

# Taste Test: Quinoa



Quinoa is a whole-grain and delicious plant-protein option. Quinoa is also packed with fibre, vitamins, minerals and is an excellent gluten-free alternative to rice. It also contains iron, copper, thiamine, phosphorus, folate, and vitamin B6. Quinoa was originally produced in South America, however due to its growing popularity, it has expanded and is now grown in more than 70 countries! <sup>1</sup>

## Food Fact

Quinoa is pronounced as “KEEN-wah and is often described as a “superfood” due to its amazing health benefits.<sup>1</sup>

### How to Choose:

- Quinoa can be prepared in many delicious ways
- Make sure to check the label to make sure the quinoa is gluten-free if you have a gluten allergy<sup>1</sup>
- Choose your variety of choice! There are many types of quinoa, however the white, red, or mixed varieties are most popular in Canada<sup>1</sup>
- The white variety is more flavorful while the red is considered to have more nutrients<sup>1</sup>
  - There are many brands, try finding one that has been thoroughly rinsed and air dried
  - Quinoa is also available in flour or flake form<sup>2</sup>

### How to Prepare:

- Prior to cooking, rinse the quinoa (this removes any unwanted flavour profiles)<sup>2</sup>
- Quinoa is similar to cooking rice and can be combined with water on the stove top, microwave, instant pot, or rice cooker<sup>2</sup>

### How to Store:

- Uncooked quinoa can be stored in a cool, dry place in an airtight container for up to 1 year<sup>2</sup>
- Cooked quinoa can be stored in a sealed container for up to 5 days or up to 2 months in the freezer<sup>2</sup>

### Note:

Canada's food guide recommends:

- Including whole-grains foods in your daily food choices, doing so can help to lower your risk of stroke, colon cancer, heart disease, and type II diabetes.<sup>3</sup>
- Choosing whole-grain foods rather than refined grains because all parts of the grain are intact. Refined grains have parts of the grain removed during processing.<sup>3</sup>

## I Tried It!

My Rating (circle one):



Would you like to try quinoa again?

YES     NO

## Ideas for Serving Quinoa:

- Try preparing quinoa like hot cereal, just add milk or fortified soy beverage to leftover cooked quinoa. Top with cranberries, fresh fruit, or nuts and seeds!
- Serve quinoa as a side to your main meal, enjoy plain or with leftover vegetables, sauteed mushrooms, or diced cooked sweet potato, frozen green peas, beans, or edamame!
- Use quinoa to make a salad! Add lean meats, fish like salmon, tofu, your favourite legume, like canned beans or vegetables!
- Add leftover quinoa to a frittata, or soup!

### Vegetable Quinoa Salad

Makes 10 servings

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup quinoa, well rinsed and drained
- 2 cups cold water
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 2 large sprigs Italian flat-leaf parsley (leaves only), or cilantro, chopped
- ½ English cucumber, chopped
- 1/3 cup chopped red, green, yellow, or mixed bell pepper
- Vinaigrette
- 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 ½ tsp hot pepper flakes
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ½ tsp dried lavender flowers (optional)

#### Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan, over medium heat, bring quinoa and water to a boil. Reduce heat to low and gently simmer for 10 to 15 minutes or until the white or red germ separates from the seed (or follow according to package directions). Cover, remove from heat, and let stand for 5 minutes. Remove lid, let cool, and fluff with a fork.
2. In a large bowl, combine vegetables – tomatoes, parsley or cilantro, cucumber and bell peppers. Stir in cooled quinoa.
3. Prepare the vinaigrette. In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper, hot pepper flakes and lavender (if using)
4. Pour the vinaigrette over the salad and toss to coat. Serve and enjoy!



Recipe adapted from [UnlockFood.ca](https://www.unlockfood.ca).

Getting children involved in cooking at home makes them more likely to eat more protein and select healthy foods. For more information, please contact APPLE Schools at [info@appleschool.ca](mailto:info@appleschool.ca).

<sup>1</sup>Live Science. Quinoa: Health Benefits & Nutrition Facts. <https://www.livescience.com/50400-quinoa-nutrition-facts.html>. Accessed April 2022.

<sup>2</sup>UnlockFood.Ca. All About Quinoa. <https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Cooking-And-Food/Grain-Products/All-about-quinoa.aspx>. Accessed April 2022.

<sup>3</sup>Government of Canada. Canada's Food Guide. <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>. Accessed April 2022.