

# Nutrition Bites



## Quinoa (keen-wah)

Quinoa is actually the seed of a broadleaf plant, not a grain, though we prepare and eat it as if it was a grain. The quinoa plant is a relative of beets, spinach and Swiss chard. There are hundreds of varieties of quinoa, and it grows well in mountainous regions like the South American Andes, where it was known as mother grain to the ancient Incas, who thrived on its nutritious seed for thousands of years.

Some people like to add olive oil, butter, salt, or pepper. Cooked quinoa can also be used as the basis for pilafs, salads, breakfast porridges, and more. One cup of dried quinoa yields about 3 cups cooked.

- ✓ High in magnesium, which helps relax blood vessels, and decreases risk of hypertension
- ✓ Highest protein content of any grain, and contains all nine essential amino acids
- ✓ Rich in manganese, which helps with bone integrity, healthy skin and blood sugar regulation
- ✓ Good source of fiber, needed for blood sugar regulation
- ✓ Gluten-free
- ✓ Anti-inflammatory phytonutrients
- ✓ Antioxidants and flavonoids: quercetin and kaempferol (concentration of these two flavonoids in quinoa can sometimes be greater than in berries like cranberry or lingonberry)



Pre-washing is especially advisable for quinoa in order to remove the bitter saponin coating on its outer hull. Run cold water over quinoa in a fine-meshed strainer, rubbing the seeds with your fingers. Soaking quinoa after rinsing can make it even more digestible (1 to 6 hours soak time).

When you cannot soak the quinoa, just rinse until water runs clear, drain and transfer to a medium pot. Add 2 cups water to 1 cup quinoa and salt and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to medium low and simmer until water is absorbed, 15 to 20 mins.

Sources: World's Healthiest Foods <<http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=142>>  
Dr. Weil <<http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/ART03187/How-to-Cook-Quinoa.html>>  
Emily Ho, The Kitchn <<http://www.thekitchn.com/how-to-cook-quinoa-63344>>

## This Week's Recipe

### Honey Curried Quinoa Salad

3/4 cup quinoa, soaked overnight, then drained	2 Tbs minced red onion
1/2 cup water	2 Tbs fresh cilantro, chopped
1/2 bay leaf	2.5 Tbs olive oil
1/4 tsp mild curry powder	2.5 Tbs apple cider vinegar
1/8 tsp salt	2 Tbs honey
3/4 cup small broccoli florets, blanched until crisp tender	1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
3/4 cup small cauliflower florets, blanched until crisp tender	1 tsp minced fresh ginger
1/2 cup peeled and diced carrot, blanched until crisp tender	1 tsp mild curry powder
1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half	1/4 tsp salt
	1/4 tsp pepper
	Pinch of cinnamon
	Pinch of ground cloves

Makes 4 servings | Total time: 40 mins plus soaking time

**1** Place the quinoa, water, salt, bay leaf and curry powder in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to very low, cover, and cook for 8 to 10 minutes until the quinoa is tender and the water is absorbed. Turn off heat and let sit for 5 minutes, then turn out into a large bowl and cool.

**2** While the quinoa is cooking and cooling, blanch the vegetables just until bright and crisp tender -- don't overcook. Rinse in cold water to stop the cooking and drain very well.

**3** Whisk the ingredients in the 2nd column together.

**4** When the quinoa is cool, add the dressing and toss to coat it evenly. Then add the broccoli, carrots, cauliflower and tomatoes and toss.