

## 32. Quinoa & Couscous, Mint and Tomatoes Salad

By Rebecca Katz April, 2009

Serves 8 with a tasty, healthy salad that will have your family coming back for seconds.

**Quinoa:** (pronounced "keen-wah") This is a high-energy protein that is mineral rich, easily digested and has more calcium than milk! When paired here with couscous, fresh herbs, tomatoes and spices. it makes for a salad entree or side dish that is high in crunch factor and nutritional value.

**Note:** Preparation is everything. Some people don't like quinoa, claiming it has a bitter taste, which is true when it is not properly prepared. The grain is naturally coated with a resin, the reason for the off-putting bitterness. Getting rid of the resin is as easy as putting the grain in a bowl of cool water, swish it around with your hand, and drain it into a fine-mesh sieve. Repeat this process up to five times. It doesn't take that long but makes all the difference to any quinoa dish.

**Optional Variation:** If you don't have quinoa in the house, you can make this recipe completely with couscous, And remember, when buying couscous, reach for the whole wheat variety, which provides protein and B vitamins. The recipe also works just as well if you substitute orange juice and orange zest for the lemon.

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup quinoa
- 1¼ teaspoons sea salt
- 1 cup couscous
- 2¼ teaspoons ground cumin
- 1⅛ teaspoons ground coriander
- 1 cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 cup finely chopped fresh mint
- small English cucumbers, peeled, seeded, and diced
- 1 cup diced tomatoes or halved cherry tomatoes
- Zest of 1 lemon (about ½ teaspoon)
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- scallions, green part only, finely chopped, for garnish

### Directions:

1. Place the quinoa in a fine-mesh strainer and rinse well under cold running water.
2. In a small saucepan, bring 1¾ cups water and 1 teaspoon salt to a boil over high heat. Add the quinoa and cover. Decrease the heat to low and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Remove from heat and fluff with a fork.
3. While the quinoa is cooking, place the couscous in a large bowl. Add 1 cup of boiling water and ¼ teaspoon salt. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and steam for 5 minutes, or until the water is absorbed. Fluff with a fork.
4. Add the quinoa to the couscous, stir in the cumin and coriander, and fluff with a fork. Spread the mixture out on a sheet pan and rake with a fork constantly until cooled.
5. In a large bowl, combine the parsley, mint, cucumbers, tomatoes, lemon zest and juice, and olive oil, Add the grains and mix with a fork. Chill for at least 2 hours.
6. Taste and think FASS (fat, acid, salt, sweet): You may need an extra squeeze of lemon juice or a pinch of salt.
7. Now that you're at YUM stage, spoon into a large salad bowl and garnish with the scallions.