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## Quinoa-Stuffed Peppers



Serves 8

This dish freezes well for future meals. [Quinoa](#) provides whole-grain goodness and a serving of protein.

1 medium onion, finely chopped (1 cup)

2 Tbs. olive oil

2 ribs celery, finely chopped (½ cup)

1 Tbs. ground cumin

2 cloves garlic, minced (2 tsp.)

1 10-oz. pkg. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry

2 15-oz. cans diced tomatoes, drained, liquid reserved

1 15-oz. can black beans, rinsed and drained

¾ cup quinoa

3 large carrots, grated (1½ cups)

1½ cups grated reduced-fat pepper Jack cheese, divided

4 large red bell peppers, halved lengthwise, ribs removed

1. Heat oil in saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and celery, and cook 5 minutes, or until soft. Add cumin and garlic, and sauté 1 minute. Stir in spinach and drained tomatoes. Cook 5 minutes, or until most of liquid has evaporated.

2. Stir in black beans, quinoa, carrots, and 2 cups water. Cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 20 minutes, or until quinoa is tender. Stir in 1 cup cheese. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Pour liquid from tomatoes in bottom of baking dish.

4. Fill each bell pepper half with heaping ¾-cup quinoa mixture, and place in baking dish. Cover with foil, and bake 1 hour. Uncover, and sprinkle each pepper with 1 Tbs. remaining cheese. Bake 15 minutes more, or until tops of stuffed peppers are browned. Let stand 5 minutes. Transfer stuffed peppers to serving plates, and drizzle each with pan juices before serving.

February 2009 p.66

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