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Kale & Quinoa Salad with Dates, Almonds & Citrus Dressing

YIELD

Serves 6

INGREDIENTS

For the salad and toppings:

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 large onion, diced

Salt

1/2 cup red quinoa

1 small clove garlic, smashed

1 bunch lacinato kale (3/4 to 1 pound, with stems)

1/2 heaping cup whole dates

1/2 cup roasted salted whole almonds

For the dressing:

1 clementine or mandarin orange, juiced

1/2 lime, juiced

2 teaspoons maple syrup

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Heat the olive oil in a wide sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onion and sprinkle lightly with salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion has darkened to a toasty brown and smells caramelized — about 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside. You should have about 1/2 cup of cooked onions. (This can be done up to 3 days ahead of time, and the onions can be refrigerated.)

2 Rinse the quinoa in a fine mesh strainer. Add it and the garlic to a 2-quart saucepan set over medium-high heat and sauté for about a minute both to dry the grain and toast it lightly. Add 1 cup water and 1/2 teaspoon salt and bring to a boil. Cover and turn the heat to low; cook for 15 minutes. Turn off the heat but leave the lid on for an additional 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, remove the lid and fluff with a fork.

3 While the onions are caramelizing and the quinoa is cooking, slice off the muddy bottoms of the kale stems, then slice the rest of the bunch into fine ribbons. Wash thoroughly and spread on a towel to dry.

4 Pit the dates and slice them into quarters. Roughly chop the almonds, by which I mean try to chop each almond into just two or three pieces, no more.

5 Make the dressing: Whisk the juices together (you

should have about 1/4 cup total of juice, or a little less). Whisk in the maple syrup and olive oil. The dressing will be emulsified but still thin. Stir about 2 tablespoons of the dressing into the quinoa after it finishes cooking.

6 Assemble the salad: Toss the kale with all of the still-warm quinoa and the caramelized onions. Toss with about half the dressing and taste. Add the remaining dressing if desired, then toss with the dates and almonds. Taste a bite; if it needs more salt, add it now, as well as fresh pepper if desired.

7 This salad keeps very well; the kale gets more tender as it sits in the dressing. Refrigerate for up to 5 days.

RECIPE NOTES

Be sure to use a leafy kale in this salad, as opposed to a curly. How to know the difference? Lacinato kale (also called dinosaur, Tuscan, or black kale) comes in bundled sheaves of leaves, like chard or collards. Curly kale looks more like a big bouquet of floral filler, with ruffled edges, and it is too tough for this recipe. (I find chewing raw curly kale to be like taking bites of shrubbery, personally, so I usually cook it.) See more [here](#) about types of kale.
