



Healthful Advice from our Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist, Debra Heverling, MA, RD/LDN

Dietitian's Dish

Seasonal during late summer (but available year-round), eggplant is a fruit that is classified as a vegetable. Offering great versatility as a substitute for meat, eggplants soak up the flavor of sauces and other ingredients. If you're looking to swap out meat for a boost of nutritional value, eggplants fit the bill!



- Free from fat, cholesterol, and sodium
- Super low in calories
- Good source of dietary fiber (12% DV)
- Source of vital nutrients for the body, brain and nervous system.

Selection: Choose eggplants that are heavy for their size and without cracks or discolorations. Small and medium sizes tend to be sweeter with less seeds.

Storage: Refrigerate eggplants in the crisper drawer, and use within 5-7 days (bitterness increases over time). Do not wash until ready to use them.

This salad is loaded with veggies and quinoa, packing a 1-2 nutritional punch from protein and fiber. It's a light, but filling option for a side dish at your next picnic or a packed lunch for work.



Grilled Vegetable & Quinoa Salad

Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 cups quinoa
- 3 cups water
- 2 Roma tomatoes, each cut lengthwise in half
- 1 medium eggplant, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
- 1 red onion, peeled, root left intact, and cut into quarters
- 1 medium zucchini, cut lengthwise into thirds
- 1 red bell pepper, quartered
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper



Directions:

- Preheat grill for direct grilling over medium heat.
- Rinse quinoa with cold water; drain. In small saucepot, heat water and quinoa to boiling over high heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and cook 13 to 15 minutes or until all liquid is absorbed.
- Place vegetables on rimmed baking pan; spray vegetables with nonstick cooking spray and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place onion and bell pepper in barbecue grill topper. Place grill topper, tomatoes (cut side down), zucchini and eggplant on hot grill rack. Cover and cook 4 to 6 minutes or until grill marks appear on the vegetables directly on the rack, stirring occasionally. Transfer tomatoes to plate. Turn zucchini and eggplant. Cover and cook 4-6 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender-crisp, stirring vegetables in grill topper occasionally.
- To serve, transfer quinoa to large serving bowl. Cut root off onion quarters; cut vegetables into 1/2-inch pieces and transfer to bowl with quinoa. Add **Herb-Feta Vinaigrette** (see below) and toss to combine.

Herb-Feta Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsps. red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley leaves
- 1-1/2 tsps. chopped fresh basil leaves
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh oregano leaves



Directions:

In a medium bowl, whisk together vinegar, honey, mustard, salt and pepper until well blended. Whisking constantly and vigorously, very slowly drizzle oil into vinegar mixture until dressing is emulsified; stir in cheese and herbs.