

Flavors of Rochester at the Market

A sampling series brought to you by the Rochester Public Market, Friends of the Public Market, and Democrat and Chronicle. Saturdays, May through September 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
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Guest Chefs for May 7, 2015:
Rochester Area Vegan Society
www.rochesterveg.org

RECIPE: SUNSHINE QUINOA SALAD!

1 cup light (not black) quinoa	Juice and pulp of 1 lemon, or 1/3 cup cider vinegar
2 cups water	Olive oil
1 red pepper	1 or 2 cloves garlic
1 yellow (summer) squash	Black pepper
1 large cucumber, peeled	1/2 tsp. paprika
1 jalapeno pepper (optional)	Salt to taste
Small handful of fresh cilantro (or parsley)	

The many colors in this summer salad give it aesthetic appeal, and its tangy and slightly nutty taste make it an appealing and nutritious treat.

In addition to being a rich source of quality protein, quinoa is a delicious food. (It's technically not a grain - it's a seed.) In this recipe, we utilize a method of preparation that gives the quinoa a delicious nutty taste; we use this method for about half of our quinoa dishes because we like it so much.

Commercially purchased quinoa is washed to remove the bitter, soapy film which naturally occurs on its surface. We always re-rinse it just to be sure: put it into a fine strainer and wash under cold water for about 15 seconds.

Now the magic part: Dump the wet quinoa into a cast iron or similar (non-Teflon) dry skillet. Heat at high temperature, shaking the skillet gently. In about two minutes the water will be driven off, and the quinoa will begin to toast, turning from beige to a medium rich brown color. (Be careful to keep shaking so it doesn't burn!) The quinoa will also begin to pop, like little kernels of popcorn. This is OK. When the quinoa is nicely and uniformly toasted, dump it into a pot with 2 cups of lightly salted water. Boil on low 15 minutes, or until the quinoa has cooked to tiny comma-shaped grains and absorbed most of the water.

Meanwhile, dice the vegetables into small pieces (about 1/2 inch) and set aside. If you choose to add in the bite of the jalapeno, dice it very fine (1/8 inch pieces). Chop the cilantro, removing large stem pieces if desired. The garlic should be crushed, ideally through a garlic press.

In a large bowl, mix all ingredients. Add one or two tablespoons olive oil for texture, but not enough to be noticed in the salad. Add water a little at a time until the salad is wet but not soaked. (You may use a bit more cider vinegar or lemon juice if you wish for a bit more tartness.) Season with paprika, a few twists of fresh ground black pepper, and salt to taste.