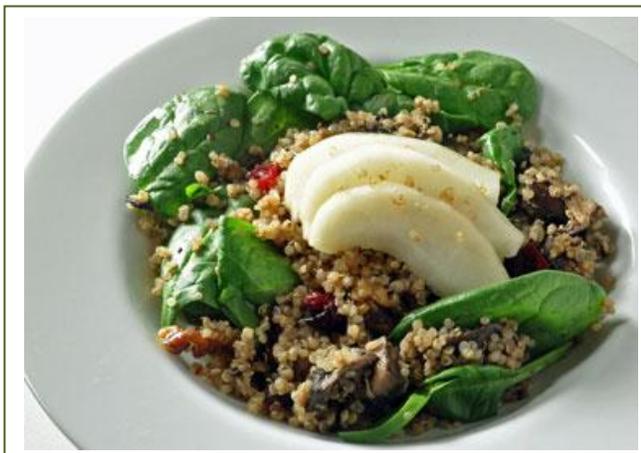

CONNAISSÉUR

Quinoa Salad with Spinach, Pear & Portabella Mushrooms



Quinoa is a grain that originates from the Andes Mountains in South America. It is a staple just like corn, potatoes, pasta and rice. It's an exceptional alternative due to its superior nutrient composition. Quinoa seeds contain essential amino acids like lysine and good quantities of calcium, phosphorus, and iron. On top of this it is gluten free and easy to prepare!

We've used fresh ripe pears to make this delicious Quinoa Salad – but don't be limited by this. Blueberries, peaches and plums also blend nicely with the balsamic vinegar, so choose a seasonal fruit and enjoy!

Ingredients

DRESSING AND MUSHROOMS

1/4 cup	Balsamic Vinegar (Modena)
2 tsp	Mustard - Dijon
1 whole	Pear - ripe, peeled, cored, and cut in large pieces
1/3 cup	Roasted Garlic Olive Oil
2 pounds	Portobello mushrooms - stems and gills removed, cut into 1 inch pieces

SALAD

1 cup	Quinoa - pearl size, white or red
1/2 cup	Walnut pieces - washed and toasted
1 Tbsp	Roasted Garlic Olive Oil
1/2 cup	Cranberries - dried
4 whole	Green onions - cleaned and thinly sliced
To taste	Salt - preferably fleur de sel
To taste	Pepper - black, freshly ground

GARNISH

3 whole	Pears - ripe, peeled, cored, quartered, and sliced
4 cups	Baby spinach - washed

Instructions

Preheat oven to 475 degrees F

Salad dressing and roasted mushrooms:

1. In a blender on medium speed, blend the Balsamic Vinegar, Dijon mustard, and pear. Blend until smooth, approximately 30 seconds. In a slow steady stream pour the Roasted Garlic Olive Oil into the mixture. Continue to blend for another 30 seconds. Set aside.
2. Place the chopped mushrooms in a large mixing bowl. Toss ¼ cup of the dressing into the mushrooms. Cover the remaining dressing and refrigerate until ready to use.
3. Spread the mushrooms, in a single layer, on a large rimmed baking sheet (approximately 12"x 14")
4. Place the baking sheet in the lower section of the preheated oven and roast for 20 to 30 minutes. Stir occasionally. Remove from the oven and allow to cool at room temperature.

Quinoa:

To prepare the quinoa follow the package instructions/or:

- rinse the quinoa thoroughly with water
- in a large pot, on high heat, bring 1 ¾ cup water to a boil
- stir in the quinoa, cover the pot and reduce heat to low, simmer for 15 minutes
- remove the pot from the heat and allow to sit for 5-10 minutes more
- remove the lid and fluff the quinoa with a fork
- let cool to room temperature

To toast the walnuts:

- preheat oven to 350°F
- rinse the walnuts thoroughly with water
- spread the walnuts out on a baking sheet
- toss with Roasted Garlic Olive Oil and season with salt and pepper
- place the baking sheet in the lower section of the oven and bake for 5-10 minutes
- watch carefully to prevent burning
- remove the toasted walnuts from the oven and allow to cool to room temperature
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To prepare the quinoa portion of the salad:

- combine mushrooms, quinoa, green onion, walnuts, dried cranberries, salt, pepper and remaining salad dressing
- cover and refrigerate until ready to serve

To serve the salad:

- just before serving toss the spinach into the quinoa salad
- season to taste with salt and pepper
- place the salad in a large serving bowl or in individual serving dishes and garnish with a freshly cut pear
- serve immediately