



# Quinoa Salad Recipe for Fresh Flavor

## Introduction

Mediterranean Quinoa Salad is a vibrant, nutritious dish that brings together a burst of flavors and textures. Perfect for a light meal or as a side dish, this salad features wholesome ingredients, including quinoa, fresh vegetables, and aromatic herbs. Ideal for meal prep, this recipe can also be customized to suit your dietary preferences.

## Detailed Ingredients with measures

3 cups cooked quinoa

1 recipe Roasted Tomatoes  
2 cups arugula  
1 cup sliced Persian cucumbers  
1 cup mixed fresh basil and mint leaves  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup crumbled feta cheese  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup kalamata olives, pitted and sliced  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup diced red onion  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup toasted pine nuts  
1 recipe Italian Dressing, plus 2 additional garlic cloves, grated  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon sea salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
Red pepper flakes  
1 cup roasted chickpeas

## Prep Time

15 minutes

## Cook Time

45 minutes (including quinoa and roasted tomatoes)

## Total Time

1 hour

## **Yield**

Serves 4-6

This Mediterranean Quinoa Salad is not only delicious but also easy to make. With the option to prepare the quinoa and roasted tomatoes ahead of time, you can enjoy this meal any day of the week. The crunchy vegetables, fresh herbs, and creamy feta create a lovely contrast, while the roasted chickpeas add an extra layer of nutrition. For a vegan version, simply omit the feta cheese. Enjoy!

## **Detailed Directions and Instructions**

### **Step 1**

In a large bowl, combine the cooked quinoa, roasted tomatoes, arugula, cucumbers, basil and mint leaves, feta cheese, kalamata olives, red onion, and toasted pine nuts.

### **Step 2**

Drizzle half of the Italian dressing over the mixture and toss to combine.

### **Step 3**

Sprinkle with sea salt, freshly ground black pepper, and a few pinches of red pepper flakes. Toss again to ensure even seasoning.

See also [Swiss Chicken Casserole](#)

### **Step 4**

Taste and adjust the seasoning, adding more dressing if desired.

### **Step 5**

Top the salad with roasted chickpeas just before serving.

## **Notes**

### **Note 1**

The quinoa and roasted tomatoes can be prepared up to 3 days in advance and stored in the refrigerator until ready to use.

### **Note 2**

To make this recipe vegan, omit the feta cheese.





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## Cook techniques

### Cooking Quinoa

Rinse the quinoa under cold water to remove bitterness. Cook in a ratio of 1 part quinoa to 2 parts water or broth. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, cover, and cook for about 15 minutes until water is absorbed.

### Roasting Tomatoes

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Halve the tomatoes, place them on a baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil, and season with salt. Roast for approximately 20-30 minutes until they are juicy and slightly

caramelized.

### **Toasting Pine Nuts**

In a dry skillet over medium heat, add the pine nuts. Stir frequently for about 3-5 minutes or until they are golden brown and fragrant. Be careful not to burn them.

### **Preparing Roasted Chickpeas**

Drain and rinse canned chickpeas, then pat them dry. Toss with olive oil and seasonings of your choice. Roast at 400°F (200°C) for 20-30 minutes, shaking the pan occasionally, until crispy.

### **Making Italian Dressing**

Combine olive oil, vinegar, Dijon mustard, garlic, and Italian herbs in a jar. Shake well until emulsified. Adjust the ratio of oil to vinegar for desired taste.

### **Mixing Fresh Herbs**

Use a sharp knife to finely chop fresh basil and mint leaves. This enhances their flavor and allows them to blend better into the salad.

See also Stuffed Potatoes

### **Combining Ingredients**

When mixing salad ingredients, start with the base components (quinoa and vegetables) and lightly toss them before adding delicate ingredients like herbs and cheese to prevent bruising.

## FAQ

### **Can I use other types of greens instead of arugula?**

Yes, you can substitute arugula with spinach, kale, or mixed greens based on your preference.

### **How do I store leftovers?**

Store any leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

### **Can I make this salad in advance?**

Yes, the quinoa and roasted tomatoes can be prepared in advance and stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Combine with fresh ingredients just before serving.

### **Is there a gluten-free option for the dressing?**

Yes, ensure your vinegar and other dressing ingredients are labeled gluten-free, or use a simple mix of olive oil and citrus juice.

### **Can I add protein to this salad?**

Absolutely! Grilled chicken, tofu, or baked salmon would be great additions for more protein.

### **How can I make this salad vegan?**

Simply omit the feta cheese to keep the salad completely vegan.

**What can I substitute for feta cheese?**

You can use avocado or a vegan feta alternative if you're looking for a creamier texture.

## Conclusion

The Mediterranean Quinoa Salad is a vibrant and nutritious dish that perfectly combines fresh ingredients and bold flavors. It's versatile enough to serve as a main course or a side dish, and can easily be customized to suit various dietary preferences. Enjoy its delightful taste while reaping the health benefits of quinoa, vegetables, and healthy fats.

**Chickpea and Avocado Salad**

A refreshing salad featuring chickpeas, creamy avocado, cherry tomatoes, red onion, and a zesty lime dressing. Perfect for a quick lunch or a light dinner.

See also [Apple Pear Quinoa Crisp](#)

**Greek Pasta Salad**

Combine cooked pasta with cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, red onion, olives, feta cheese, and a lemon-oregano dressing for a hearty and flavorful salad.

**Spinach and Strawberry Salad**

Mix fresh spinach with sliced strawberries, almonds, feta cheese, and a balsamic vinaigrette for a sweet and savory combination that's perfect for spring and summer.



### **Roasted Vegetable Quinoa Bowl**

Toss roasted seasonal vegetables with quinoa and a drizzle of tahini dressing. This bowl is not only flavorful but also packed with nutrients.

### **Curried Lentil Salad**

Combine cooked lentils with diced carrots, celery, and a curry mustard dressing for an earthy and satisfying salad that's high in protein and fiber.



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