

Get to Know Quinoa and Bulgur

Whole grains have been part of the human diet for 10,000 years and they're still important to our overall health. They're linked to lower risk of stroke, heart disease, and longer longevity. They can also aid in reducing obesity, and diabetes as well as chronic inflammation.

A grain is classified as whole when it maintains the 3 basic elements of its natural form:

1. Bran: the outer shell, which contains minerals, antioxidants and fiber.
2. Endosperm: the middle layer, predominantly made up of carbohydrates
3. Germ: the inner layer, made up of plant-compounds, protein, vitamins and minerals.

Any number of these qualities can be lost when the grain is processed.

Quinoa (pronounced Keen-wa)

About Quinoa

Quinoa offers up a very neutral flavored cooked grain that works with pretty much any flavor combination.

Quinoa is considered an ancient grain as it originated as a food source over 5,000 years ago in the Andes mountains of South America.

Quinoa is technically not a grain but a seed. (I still call it a grain.)

It is often listed as a superfood as it beats brown rice and yellow corn for fiber content.

By dry weight, quinoa provides 16% protein. This is the highest protein content of the grains.

Quinoa is also considered a complete protein source as it provides all 9 essential amino acids.

For those who worry about gluten, it's gluten free.

It's readily available at most supermarkets.

Preparation of this wonder-food is so simple:

- Combine 1 C. quinoa and 2 C. water in a small saucepan.
- Bring to a boil.
- Cover and turn off heat.

The grain is ready to eat in 20 minutes.

Bulgur

About Bulgur

This whole grain is a staple of the Middle Eastern diet. Bulgur appears to have originated over 5,000 years ago in China.

It's made from parboiled cracked wheat or groats from several different wheat species.

It still maintains all three of the essential elements of its natural form.

As a whole grain, bulgur is high in fiber, rich in nutrients and cholesterol free.

It's a good food for weight loss, heart health and blood sugar control.

The neutral yet slightly nutty flavor of this grain makes it a great companion for any flavor combination.

Like quinoa, bulgur is super easy to cook:

- Combine 1 C. bulgur and 2 C. water in a small saucepan.
- Bring to a boil.
- Cover and turn off heat.

The grain is ready to eat in 20 minutes.

Where do I find the in the Grocery Store

Either of these grain options are usually packaged in the grain/pasta aisle of the grocery store.

They can also be found in most bulk food sections if you grocery store has one.