

QUINOA STUFFED PEPPERS

(from Whole Foods Cookbook)

2 c. water or vegetable stock
1 c quinoa, well rinsed and drained
2 large red peppers, halved and seeded
2 large green peppers, halved and seeded
Olive oil for spraying peppers and casserole dish
Salt to taste
½ tsp cayenne pepper

The Stuffing:

2 ½ tbsp. olive oil
½ med. Onion, finely diced
1 carrot, finely diced
2 stalks celery, finely diced
½ c. shelled pumpkin seeds
2 cloves garlic, minced (1tsp)
½ tsp cumin
1 ttsp chili powder
1/8 c finely chopped fresh oregano
1/8 c finely chopped fresh basil
Salt to taste

Vegetable oil for spraying casserole dish
½ c water or vegetable stock

In a saucepan, bring the 2 c water to a boil, add the quinoa to it, and simmer on low heat with the saucepan covered. Cook the quinoa until the liquid has evaporated and the quinoa is very tender, about 30 minutes. Set the quinoa aside (this may be cooked up to 2 days ahead).

Preheat oven to 400.

Spray pepper halves with the oil and season with salt and cayenne pepper. Place the peppers on a baking pan and bake for 15 minutes, until softened a little.

To prepare the stuffing: Heat the olive oil in a pan and sauté the onion, carrot, celery, pumpkin seeds, garlic, cumin, and chili powder for 3-4 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften and become lightly browned. Add the cooked quinoa, oregano, and basil to the vegetables and continue to sauté for 1 more minute, until all ingredients are well blended. Salt to taste.

Fill each pepper half with even amounts of the quinoa filling, and place them in a lightly oiled ovenproof casserole dish. Add the ½ c. water to the pan. Cover the dish with foil and bake for 20-25 minutes, until the peppers are tender.