



Quinoa

Quinoa is a small, nutty seed that serves as a complete protein source, containing all nine essential amino acids. This versatile seed is rich in fiber, magnesium, and antioxidants, supporting heart health, digestion, and reducing inflammation. Its fluffy texture and mild flavor make it a perfect addition to salads, bowls, and stir-fries, especially for those on gluten-free or plant-based diets. It is native to the Andes in South America and has been cultivated for thousands of years.

Quinoa & Vegetable Stir-Fry

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 2 cups water or vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce or tamari
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro or parsley, chopped
- 1 pound chicken breast or beef strips (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Cook quinoa by bringing water or broth to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add quinoa, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes or until the liquid is absorbed. Fluff with a fork and set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet or wok over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, sautéing until fragrant.
3. Add bell pepper, zucchini, and broccoli to the skillet. Stir-fry for 5-7 minutes until the vegetables are tender but still crisp.
4. Stir in soy sauce, sesame oil, and grated ginger. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.
5. Add the cooked quinoa to the skillet, stirring to combine.
6. If using meat, cook separately:
 - a. For chicken or beef strips: Season with salt and pepper and stir-fry in a little oil until cooked through (about 5-7 minutes). Add to the stir-fry.
7. Garnish with fresh cilantro or parsley and serve.

STORAGE & SELECTION

When selecting quinoa, opt for sealed packages labeled "pre-rinsed" to remove the naturally bitter coating (saponin) or rinse it thoroughly yourself. Choose organic if possible, and note that white quinoa is the mildest, while red and black varieties offer a nuttier flavor and firmer texture. Store uncooked quinoa in an airtight container in a cool, dry place for up to 2 years. Once cooked, refrigerate it for 5-7 days or freeze for up to 12 months for longer storage. Proper selection and storage help maintain its freshness and nutritional value.