan, and continue to simmer about 5 minutes until heated through.
6. Mix in the black beans and cilantro.

Optional Ingredients: corn kernels (optional)

What is Quinoa? pronounced kēnwä

While quinoa is usually considered to be a whole grain, it is actually a seed, but can be prepared like whole grains such as rice or barley.

Quinoa is my favorite whole grain for three reasons: First, it takes less time to cook than other whole grains - just 10 to 15 minutes. Second, quinoa tastes great on its own, unlike other grains such as millet or teff. Add a bit of olive oil, sea salt and lemon juice and - yum! Finally, of all the whole grains, quinoa has the highest protein content, so it's perfect for vegetarians and vegans.

Quinoa provides all **9 essential amino acids**, making it a complete protein. Quinoa is a **gluten-free** and **cholesterol-free** whole grain, is **kosher for Passover**, and is almost always organic.

Culinary ethnologists will be interested to know that quinoa was a staple food for thousands of years in the Andes region of South America as one of just a few crops the ancient Incas cultivated at such high altitude.

Cooking quinoa:

Prepare quinoa as you would prepare rice. Cover it with water or vegetable broth and boil until soft, about 15 minutes. Or, place 1 part quinoa to 2 parts water in your rice cooker.

Nutritional content of quinoa:

According to CalorieCount, 1/3 cup of cooked quinoa has 160 calories, 2.5 grams of fat, 3 grams of fiber and 6 grams of protein.

Scarlett Quinoa

The magenta color from the beets is gorgeous. It isn't necessary to peel the beets if you are using fresh young ones and they've scrubbed well.

Ingredients:

1 2/3 cups water
1 cup quinoa, thoroughly rinsed and drained
1/2 tsp salt
3/4 cup (about 1/2 lb) grated raw beets
1/3 cup minced parsley
1/4 cup scallion greens, finely chopped
3 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 cup lemon juice, freshly squeezed
salt and pepper

Directions:

1. Rinse the quinoa well under cold running water. When the water runs clear, it's rinsed.
2. Bring water or stock to a boil. Add quinoa and salt.
3. Return to a boil, cover, reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
4. Turn off the heat and let stand covered for 5 minutes.
5. While fluffing up the just-cooked quinoa, stir in the beets until all the grains turn scarlet.
6. Stir in the parsley, scallion greens, olive oil, 1/3 cup lemon juice and salt. Season to taste.
7. Serve warm or refrigerate until shortly before needed and bring to room temperature.

Add more lemon juice to perk up flavors if desired.