



## 'Where's the Beef': A 3-Course Vegan Dinner

By Sarah Kuziomko

### **Vegan Quinoa Salad** *serves 4-6*

**1 cup uncooked quinoa · 1 ½ cups cold water · ½ tsp salt · 2 tsp olive oil · assorted veggies (snow peas, celery, green beans, carrots, red/green peppers, tomato, cucumber) · ¼ chopped fresh parsley or cilantro · ½ walnuts, sunflower seeds or toasted cashews · 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice · 1/4 cup olive oil · ½ tsp salt · optional ingredients include ginger, dried unsweetened cranberries, olives, fresh mint, or feta cheese.**

Soak quinoa in cold water for 30 minutes. Rinse several times before placing in a pot full of water. Add 1/2 tsp salt and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and let cook an additional 15 minutes. Remove from heat and allow it to sit for 5 minutes. Gently fluff with a fork and set aside to cool. Steam carrots and green veggies. Chop tomatoes, herbs and cucumber. In a large serving dish, add 2 tbsp lemon juice, 1/4 cup of olive oil, 1/2 tsp salt. Whisk to combine. Add veggies, quinoa, herbs and nuts and toss.

Cover and chill until ready to eat!

### **Maori Rice** *serves 4-6*

**3 large sweet potatoes · 2 cups brown rice (uncooked) · ½ cup raisins · 4 tbsp olive oil · 1 tsp onion powder · ½ tsp garlic powder · ¼ tsp chili powder · ¼ tsp cinnamon · salt and white pepper to taste · ½ cup barbecue sauce**

Preheat the oven to 375°.

Wrap the sweet potatoes individually in aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes. Prepare the rice according to the package's instructions. Remove the sweet potatoes from the oven, unwrap and allow to cool slightly. Peel the sweet potatoes and dice into 1" cubes. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a pan. Sauté sweet potatoes in olive oil over medium-high heat for 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium low. Add onion, garlic, chili powder, cinnamon, salt, and pepper. Add ½ tbsp olive oil and sauté for 5 more minutes. Reduce heat to low. Add raisins and ½ tbsp olive oil and sauté for 5 minutes. Heat the bbq sauce in a small saucepan or in a microwave. Serve sweet potatoes and raisin combination on a bed of rice drizzled with warm barbecue sauce.

## **Banana Split Cupcakes** *makes 12*

**1/2 cup very ripe banana, mashed well · 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour · 1/4 tsp baking soda · 1 tsp baking powder · 1/2 tsp salt · 3/4 cup granulated sugar · 1/3 cup canola oil · 2/3 cup rice or soy milk · 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract · 1/2 tsp almond extract · 1/4 cup dark chocolate, finely chopped**

**Vegan Peanut Buttercream Frosting (see below)**

**Quick Melty Chocolate Ganache (see below)**

**Additional topping options: sprinkles, chopped walnuts, candied cherries, fresh or dried banana slices**

Preheat oven to 350°.

Line muffin pan with paper liners.

In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and sugar. In a separate, smaller bowl mash ripe banana until smooth. To that bowl add oil, rice or soy milk, vanilla and almond extract. Quickly and gently add the wet ingredients to the dry, mixing until it just begins to combine— don't over mix (very small lumps are okay).

Fill liners two-thirds full. Top the batter of each cupcake with 1 tsp chopped chocolate. With a small knife, carefully stir each cupcake two or three times to swirl in chocolate. Bake for 20 to 22 minutes till knife inserted into cupcake comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack before frosting.

### **Vegan Peanut Buttercream Frosting**

**1/4 cup margarine, softened · 2 tbsp shortening (Earth Balance sticks are the best for this) · 1/3 cup creamy peanut butter · 1 tbsp barley malt syrup or molasses (optional) · 1 1/2 cups confectioners sugar, sifted · 1 to 2 tbsp rice milk, soy milk, or soy creamer**

Cream together margarine and shortening at medium speed till smooth. Add peanut butter, barley malt syrup, and vanilla and continue to beat until very smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in sugar; mixture will be very stiff. Dribble in rice milk a little at a time, beating continuously until frosting is a pale tan and very fluffy. Adjust the thickness by adding rice milk or more confectioners sugar in small increments if necessary.

### **Quick Melty Chocolate Ganache**

**3 tbsp soy creamer or soy milk · 1/3 cup semisweet chocolate chips**

Heat soy creamer in a small saucepan over medium heat till just about to simmer. Remove from heat; add chocolate chips and stir till chocolate is completely melted and creamer is incorporated. Set aside and allow to cool for 10 minutes. With a spatula scoop into a prepared pastry bag or plastic bag with the tip chopped off, or drizzle haphazardly with a fork. Quick Melty Chocolate Ganache will set when fully cooled.

### **To Assemble Banana Split Cupcakes:**

Top cooled cupcakes with *Vegan Peanut Buttercream Frosting*. Swirl *Quick Melty Chocolate Ganache* over frosting. Sprinkle with optional toppings.