

# Quinoa – The Supergrain

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Although used like a grain, botanically speaking quinoa is a relative of green leafy vegetables like spinach and Swiss chard. Quinoa is native to South America where it was once called “The Gold of the Incas”, recognising its nutritional value. When cooked it has a fluffy texture and a pleasant nutty taste.

Compared to other grains quinoa has not only a significantly higher protein content but it also provides “complete” protein which means it contains all essential amino acids in a well balanced ratio. Quinoa also provides slow releasing carbohydrates which help maintain blood sugar and energy levels. The grain is a good source of minerals, including manganese, iron and magnesium. Quinoa is naturally gluten-free and is therefore a great addition for anyone on a gluten-free diet.



Whilst not long ago few people had heard of quinoa it is now widely available in health food shops and supermarkets. Quinoa can be used instead of rice or couscous as a side dish, in salads, stuffing and pilaffs. To prepare, rinse quinoa well in a sieve under running water. Add two parts of water to one part of quinoa, bring to the boil and simmer for approximately 15 minutes. It is ready when the whitish rings around the centre detach themselves.

## Recipes

### Quinoa tabbouleh

*A gluten-free version of this popular Middle Eastern dish which is traditionally made with bulgur wheat. Ideally leave the salad to stand for a few hours before serving, so that the flavours can mingle.*

*Serves 4*

250g quinoa  
500ml vegetable stock  
4 tomatoes, diced  
½ cucumber, diced  
1 clove garlic, crushed  
2 tbsp lemon juice  
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
8 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped  
4 tbsp fresh mint, chopped  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Bring quinoa to the boil in the vegetable stock and simmer for approximately 15 minutes. Let the quinoa cool down a little and mix in the remaining ingredients.

## **Fish Chowder with Quinoa**

*A wonderfully warming and nutritious chowder which may even convince people who say they don't like fish.*

Serves 4

1 tbsp coconut oil  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
2 cloves of garlic, crushed  
2-3 stalks of celery, finely chopped  
2 medium carrots, coarsely grated  
1 heaped tsp of curry powder  
1 tin of chopped tomatoes  
1 litre of boiling water or fish stock  
2 bay leaves  
600g skin and bone free fish  
200g quinoa  
1 tbsp lemon juice  
Pepper and salt to taste  
Crème fraiche to serve

Gently fry onions, garlic and celery in coconut oil until they are softening. Add curry powder and fry for another minute. Add tin of tomatoes, water, bay leaves, grated carrots, fish and quinoa.

Cook for approx. 20 minutes until fish is cooked through and quinoa is done.

Remove the bay leaves. Add lemon juice, season with pepper and salt and serve with a dollop of crème fraiche.

## **Quinoa and walnut bake**

*A simple but very tasty vegan dish. Serve with steamed vegetables or a salad.*

Serves 4

125g quinoa  
750ml carrot juice  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 onion, finely chopped  
1-2 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 stalk of celery, finely chopped  
1 carrot, roughly grated  
1 courgette, diced  
1 red pepper, diced  
125g walnuts, roughly ground  
1 tsp dried mixed herbs  
Pepper to taste

Cook quinoa in half the carrot juice for approximately 15 minutes.

Meanwhile gently fry the onions, garlic, celery and carrot in the olive oil until they start to soften. Add courgette and red pepper and fry for another few minutes.

Mix cooked quinoa, nuts and vegetables and add remaining carrot juice. Season with the herbs and pepper.

Pour into a large, shallow ovenproof dish and bake uncovered for 30 minutes at 200°C, until it turns golden on top.