

Quinoa

Quinoa (pronounced KEEN-wah) is an ancient nutritious grain. The outer hull of quinoa contains a bitter resin called saponin. Quinoa must be rinsed thoroughly before cooking in order to remove this bitter coating.

QUINOA TABBOULEH

Traditionally, tabbouleh is made with bulgur, but this version calls for quinoa.

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| 1 cup (250 mL) water | 2 tbsp (25 mL) olive oil |
| 1/2 cup (125 mL) quinoa, thoroughly rinsed and drained | 1/2 cup (125 mL) diced seeded English cucumber |
| 2 tbsp (25 mL) fresh lemon juice | 1/2 cup (125 mL) diced seeded Roma tomatoes |
| 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt | 1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped fresh parsley |
| 1 clove garlic, crushed | 1/4 cup (50 mL) chopped fresh mint |

Bring water to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir in quinoa and return to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes or until tender. Transfer quinoa to a bowl and fluff with a fork. Cool to room temperature. Meanwhile, to prepare dressing, whisk together lemon juice, salt and garlic until combined. Gradually whisk in oil until blended. Add cucumber, tomatoes, parsley and mint to quinoa. Add dressing and toss to combine. Serves 4.

WARM QUINOA SALAD

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| 1 cup (250 mL) quinoa, thoroughly rinsed and drained | 1 tbsp (15 mL) olive oil |
| 2 cups (500 mL) chicken broth or water, divided | 1 cup (250 mL) diced zucchini |
| 1 cup (250 mL) plain yogurt | 1 cup (250 mL) diced dried golden Calimyrna figs or golden raisins |
| 1/4 cup (50 mL) slivered fresh mint | 1/2 cup (125 mL) diced seeded Roma tomatoes |
| 2 tbsp (25 mL) honey | 1/4 cup (50 mL) finely chopped preserved lemon peel or 1 tbsp (15 mL) grated lemon peel |
| 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt | |

Place quinoa in a large frypan over medium heat and cook, stirring frequently, until quinoa is lightly toasted, about 7 – 9 minutes. Remove from heat. Bring 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) chicken broth to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir in quinoa. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed and quinoa is tender. Remove from heat and fluff quinoa with a fork; set aside. To prepare dressing, whisk together yogurt, mint, honey and salt until blended; set aside. Heat oil in same frypan over medium heat. Add zucchini and saute until tender, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in remaining 1/2 cup (125 mL) chicken broth, quinoa, figs, tomatoes and lemon peel. Add dressing and toss to combine. Serve immediately. Serves 6.

Cook's Note: Look for preserved lemons in Middle Eastern grocery stores. To make your own preserved lemons, wash 2 lemons and pat dry with paper towels. Cut each lemon lengthwise into 8 wedges. Pack wedges into a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Add 1/3 cup (75 mL) pickling salt and toss to coat. Pour 1/2 cup (125 mL) fresh lemon juice over lemons and salt. Cover jar and shake gently. The salt will not dissolve completely. Let lemons stand at room temperature for 7 days, shaking jar daily to redistribute lemons and salt. Refrigerate for up to 1 month, shaking jar occasionally. Makes 16 wedges.

To use preserved lemons, scoop and discard pulp out of as many wedges of preserved lemons as required. Finely chop lemon peel and use as directed in recipe.

QUINOA PILAF WITH VEGETABLES

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| 2 tbsp (25 mL) oil | 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) chicken broth |
| 1 cup (250 mL) quinoa, thoroughly rinsed and drained | 1/4 tsp (1 mL) freshly ground pepper |
| 1/2 cup (125 mL) diced celery | 1/4 cup (50 mL) toasted pine nuts |
| 1/2 cup (125 mL) diced red bell pepper | 2 tbsp (25 mL) thinly sliced green onion |
| 1/2 cup (125 mL) shredded carrot | 2 tbsp (25 mL) chopped fresh parsley |
| 1/4 cup (50 mL) finely chopped shallots | 1 tbsp (15 mL) fresh lemon juice |
| | 1 tsp (5 mL) grated lemon peel |

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add quinoa and cook, stirring frequently, until quinoa is lightly toasted and fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add celery, red pepper, carrot and shallots; sauté for 3 minutes. Stir in broth and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, until liquid is absorbed and quinoa is tender, about 20 – 25 minutes. Remove from heat. Let stand, covered, for 10 minutes. Fluff quinoa with a fork. Stir in pine nuts, green onion, parsley, lemon juice and lemon peel. Serve immediately. Serves 4 – 6.

QUINOA PORRIDGE

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| 2 cups (500 mL) milk | 1/8 tsp (0.5 mL) salt |
| 2 tbsp (25 mL) packed golden brown sugar | 1/2 cup (125 mL) quinoa, thoroughly rinsed and drained |
| 1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla | |
| 1/4 tsp (1 mL) cinnamon | |

Combine milk, brown sugar, vanilla, cinnamon and salt in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring frequently. Stir in quinoa. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring frequently, until most of liquid is absorbed and quinoa is tender, about 25 – 30 minutes. Serves 2 – 3.

CURRIED QUINOA AND LENTIL SALAD

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| 3 1/4 cups (800 mL) water | 2 tbsp (25 mL) water |
| 2 tsp (10 mL) curry powder | 2 tsp (10 mL) curry powder |
| 1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt | 1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt |
| 1 cup (250 mL) quinoa, thoroughly rinsed and drained | 1/8 tsp (0.5 mL) cayenne pepper |
| 1/2 cup (125 mL) dried red lentils, rinsed and drained | 2 tbsp (25 mL) oil |
| 1/4 cup (50 mL) white wine vinegar | 1/4 cup (50 mL) thinly sliced green onion |
| 2 tbsp (25 mL) tomato paste | 4 cups (1 L) torn young Swiss chard leaves or baby spinach |

Combine 3 1/4 cups (800 mL) water, 2 tsp (10 mL) curry powder and 1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Stir in quinoa and lentils; return to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand for 15 minutes. Transfer quinoa mixture to a bowl and fluff with a fork. Cool to room temperature. Meanwhile, to prepare dressing, whisk together next 6 ingredients (vinegar through cayenne pepper) until combined. Gradually whisk in oil until blended. Stir in green onion. Add dressing and Swiss chard to quinoa mixture and toss to combine. Serve immediately. Serves 6.

Safety Matters:

Leafy green or dense vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower and Brussel Sprouts should be soaked in water to dislodge dirt. Follow by rinsing thoroughly under cold running water.