



# Quinoa

## Did You Know?

In addition to the many health benefits, quinoa is a very versatile crop.

- It is naturally resistant to pests.
- It is able to adapt and grow in a wide variety of climates.

For these reasons and more, quinoa is currently being researched for its potential role in improving world food security.



Quinoa is a nutritious food that has been around for thousands of years. It is often used as a substitute for grains, but it is actually a seed. It has gained popularity in recent years, particularly for those following [gluten free](#) or vegetarian diets.

## Why quinoa?

- It is a great source of [protein](#). 1 cup of cooked quinoa contains about 220 calories and 8 grams of protein.
- It contains all 9 essential amino acids, making it a complete protein.
- It has the highest [potassium](#) content of all whole grains, containing over 300mg per 1 cup cooked.
- It is cholesterol free and low-fat.
- It is a good source of fiber, which helps slow the rise of blood glucose and keeps you feeling fuller longer.
- It is a good source of iron and magnesium.
- It is gluten free, and easy to digest.

## Varieties

Although there are many varieties of quinoa, there are two commonly found in the United States:

- Traditional – pale ivory in color, found in most grocery stores, stronger flavor.
- Inca Red – dark red in color, found in specialty or natural food stores, higher in protein, calcium, and iron.

## How do I use it?

- Quinoa can be cooked just like rice, and substituted for rice, pasta, or even cereal!
- Rinse quinoa first to remove its bitter coating, unless the package states this has already been rinsed.
- Toasting quinoa in a dry pan before cooking adds a great nutty flavor.