

Pomegranate & Quinoa Salad

*1 cup uncooked quinoa *2 cups water *pinch of salt *1/4 cup olive oil *2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar *2 Tbsp. lemon juice *1/2 tsp. salt *pepper to taste *1 cup pomegranate seeds *1/2 cup chopped parsley (optional)
Combine the quinoa, water & salt in a medium saucepan. Bring the water to a boil & after the water begins to boil, reduce the heat to low & cover the pan. Gently simmer, covered, for 15 minutes (there may still be some water not yet absorbed). Remove from heat. Keeping the pan covered, let it stand for 5 minutes, or until the remaining water is absorbed. Remove the lid & gently fluff the quinoa. Set aside to completely cool. In a bowl whisk together the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, salt & pepper. In a large bowl toss together the cooled quinoa, pomegranate seeds, parsley (optional) & dressing. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Chocolate Pomegranate

*7 ozs. dark chocolate *1/2 to 1 cup pomegranate seeds *1/2 cup dry roasted almonds
Melt the dark chocolate (about two bars worth) in the microwave or a double broiler. Mix half of the pomegranate seeds & almonds into the chocolate. Spread the mixture into a glass baking dish lined with parchment paper. You can spread it as thin or thickly as you wish. Top with the remaining seeds & nuts & press down gently so that they will stick. Refrigerate for 2-3 hours or until firm. Cut roughly with a knife or break the bark into uneven pieces. No need to be perfect. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to two weeks, or freeze for up to 6 months.

Cucumber & Pepper Salad with Couscous & Chickpeas

*1 cup couscous, raw *1 cucumber, peeled, cut into small bite-sized pieces *1 pepper, cut into small bite-sized pieces * tomatoes, halved *3 carrots, peeled & cut into small bite-sized pieces *1/4 cup red onion, sliced into small bite-sized pieces *1 can chick peas, 29 ounces, rinsed & drained *1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped *1/2 cup plus 1 Tbsp. virgin olive oil *Juice of 1 lemon *1/2 tsp. smoked paprika *1 tsp. cumin *1/2 tsp. salt, then to taste. *1/2 tsp. pepper
Prepare couscous according to directions. Once cooked, fluff with a fork, add tablespoon of olive oil & a pinch of salt. Stir in well. Refrigerate to cool off. Prepare vegetables. Once couscous is cool, add all ingredients & refrigerate until time to serve.

Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

*3½ to 4 lbs butternut squash, peeled, seeded & cut into 1 inch pieces *2 yellow onions, quartered *2 Tbsp. olive oil *salt & pepper *2 Tbsp. unsalted butter *2 cloves garlic, minced *1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, minced *6 cups veggie stock *¼ tsp. freshly pepper
*1 tsp. curry powder *toasted pumpkin seeds (optional, for garnish) *toasted croutons (optional, for garnish)
Pre-heat oven to 425 F. Place the squash & onion on two baking sheets. Toss with the olive oil & sprinkle with salt & pepper. Bake for 45 minutes, tossing occasionally, until tender. Once the squash & onion are out of the oven, heat butter over medium heat in a large skillet. Add the garlic & ginger & sauté until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Stir in the roasted squash & onions. Add in 4 cups of the stock & simmer for 20 minutes. Puree in blender, or food processor, until smooth (be careful, liquid is hot!). Return to the pot & stir in the remaining 2 cups of stock. Add 1½ tsp. of salt. Add curry & mix. Cook until heated through. Garnish with toasted pumpkin seeds &/or toasted croutons (optional).

Cauliflower & Roasted Butternut Squash Salad

For the salad *1 medium cauliflower head, cut into florets *1 small butternut squash, peeled & cut in cubes *1 Tbsp. olive oil *salt & black pepper *¼ cup red onion, chopped *1 Tbsp. onions, chopped For dressing *1/2 cup veganaise or traditional mayonnaise *2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard *1 tsp. garlic, minced *salt & pepper
Steam the head of cauliflower. In a large pot add about 2 cups of water & place a steamer basket in the bottom. Bring the water to a boil. Add the cauliflower florets into the steamer basket. Cover the pot & steam until the cauliflower florets are tender 6-8 minutes. The time will depend on how tender you prefer your cauliflower florets to be. Remove from the heat & also remove the lid from the pot. Let the cauliflower cool down for 5 minutes. While the cauliflower florets are being steamed, roast the butternut squash. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. On a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or silicone mat, place butternut squash & toss in olive oil and season with salt & pepper. Mix well to combine. Roast in the oven for 15-20 minutes. Place the steamed cauliflower, the roasted butternut squash & the red onions in a bowl. In a small glass bowl, add all the ingredients for the dressing & whisk everything together to combine. Taste to check the seasoning & pour over the salad. Mix all the ingredients together until well combined & garnish it with onions.

How to eat a Pomegranate

Slice 1/4-inch off of the stem end of the pomegranate & place the it cut side down on the cutting board to stabilize it.

Use a paring knife to cut a circle, at a shallow angle, around the crown of the pomegranate, cutting it out.

Make shallow, vertical cuts along the ridges on the outside of the pomegranate. You should make about 6 cuts. If you can't feel the ridges, don't worry about it, just make several gentle cuts.

Use your fingers to gently pry open the pomegranate. It should open easily, exposing the seeds.

Working over a bowl, use your fingers to pry away the seeds from the peel and membranes. If you like, you can fill the bowl part way with water. The seeds will sink to the bottom of the water while pieces of membrane will float to the top, making it easier to separate the membranes from the seeds.

Storage Tips

Pomegranates: Store whole pomegranates in plastic bags in the refrigerator. You can also store just the seeds in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. To freeze, place seeds in a single layer on trays and freeze. Transfer to airtight container & freeze.

Grapes: Place grapes into a sealed plastic bag or airtight container without washing them (wash them just before you eat them). Put them near the back of the refrigerator, as it's normally cooler.

Tomatoes - Do NOT refrigerate. Keep them at room temperature on the counter away from direct sunlight.

Peppers - Store in plastic bag in the crisper drawer of refrigerator. To freeze: slice or chop peppers, spread in a single layer on cookie tray and freeze, then promptly place in airtight containers or heavy-duty freezer bags and return to freezer.

Cucumbers - wrap cucumbers individually in a paper towels & then place in a plastic bag & store in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator.

Cauliflower - Store, stem-side down in a plastic bag in the refrigerator (stem-side down prevents moisture from collecting in the florets & possibly causing the head to spoil).

Squash: Store squash in a cool, dry place. Cut squash should be tightly wrapped in plastic wrap and refrigerated.