

## Day 92 | Friday, 19 June 2020 From the Church Mouse

### What is quinoa?

In case you have not encountered quinoa yet, it is a pseudo cereal that grows near the Andes in South America. Pseudo cereal means that it is grain-like, but it's technically not a grass like wheat. Quinoa is pronounced KEEN-wah.

Quinoa is very nutritious—it is full of fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals, including manganese, magnesium and folate. Quinoa's health benefits are really too long to list here, but the key point is that quinoa is remarkably dense in nutrients, and worth including in your diet. You can buy quinoa in most grocery stores these days, usually in the health section or near the rice. You can also buy Quinoa online at Amazon.

**Here's the trick for perfectly fluffy quinoa:** Use twice as much water as quinoa, as usual, then cook *uncovered* until the quinoa has absorbed all the water. The cooking time will vary based on quantity.

Once the water is all absorbed, remove the pot from heat, cover it and let the quinoa steam for 5 minutes. That's when the quinoa pops open into fluffy quinoa perfection, and *that* is how to cook quinoa properly.

### Perfect Quinoa

- Prep Time: 2 mins Cook Time: 20 mins
- Total Time: 22 minutes Yield: 3 cups
- Category: Staple Method: Stovetop Cuisine: Peruvian

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 part uncooked quinoa (e.g. 1 cup quinoa—any color will do—you will end up with three times as much cooked quinoa)
- 2 parts water (e.g. 2 cups water)
- Salt, to taste (around 1/4 teaspoon salt per cup of dry quinoa)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the quinoa: Pour the quinoa into a fine mesh colander and rinse under running water for at least 30 seconds. Drain well. This

step removes any bitterness on the outside of the quinoa (caused by naturally occurring saponins).

2. Combine the rinsed quinoa and water in a saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, then decrease the heat a bit to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook until the quinoa has absorbed all of the water, about 10 to 20 minutes (small amounts of quinoa will be ready closer to 10 minutes; larger amounts between 15 to 20). Reduce heat as time goes on to maintain a gentle simmer.
3. Remove the pot from heat, cover, and let the quinoa steam for 5 minutes. This step gives the quinoa time to pop open into little curlicues, so it's nice and fluffy. Remove the lid and fluff the quinoa with a fork.

Season with salt, to taste, unless you're proceeding with another recipe as written.

**SERVING SUGGESTIONS:** Stir a drizzle of olive oil and clove of garlic into warm quinoa for extra flavor. Other options include chopped fresh spinach or arugula, or massaged kale. Fresh herbs and/or dried spices are nice, as well as grated or crumbled cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, pitted and sliced olives, etc.

**STORAGE SUGGESTIONS:** Leftover quinoa keeps well, refrigerated, for 4 to 5 days. Make sure it has cooled to room temperature before covering and chilling.

### **Favorite Quinoa Salad**

- Prep Time: 20 minutes
- Cook Time: 20 minutes
- Total Time: 40 minutes
- Yield: 8 side salads
- Category: Salad
- Method: Stove top
- Cuisine: Mediterranean

This quinoa salad recipe is the best! Everyone loves this healthy quinoa salad made with quinoa, chickpeas, red bell pepper, cucumber, parsley and

lemon. It's vegan and gluten free, too! Recipe yields 4 medium salads or 8 side salads.

## **INGREDIENTS**

- cup uncooked quinoa, rinsed in a fine-mesh colander
- 2 cups water
- 1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas, rinsed and drained, or 1 1/2 cups cooked chickpeas
- 1 medium cucumber, seeded and chopped
- 1 medium red bell pepper, chopped
- 3/4 cup chopped red onion (from 1 small red onion)
- 1 cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley (from 1 large bunch)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup lemon juice (from **2** to 3 lemons)
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed or minced
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. To cook the quinoa: Combine the rinsed quinoa and the water in a medium saucepan. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, then decrease the heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook until the quinoa has absorbed all of the water, about 15 minutes, reducing heat as time goes on to maintain a gentle simmer. Remove from heat, cover, and let the quinoa rest for 5 minutes, to give it time to fluff up.
2. In a large serving bowl, combine the chickpeas, cucumber, bell pepper, onion and parsley. Set aside.

3. In a small bowl, combine the olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, garlic and salt. Whisk until blended, then set aside.
4. Once the quinoa is mostly cool, add it to the serving bowl, and drizzle the dressing on top. Toss until the mixture is thoroughly combined. Season with black pepper, to taste, and add an extra pinch of salt if necessary. For best flavor, let the salad rest for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.
5. This salad keeps well in the refrigerator, covered, for about 4 days. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

We had visitors last night, Ricky Raccoon, Sammy the Skunk.

Lord give us patience as we readjust our way of living. Help us to keep in balance and to be prepared. Surround us with your grace and peace. Lord, hear our prayers. Amen

Today: food for your soul.