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Warm Up With Quinoa and Walnuts

Warm up with this plant-based, protein-packed salad that features warm quinoa and crunchy walnuts. Considered a grain, quinoa is actually a seed that's high in protein and fiber. Walnuts contain high amounts of polyphenols, phytochemicals that have antioxidant properties. They're also being studied for their omega-3 fat, alpha-linolenic acid. A classically simple dressing of olive oil, lemon juice, lemon zest and tarragon tops off this nutritious dish.

Warm Quinoa and Walnut Salad

- 1 cup red quinoa
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 2 cups (10 oz.) frozen shelled edamame
- 2 Tbsp. fresh tarragon, chopped (2 tsp. dried)
- 1 Tbsp. lemon zest, freshly grated
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 3/4 cup jarred roasted red peppers, drained and coarsely chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pkg. (5 oz.) baby spinach
- 1/4 - 1/3 cup chopped walnuts

In large strainer, rinse quinoa well.

In large pot over medium heat, toast quinoa until it starts to crackle, about 5 minutes. Add broth and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to low and gently simmer for 12 minutes. Add edamame on top of quinoa. Do not stir or disturb quinoa. Cover again and continue cooking for 10 minutes or until edamame is tender. Carefully drain any remaining liquid. Set aside and let stand for 15 minutes.

In large mixing bowl, add tarragon, zest, olive oil and juice. Gently stir to combine. Reserve 2 tablespoons. Add red peppers and quinoa mixture and toss to combine well. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

In another large mixing bowl, gently toss spinach with reserved dressing.

Evenly divide spinach among six plates and top with quinoa mixture. Garnish salad with walnuts and serve.

Makes 6 servings.

Per serving: 270 calories, 14 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat), 30 g carbohydrate, 10 g protein, 6 g dietary fiber, 150 mg sodium.

