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Quinoa and black-bean cakes with cumin and chile make a healthy burger. MICHELLE DUDASH

Quinoa, spices pat into a tasty vegetarian burger

Breaking news: My husband agreed to eat one vegetarian meal per week and I knew I had to act quickly before he changed his mind. I made quinoa burgers, beginning by cooking the grain in a vegetable broth for additional flavor.



MICHELLE DUDASH

HEALTHY DISH

Michelle Dudash of Scottsdale is a registered dietitian, chef and author of "Clean Eating for Busy Families." Find a link to her blog, Dudash's Healthy Dish, at azvoices.com.

Add cumin and chile powder for Southwestern flavor. Serve with avocado and salsa for additional pops of flavor. In this dish, ground flaxseed contributes fiber, omega-3s and phytochemicals while serving as the binding agent for all the ingredients.

Quinoa and Black Bean Cakes with Cumin and Chile

1 cup dry quinoa
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus additional for brushing
2 scallions, green and white parts divided, thinly sliced
1 3/4 cups organic or reduced-sodium vegetable broth
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
1/4 cup roasted red bell peppers, diced
2 teaspoons lemon or lime juice
1 tablespoon ground flaxseed, plus 3 tablespoons (45 ml) water

1 tablespoon nutritional yeast seasoning
1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon chili powder
Sliced avocado and salsa

In a medium saucepan, cover quinoa with water and soak for 5 minutes. Stir quinoa, pour into a fine strainer and rinse with cool water. Heat the saucepan over medium heat and add oil. When oil begins to shimmer, add quinoa and white parts of scallions and cook until quinoa becomes aromatic and slightly golden, about 4 minutes. Add broth, salt and pepper and bring to a boil on high. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to sit covered 5 minutes to continue to absorb the moisture. Fluff quinoa with a fork.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper or silicone baking mat. Push quinoa to one side of the pot and add black beans to the other side. Mash with a fork just until all of the beans have been broken in half, but are not mushy. Add green parts of scallions (reserving 1 tablespoon), bell peppers, lemon juice, flaxseed slurry, nutritional yeast, cumin and chili powder and stir all together with the quinoa and beans. Using a 1/4-cup measure, scoop the quinoa mixture and place into evenly spaced mounds on the sheet pan. Shape into 1/2-inch patties. Brush the tops with oil and bake for 20 minutes, until the cakes are slightly dried and cohesive.

Serve with avocados, salsa and remaining green scallions.

Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 363 calories, 7 g total fat (1 g saturated, 0 trans), 683 mg sodium, 0 cholesterol, 40 g total carbohydrate (8 g fiber), 12 g protein.