



MAIN DISH OR A SIDE? Winter Quinoa Dressing with Apples and Dried Cranberries is served in Concord, New Hampshire. Quinoa is easy to cook and offers fiber, protein, iron, and B vitamins, but no saturated fat or cholesterol. (AP Photo/Matthew Mead)

A quinoa dish that can be a side or delicious main

By **Melissa d'Arabian**
The Associated Press

The first time I heard of quinoa was more than 14 years ago. I was at a bustling little restaurant called Le Loup Blanc in Paris. The menu was plug-and-play — pick a meat, then fill out your plate with a selection of sides. Think upscale table-service cafeteria with crammed quarters, French bistro charm, and wine carafes clinking above a smoky din.

Quinoa was one of those side choices. And like many of us, I pronounced it incorrectly. But however I said it, I was glad I tried it. I was immediately hooked on those nutty little grains, and I ordered quinoa every time I ate there. Sometimes I made it the star of a meatless meal. Sometimes it nestled up to whatever meat I opted for.

Eventually, I moved home to the U.S., but quinoa came with me. I loved it because it was so versatile, so easy to cook and so good for me.

One cooked cup of this “pseudo-cereal” (it’s actually the seed of a plant in the same family as spinach) offers five grams of fiber and eight grams of protein, along with

plenty of iron (a big plus for non-meat eaters) and B vitamins, but no saturated fat or cholesterol.

The exciting protein news on quinoa isn’t necessarily the quantity (though that’s good, too), but the quality. Quinoa offers all nine essential amino acids in the quantities required to make it a complete protein (unusual for vegetable-based protein sources). Another bonus: It’s gluten-free, which makes it a great option for hosting gluten-free guests or for families (like mine) that have gluten-free members.

I like to cook up a batch of quinoa on the weekends, then use it during the week much as I would cooked rice — in cold salads, in hot side dishes like a stir-fry, or with stews and sauces. Sometimes I’ll drizzle warm quinoa with maple syrup and top it with berries and almonds for a hearty breakfast.

My recipe for winter quinoa dressing is a perfect dish for both newbies and quinoa pros. It complements the gorgeous roasts of winter as a side dish, or can be served as a main event for a simple supper.

Food Network star Melissa d'Arabian is an expert on healthy eating on a budget. She is the author of the upcoming cookbook, Supermarket Healthy.

Winter Quinoa Dressing with Apples and Dried Cranberries

Start to finish: 30 minutes

Servings: 6

- 1 1/4 cups uncooked quinoa
- 1 3/4 cups low-sodium broth (chicken or vegetable)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 sweet Italian turkey sausages, casings removed
- 2 small celery stalks (or 1 large), chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1/2 yellow onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 6 ounces fresh mushrooms, roughly chopped
- 1 apple, cored and diced
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup pine nuts
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper

In a large microwave-safe baking dish, combine the quinoa, broth, and olive oil. Cover and microwave for 11 minutes, then allow to sit in the microwave for another two minutes. Remove the dish from the microwave and stir the quinoa. Depending on the power of your microwave, you may need to adjust the cooking time.

Meanwhile, in a large sauté pan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the sausage and cook, breaking up the meat with a spoon, until the meat is golden, about seven minutes. Add the celery, onion, and mushrooms, and cook until the vegetables are tender, another seven minutes. Add the apple, cranberries, pine nuts, garlic, rosemary, and sage, then cook an additional two minutes.

Combine the quinoa with the sausage and vegetable mixture and serve immediately.

Nutrition information per serving: 240 calories (60 calories from fat, 25 percent of total calories); 6 g fat (2.5 g saturated, 0 g trans fats); 15 mg cholesterol; 34 g carbohydrate; 3 g fiber; 8 g sugar; 10 g protein; 570 mg sodium.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Peacock Lane

Dec 15-31, 6-11pm (daily except Dec 24 & 31), 6pm-midnight (Dec 24 & 31), Peacock Lane (between SE Stark & SE Belmont St, one block east of SE César Chávez Blvd, Portland). Experience all the holiday warmth that 110 volts of AC power can provide as Portland’s famous Christmas-light display illuminates the night. The free event is presented by homeowners, who encourage visitors to view the display on foot and enjoy hot cocoa. Donations are accepted. For info, visit <www.peacocklane.net>.

Christmas Ship Parade

Through Dec 21, Willamette & Columbia Rivers (Portland). Watch two fleets of colorfully decorated ships ply the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. This year marks the 60th year of the Christmas Ship Parade. The combined fleets average 50 to 60 boats. For route schedule, viewing locations, or to make a donation, visit <www.christmasships.org>. See related story on page 8.

“The Miracle of a Million Lights”

Through Dec 23, 6-10pm, Victorian Belle Mansion (1441 N McClellan St, Portland). Take a tour of the richly appointed historic Victorian Belle Mansion and enjoy the spectacle of 2.5 million holiday lights, along with Christmas trees, holiday decorations, antiques, and more, at “The Miracle of a Million Lights.” For info, call (503) 970-0213 or visit <www.victorianbelle.com>.

Keizer light display

Through Dec 26 (daily except Dec 25), 6-10pm, Gubser Neighborhood (Keizer, Ore.). Drive through a neighborhood holiday light display benefitting area food-share programs. The route, which features more than 300 decorated homes, is approximately 3.5 miles and can take several hours to view on busy weekend nights. Parking is available at Whiteaker Middle School (1605 Lockhaven Dr NE) or Gubser Elementary School (6610 14th Ave NE) for those who wish to walk the route. The route begins near the corner of Lockhaven Drive NE and 14th Street NE. To find the display, take I-5 Exit 260B to Keizer, go one-half mile to 14th Street and follow the signs. Non-perishable food or cash donations are accepted. For info, call (503) 393-9111 or visit <www.keizerchamber.com>.

Winter Wonderland at PIR

Through Dec 28, 5-9pm (Sun-Thu), 5-11pm (Fri-Sat), Portland International Raceway (1940 N Victory Blvd, Portland). Enjoy the annual Winter Wonderland drive-through holiday lights extravaganza at Portland International Raceway (PIR). Illuminating the skies are Toyland, the Poinsettia Arch, Candy Cane Lane, Reindeer Road, and 250 display pieces featuring animated designs. For info, call (503) 232-3000 or visit <www.winterwonderlandportland.com>.

Christmas Fantasy Trail

Through Dec 30 (Mon-Sat except Dec 24-25), 6-9pm, Wenzel Farm (19754 South Ridge Rd, Oregon City, Ore). Walk down a holiday-lighted trail featuring a suspension bridge, tunnel, maze, crooked house, and a 40-foot castle with Christmas scenes at the Christmas Fantasy Trail in Oregon City. Refreshments are available. For info, call (503) 631-2047 or visit <www.fantasytrail.com>.

Christmas at the Pittock Mansion

Through Jan 2, 11am-4pm (except Dec 25), Pittock Mansion (3229 NW Pittock Dr, Portland). View the historic Pittock Mansion in all its holiday finery at “Christmas Past, Present and Future,” a centennial holiday exhibit. Visitors explore the palatial residence, which is adorned with decorations, ribbon, garland, poinsettias, and 20 festive trees. From December 20 to January 2, free shuttle service and three hours of parking are available at Portland State University’s Parking Structure #3 (SW 12th/13th Ave, south of SW Market St) by using code number “15236.” For info, call (503) 823-3623 or visit <www.pittockmansion.org>.

ZooLights

Through Jan 4, 5-8pm (Sun-Thu except Dec 24-25), 5-8:30pm (Fri-Sat), Oregon Zoo (4001 SW Canyon Rd, Portland). Ring in the holiday season with the annual ZooLights display at the Oregon Zoo. The family tradition features music and more than 1.5 million lights illuminating life-size animal silhouettes, trees, buildings, walkways, and the zoo train. Popular returning displays include trumpeting elephants, swinging siamangs, a 35-foot-long Chinese dragon, leaping reindeer, tobogganing polar bears, playful penguins, and more. For info, call (503) 226-1561 or visit <www.oregonzoo.org>.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

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Mimi and Bear in the Snow

Dec 27, 11am, Powell’s City of Books (1005 W Burnside St, Portland). Join a holiday storytime session at Powell’s City of Books. The featured book is *Mimi and Bear in the Snow*, by Janeé Trasler. For info, call (503) 228-4651 or visit <www.powells.com>.

Kwanzaa celebration

Dec 27, 1-2pm, North Portland Library (512 N Killingsworth St, Portland). Learn about the seven principles of Kwanzaa at an event celebrating the third principle, *Ujima* (collective work and responsibility). For info, call (503) 988-5394 or visit <events.multcolib.org>.

New Year’s at noon

Dec 31, 10am-4pm, Portland Children’s Museum (4015 SW Canyon Rd, Portland). Young people are invited to ring in the New Year hours before the grownups with festive noisemakers, countdowns, a dance party with DJs from Greasy Kid Stuff, and more. Countdowns are held at 11:00am, 11:30am, noon, 12:30pm, and 1:00pm. For info, call (503) 223-6500 or visit <www.portlandcm.org>.

“New Year’s Dance for Young Children”

Dec 31, 10:30am-noon, Northwest Library (2300 NW Thurman St, Portland). Families are invited to ring in the New Year with games, dancing, snacks, and activities at “New Year’s Dance for Young Children.” The free event is for children younger than six years old with an accompanying adult. For info, call (503) 988-5560 or visit <events.multcolib.org>.

New Year’s Eve celebration

Dec 31, 7pm-1am, Heart of Wisdom Zen Temple (6401 NE 10th Ave, Portland). Let go of last year’s errors and renew commitments to live ethically in the upcoming year at a New Year’s Eve celebration. The free event includes a vegetarian potluck (attendees are asked to bring a dish to share), meditation accompanied by 108 strikes of the bell, and sacred dancing. For info, call (503) 728-0654 or visit <www.zendust.org>.

DJ Anjali & The Incredible Kid New Year celebration

Dec 31, 8pm (doors open), 9pm-2am (dance party), Bossanova Ballroom (722 E Burnside St, Portland). Ring in the New Year with DJ Anjali and The Incredible Kid, who drop the latest electronic sounds emerging from South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Jamaica, and the U.K. The event, which is for persons age 21 and older, marks the 14th anniversary of the beatmasters performing for Portland crowds. The duo debuted New Year’s Eve 2000. For info, call (503) 281-3918 or visit <www.anjaliandthekid.com>. To buy advance tickets, visit <www.bossanovaballroom.com>.

First Run & Walk

Dec 31, 10pm (festivities), midnight (run & walk), World Trade Center Plaza (121 SW Salmon St, Portland). Start the New Year in a healthful manner by taking part in the annual walk or run through downtown Portland, along the waterfront, and across two bridges. The event features music, food, dancing, and more beginning at 10pm. For info, or to register, call (503) 644-6822, e-mail <events@asportsltd.com>, or visit <www.asportsltd.com/firstrun>.

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