Main dishes

Quinoa Tabbouleh

A gluten-free riff on the Levantine herb salad — cooked quinoa standing in for bulgur, but the spirit kept luminously intact: mostly flat-leaf parsley and fresh mint, punctuated by sweet tomato and cool cucumber, all dressed generously in sharp lemon and grassy olive oil.

Time 40 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 150 g White quinoa
- ☐ 80 g Flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- ☐ 20 g Fresh mint leaves, finely chopped
- ☐ 300 g Ripe tomatoes, seeded and finely diced
- ☐ 200 g Persian or English cucumber, finely diced
- ☐ 4 whole Scallions (spring onions), thinly sliced
- ☐ 60 ml Fresh lemon juice
- ☐ 60 ml Extra-virgin olive oil
- ☐ 6 g Fine sea salt
- ☐ 2 g Freshly ground black pepper
- ☐ 300 ml Cold water (for cooking quinoa)

Let's make it.

01 Rinse the quinoa under cold running water for a full 60 seconds in a fine-mesh sieve, rubbing the grains between your palms. This removes the bitter saponin coating. Combine with the water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce to the lowest simmer, cover, and cook 12–14 minutes until all water is absorbed. Remove from heat and let steam, covered, for 5 minutes. Then tip onto a large tray or baking sheet and spread into a thin layer to cool completely to room temperature — adding warm quinoa to the salad will wilt the herbs and cook the vegetables.

02 The knife work here makes or breaks tabbouleh. Strip the parsley leaves from their stems (save stems for stock) and chop very finely — almost to a near-paste in texture, not a rough chop. The mint should be treated the same way. Dice the seeded tomatoes and cucumber to a uniformly fine dice, roughly 5mm. Slice the scallions thinly, including most of the green tops. Tabbouleh is a parsley salad with other ingredients; if the quinoa is dominant, you've made a grain bowl. Parsley should be the visual and volumetric majority.

03 In a large bowl, combine the cooled quinoa with the chopped herbs, tomatoes, cucumber and scallions. Drizzle over the lemon juice and olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and toss gently but thoroughly. Taste and adjust — authentic tabbouleh is assertively lemony and well-salted; it should make your eyes water slightly with the brightness of lemon. Let rest at room temperature for 10–15 minutes before serving — this brief rest allows the quinoa to absorb the dressing and the flavors to marry.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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