

Mediterranean Quinoa-Stuffed Bell Peppers with Walnuts

Vibrant bell peppers filled with protein-rich quinoa, crunchy walnuts, and garden vegetables create a satisfying low-glycemic meal that keeps blood sugar stable.

Prep: 20 min

Cook: 25 min

Total: 45 min

Servings: 4

GL 7.2 / GI 29

Ingredients

Low GI (53), complete protein source uncooked quinoa

Healthy monounsaturated fat, slows glucose absorption extra virgin olive oil

Very low GI, high fiber vegetable zucchini, diced

Low GI (38), rich in lycopene fresh tomatoes, chopped

Low GI, adds flavor depth yellow onion, finely chopped

Minimal glycemic impact, adds crunch celery stalk, finely chopped

Healthy omega-3 fats, improves glycemic response raw walnuts, chopped

May help improve insulin sensitivity fresh garlic cloves, minced

Aromatic herb, no glycemic impact fresh thyme leaves, chopped

For seasoning sea salt

For seasoning freshly ground black pepper

Adds umami, minimal glycemic impact grated Parmesan cheese

Very low GI, excellent vitamin C source large bell peppers, halved and seeded

Instructions

Step 1

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Rinse the quinoa thoroughly under cold water using a fine-mesh strainer to remove any bitter coating. Cook the quinoa according to package directions, typically combining 1 cup quinoa with 2 cups water, bringing to a boil, then reducing to simmer covered for 15 minutes until water is absorbed. Fluff with a fork and set aside.

Step 2

While the quinoa cooks, prepare your vegetables. Dice the zucchini into small cubes, chop the tomatoes, finely chop the onion and celery, mince the garlic cloves, and chop the fresh thyme leaves. Roughly chop the walnuts into small pieces. Cut the bell peppers in half lengthwise, remove the seeds and membranes, and set aside.

Step 3

Heat a large sauté pan or skillet over medium-high heat. Add the olive oil and swirl to coat the pan. Once the oil shimmers, add the chopped zucchini, tomatoes, onion, celery, walnuts, minced garlic, and fresh thyme. Sauté for 2 minutes at high heat to develop color and flavor.

Step 4

Reduce the heat to medium and continue cooking the vegetable mixture for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender but still have some texture. The zucchini should be softened and the tomatoes should release their juices to create a light sauce.

Step 5

Add the cooked quinoa to the vegetable mixture along with the salt, black pepper, and grated Parmesan cheese. Stir everything together thoroughly, ensuring the quinoa is evenly distributed and well-seasoned. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.

Step 6

Arrange the bell pepper halves cut-side up on a rimmed baking sheet. Divide the quinoa-vegetable mixture evenly among the four pepper halves, packing it gently into each cavity—you should have about 1/2 cup filling per pepper half. Cover the entire baking sheet tightly with aluminum foil.

Step 7

Bake the covered peppers for 15-20 minutes until the peppers begin to soften. Remove the foil and continue baking for an additional 5-7 minutes until the peppers reach your desired tenderness and the filling is lightly golden on top. The peppers should be tender but still hold their shape.

Step 8

Remove from the oven and let the stuffed peppers rest for 3-4 minutes before serving. This allows the filling to set slightly and makes them easier to handle. Serve warm, optionally garnished with additional fresh thyme or a sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. For optimal blood sugar control, pair with a green salad dressed with olive oil and vinegar, and eat the salad first to maximize the fiber preload effect.