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Quinoa Tabouli

Yield: about 10 cups

Quinoa makes an ideal substitute for bulgur and combines well with the traditional Middle Eastern flavors of this time-honored salad.

1 1/2 cups quinoa, rinsed well and drained
3 cups water
2 cups coarsely chopped fresh parsley
2 cups cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1 English cucumber, peeled and diced
2/3 cup sliced scallions or chives
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
4 teaspoons dried mint
Salt and pepper

Place the quinoa in a medium saucepan over medium heat, and toast it until the grains are dry, fragrant, and turn a shade darker, about 5 minutes. Add the water and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat to low, and simmer until all the water is absorbed and the grain is tender, about 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes.

Fluff the quinoa with a fork and transfer it to a large bowl. Let it cool, fluffing it occasionally with a fork. When cool, add the parsley, tomatoes, cucumber, scallions, lemon juice, olive oil, mint, and salt and pepper to taste. Toss gently until evenly mixed. Adjust seasonings, if necessary. Serve at once or thoroughly chilled.

Variations:

To turn this salad into a more substantial main dish, add one or more of the following:

1 to 1 3/4 cups drained cooked or canned chickpeas
1 cup halved and thinly sliced red radishes
1 cup diced carrots

Per cup: calories: 151, protein: 4.5 g, fat: 6 g, carbohydrate: 22 g, dietary fiber: 3 g, calcium: 47 mg, iron: 3.6 mg, magnesium: 70 mg, sodium: 35 mg, zinc: 1.1 mg, folate: 45 mcg, riboflavin: 0.1 mg, vitamin C: 26 mg, vitamin E: 2.1 mg, omega-3 fatty acids: 0.1 g.

% Calories from: protein 11%, fat 34%, carbohydrate 55%

Crispy Rice Bars

Yield: 16 squares

These rich, crunchy squares make a delicious dessert or sweet snack.

2/3 cup brown rice syrup
1/4 cup sesame tahini, other seed butter, or almond butter
1/2 teaspoon vanilla flavoring
2 cups crisped rice cereal

Additions (choose one):

1/2 cup lightly roasted chopped almonds or walnuts
1/2 cup currants, raisins, or finely chopped apricots
1/2 cup nondairy chocolate or carob chips

Oil an 8-inch square pan or mist it with nonstick cooking spray and set aside. Place brown rice syrup and nut or seed butter in a small saucepan and warm until the mixture is softened and smooth. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla flavoring.

Combine the cereal and the addition of your choice in a large bowl. Pour the warm mixture over the cereal mix and combine carefully using a wooden spoon. Work as quickly as possible (this is especially important if using chocolate or carob chips so they do not melt). Pack the mixture evenly into prepared pan, pressing gently with your fingers. Cover the pan with plastic wrap and chill until firm. Slice into squares and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Will keep for about 10 days.

Per square: calories: 77, protein: 1 g, fat: 2 g, carbohydrate: 14 g, dietary fiber: 0.5 g, calcium: 10 mg, iron: 0.4 mg, magnesium: 7 mg, sodium: 27 mg, zinc: 0.3 mg, folate: 21 mcg, riboflavin: 0.1 mg, vitamin C: 2 mg, vitamin E: 1 mg, omega-3 fatty acids: 0 g.

% Calories from: protein 5%, fat 23%, carbohydrate 72%