

Black Bean and Quinoa Stuffed Peppers

These stuffed peppers are loaded with heart and brain friendly nutrients and fiber. Despite that quinoa is technically a seed instead of a grain, like grains it still has a moderate glycemic load, potentially raising your blood sugar levels if eaten in excess. Fortunately adding beans with quinoa will block that rise in blood sugar, and combined they provide a generous assortment of minerals, vitamins, and protein. This dish can be prepped in advance and just pop it in the oven 45 minutes prior to serving, making it a nice meal to share with company. Colorful bell peppers provide sweetness which is a treat, but if you are a bit more daring, poblanos add a whole extra flavor dimension—just be aware that poblanos vary from mildly sweet to fairly hot and spicy, and each poblano can vary in heat intensity.

Prep time: 15-20 minutes **Baking Time:** 45 minutes **Serves:** Four

Ingredients:

½ cup	Quinoa, rinsed, drained
½ cup	Water
1 Tbsp	Avocado oil
½ medium	Sweet onion, diced
2 medium	Celery stalks, diced
¼ tsp	Sea salt
1 tsp	Dried oregano
½ tsp	Chili flakes
2 medium	Plum tomatoes, chopped
2	Green onions, diced
¼ cup	Fresh cilantro, chopped
2 (15-oz) cans	Black beans, cooked, rinsed, drained
4 large	Bell Peppers (Red, yellow, or orange; or poblano), slice in half, remove seeds and membranes

Garnish

¼ cup	Chopped walnuts (or pecans)
½ cup	Organic gruyere cheese, grated (optional)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350° (F).

Combine quinoa and water in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, cover, then remove from heat, and set aside. Heat a sauté pan to medium-high heat. Add oil, then onion and sauté for 1-2 minutes until onion starts to soften. Add celery, salt, oregano, and chili flakes, and continue to sauté, stirring occasionally, for 2-3 minutes, until onions are translucent. Reduce heat to medium, add tomatoes and green onions, heat for another 2 minutes, stir in cilantro, black beans, and remove from heat.

After 12-15 minutes, stir quinoa; when cooked it should be fluffy with little pearly white sprouts extending, and be slightly al dente when tasting a bite. Mix quinoa in with vegetables.

Grease an oven proof dish lightly with avocado oil. Lay peppers and spoon in black bean, quinoa and veggie mixture into each pepper. Garnish with nut and cheese. Bake for 45 minutes and serve.