

Let's get the basics out of the way - it's pronounced "keen-wha". Next steps, we show you how to cook it, plus the FL team shares new ways to use this healthy grain.

What is quinoa?

Quinoa is an ancient grain. What does that even mean, you ask? Ancient grains are a group of wholegrains that have been cultivated in the same way for centuries.

The most important nutrition facts to know about:

- Not refined, processed or genetically modified.
- Has more protein than any other grain.
- What's more, quinoa is naturally gluten-free, making them a good choice for those who may be intolerant.
- You'll also note there is often more than one variety of quinoa on our local selves. White quinoa has a mild flavour, while black or red will have a slightly bolder, earthier taste.

Whichever you choose, the nutritional value and cooking method stays the same.

How to cook quinoa

Always start by rinsing your quinoa in a fine mesh sieve under cold water, to rinse off the natural dry coating.

Next step, combine 1 part quinoa with 2 parts water. You can use cold water and bring it to the boil on the stovetop, or even in the microwave - we won't judge!

Remember, just like rice or beans, the volume of quinoa triples when cooked, meaning 1 cup of dry quinoa makes about 3 cups cooked quinoa.

5 clever ways to use quinoa

1. Bulk up your salad with quinoa - serve it warm or cold. As used in this purple quinoa salad: Finely grate 200g cooked beetroot. Toss with 1.5 cups (375ml) cooked quinoa, ½ packet (50g) pumpkin seeds and/or sunflower seeds and ¼ punnet (5g) each fresh mint, dill and parsley. Season and add lemon juice to taste. Divide quinoa mixture between two bowls and top with 1 or 2 halved avocados, ½ sliced cucumber, a handful of rocket (optional) and a dollop of plain or Yokos dairy-free yoghurt on top. Serves 2.



2. Combine equal parts oats and quinoa and cook as you would cook plain oats (with a ratio of 1 part grains to 2 parts water). Try this [multigrain oats with berry compote and seed sprinkle](#) to spruce up breakfast time.



3. Serve as a side with your curry, stir-fry, stew or anything else you'd normally have with a starchy rice side. Swap the jasmine rice for quinoa in this [coconut and lemongrass chicken](#) dinner.

4. Add quinoa to a wrap for your office lunch. Pairs wonderfully with roasted root veg, avo or chickpeas.



5. Quinoa has some starch, which means it can stick together a little if you don't rinse it well. Use it as a binder for veg fritters, meat-free burger patties or even fish cakes (for those not following a strict plant-based diet). Ready to give quinoa a try? Why not swap the breadcrumbs in this [biltong and cheddar burgers](#) recipe for ½ cup (125ml) of cooked quinoa.