

Recipes included at this site do not appear in
A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul.

May 2016

**GRAIN SALADS CAN EASILY MOVE FROM SIDE SALADS
TO CENTER STAGE:**

Barley and Wild Rice Salad with Dried Cranberries

**Wild Rice, Carrot, and Papaya Salad
with Black Tea and Vinegar Salad Dressing**

Roasted Corn Salad with Basil *Vinaigrette* and Grated Cheese

Millet Salad with Vegetables and Cheese

During the Great Migration periods from their African cradle hominid peoples often interrupted their nomadic lifestyle for several seasons when the promise of plenty presented itself. These periods of temporary settlement gradually became longer and longer. They remained hunter-gathers but soon understood that some animals could be domesticated to live with them in their settlements and the fruits of the plants they gathered could be planted to increase their resources.

As we have uncovered their settlements, we have learned how important grains were to these people. Archeological excavations in the Levant, at Netiv Higdud, Tell Aswad, and several other sites, confirm that the grass species now known as emmer wheat was under cultivation 23,000 years ago as our ancestors created settlements during their journey north from the Valley of the Nile. About 12,000 years ago, give or take a few hundred years, the ancestor of our modern wheat was under cultivation in southeastern Turkey. This finding is considered to be confirmation of the first cultivation of wheat and of great importance to the survival of our species. It led to an estimated 25,000 different cultivars of *Triticum*. The wild grasses of the genus *Triticum* from which modern wheat evolved, such as emmer, einkorn, and spelt, collectively known as farro and Khorosan wheat, marketed as Kamut, can still be found today in specialty stores and in natural food stores.



Barley was one of the first cereal grains cultivated in the Fertile Crescent at about the same time as emmer and eikorn wheats were introduced, i. e., about 8500 BC. By 4200 BC barley had been domesticated as far north as Finland.

Archeological evidence suggests that some species of grasses, collectively known as millet, were under cultivation in China between 8300-6700 BC. Millet cultivation had spread beyond the Caucasus by 5000 BC. It is an important crop in North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa today. Millets are comparable in protein content to wheat and superior to rice. Their contribution of fiber to the diet is higher than both.

It is generally agreed that rice, essential to the survival of millions on this planet, was domesticated as early as c. 11,500 BC in the Pearl River valley of China and probably under cultivation by 7000 BC. Cultivation spread west to Europe and from Europe to the New World and to Africa as a direct result of European colonization.

A fortunate gene mutation is thought to have led to the plant *Avena sativa*, the cereal grain oats. Although the ancestor of today's crop, *Avena sterilis*, grew in the Near East, cultivation of oats did not begin in the Fertile Crescent, but instead in Europe during the Bronze Age (3150-1300 BC). Researchers in Switzerland confirmed Bronze Age cultivation of oats and oats were identified in Egypt dating to 2000 BC, the Middle Kingdom period coincident with the Intermediate Bronze Age in Europe. The popularity of oats is still relegated to Europe and to the areas of nineteenth century European colonization such as the United States.

Cultivation of grains in the Western hemisphere was a more modern development as you move through the timeline. Quinoa appears to have been cultivated about 3,000-4,000 years ago in the valleys of the Andes in Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia. Amaranth or *huauhtle* was a very important food to the Aztecs for whom eighty percent of their calorie intake was derived from this plant. Amaranth is not a grain but it is increasingly used as such in modern cuisine. Not only is it still cultivated in Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru, demand has encouraged other markets including the southern United States, India, China, and Nepal.

Although maize was domesticated by the peoples of Mesoamerica as early as 2500 BC, cultivation of corn on a large scale was not practical until the introduction of the horse by the Spanish explorers in the 1500s AD. Corn



kernels were carried around the world and the advantage of this New World grain was its ability to adapt to a multitude of climates and water conditions.

Wild rice is also a New World grain which has been harvested by native peoples for over one thousand years. Interestingly, it has also been grown in China. Wild rice, also known as “crazy oats,” “Canada rice,” “Indian rice,” and “water oats,” is not a rice; it is not a member of the genus *Oryza* as is rice. However, both rice and wild rice are aquatic grasses, thriving under cultivation in shallow water. Two annual species of *Zizania* are native to the Canadian and United States border region on either side of the Great Lakes and the Saint Lawrence River. Historically harvested exclusively from canoes by Native Americans, large scale commercial cultivation in recent years in California, Minnesota, Saskatchewan, Hungary, and Australia have been very successful. A perennial species is native to the San Marcos River in Texas.

Grasses have traveled through many centuries to end up on our salad plates. They provide the amino acid lysine to enable easy protein complementation with legumes. I guess my uncle was not really so “off base” as he jokingly acknowledged my vegetarianism back in the 1970s by suggesting that I might prefer to graze in the backyard.

BARLEY AND WILD RICE SALAD WITH DRIED CRANBERRIES

TPT - 6 hours;
4 hours = dried fruit rehydration period;
1 hour = refrigeration period

The week before Thanksgiving a friend, knowing that harvest meals were my challenge and that there was tradition but there was always an adventure, asked me what kind of salad I was planning for the holiday meal. When I told her I was going to make a barley and wild rice salad, she looked at me as if I had two heads; she was of the “vegetarians eat gruel” mentality and thought that was the kind of grain-thing vegetarians ate as a main course. She recovered her composure and asked how the salad would be made. Stimulating her interest seemed like a considerable victory. The following week she asked for the recipe . . . it was a victory.

1/2 cup dried cranberries
4 dried, sulfite-free apricots—chopped
1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

1/4 cup pearled barley
1/4 cup wild rice—well-rinsed
3 cups boiling water

1/4 cup orange juice reserved from fruit soaking
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon very finely chopped Italian red onion
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
Salt, to taste

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
1/4 cup toasted pecan halves

In a small bowl, combine dried cranberries, chopped apricots, and orange juice. Allow at least 4 hours for rehydration of the fruits.

In a saucepan set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, combine barley, wild rice, and *boiling* water. Allow to cook for about 45 minutes, or until both grains are tender. Drain well. Turn into a mixing bowl.

Drain dried fruits *but retain orange juice*. Add dried fruits to grains.

In a small bowl, combine 1/4 cupful of the orange juice drained from the fruits, olive oil, and *very finely* chopped onion. Stir *gently*, but *thoroughly*. Season with pepper and salt. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Turn into a serving bowl.

Add chopped fresh parsley and toasted pecan halves just before serving.

Yields 8 servings
adequate for 6 people

Notes: *This recipe can be made ahead of time to this point and actually profits from a twenty-four-hour flavor development period. Garnish with the crisp parsley and pecan halves just before serving.

This recipe can be doubled, when required.

1/8 SERVING – PROTEIN = 1.9 g.; FAT = 6.6 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 13.8 g.;
CALORIES = 117; CALORIES FROM FAT = 51%

WILD RICE, CARROT, AND PAPAYA SALAD WITH BLACK TEA AND VINEGAR SALAD DRESSING

TPT - 2 hours and 19 minutes;
20 minutes = wild rice soaking period;
30 minutes = wild rice cooling period;
30 minutes = flavor development period

The strongly earthy, nutty-tasting flavor of the grain dubbed wild rice, but actually the seed of a tall aquatic grass (Zizania aquatica), and the assertive flavor of this unusual salad dressing make this salad a superb choice for a hot summer evening since you can prepare it in the cool of the morning.

2/3 cup raw wild rice

1 1/3 cups water

1 ripe papaya—peeled, seeded, and diced

3/4 cup coarsely grated carrot

1/2 cup chopped fresh coriander (*cilantro*)

**BLACK TEA AND VINEGAR SAUCE OR
SALAD DRESSING:**

6 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
3 tablespoons *strongly brewed* black tea
1/8 teaspoon *Szechuan (Sichuan) chili* paste,
or to taste*
1 garlic clove—*very finely* chopped
2 teaspoons honey
Pinch freshly ground black pepper

Boston lettuce leaves—well-washed and well-dried

2 cups *mesclún* or mixed greens

1 ripe papaya—peeled, seeded, and *thinly* sliced

Wash wild rice in several changes of *cool* water. Soak washed grain in *cool* water to cover for 20 minutes. Discard any kernels which float to the surface. Again, drain. Rinse again in several changes of *cool* water. Drain thoroughly.

In a saucepan with cover set over *MEDIUM-HIGH* heat, bring the 1 1/3 cupfuls water to the boil. Stir in rinsed and drained wild rice. Reduce heat to *LOW*, cover tightly, and cook *undisturbed* for about 40 minutes, or until grain kernels burst. Drain well. Refrigerate rice for about 30 minutes.***

Meanwhile, in a jar with a tightly fitting lid, combine rice wine vinegar, black tea, *Szechuan chili* paste, *very finely* chopped garlic, honey, and black pepper. Shake well.

Turn wild rice into a mixing bowl. Add diced papaya, grated carrot, and chopped fresh coriander (*cilantro*). Pour BLACK TEA AND VINEGAR SAUCE OR SALAD DRESSING over. Toss to coat the grain kernels. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to allow for flavors to meld.

Arrange Boston lettuce leaves in a shallow serving bowl or on a platter. Mound *mesclun* or mixed greens at the center of the Boston lettuce leaves.

Turn wild rice salad onto the mounded *mesclun*. Arrange papaya slices on top.

Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Yields 6 main course servings

Notes: *Wild rice is an unfortunate name for this wonderful grass grain since it is confusing to the cook, new to the joys of this very American grain. Wild rice is the only grain native to North America and is far more nutritious than rice. To release its perfection of flavor and texture, it should not be cooked in the same manner as white and brown rices.

**Szechuan (*Sichuan*) chili paste is available in Asian groceries and food specialty stores.

***The wild rice can be prepared as much as a day in advance. Cover and refrigerate until required.

This recipe may be doubled or halved, when required.

1/6 SERVING – PROTEIN = 3.5 g.; FAT = 0.3 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 26.2 g.;
CALORIES = 116; CALORIES FROM FAT = 2%

ROASTED CORN SALAD WITH BASIL VINAIGRETTE AND GRATED CHEESE

TPT - 59 minutes;
30 minutes = cooling and flavor
development period

I can remember hauling a huge burlap bag with fifty ears of corn home from a local farm each year for years. We “shucked and silked” and parboiled, cut the kernels from the ears, and froze it all in one-and-a-half-cup packages, except, of course, for the three ears that we had for dinner that night. The shucks were immediately taken to the compost pit and the cobs were chopped with a cleaver and then they too were dumped into the compost pit. Today we freeze far fewer ears in one-cup packages but we still value corn as a meal component and we still would not trade the farm-fresh taste of local corn, fresh or frozen, for that old canned corn we grew up with.



3 cups fresh or frozen corn kernels

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

1 large shallot—finely chopped

1 teaspoon GARLIC – BASIL VINEGAR*

1 teaspoon SWEET AND TART CRANBERRY VINEGAR*

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon grated pecorino Romano cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Prepare a jelly roll pan or baking pan with raised sides by lining with aluminum foil and then coating with *high-heat* non-stick lecithin spray coating.

In a bowl, combine corn kernels and oil. Toss to coat the corn with the oil. Spread out on the prepared baking pan. Bake in preheated 400 degree F. oven for 10 minutes. *Remove from the oven.*

Add *finely* chopped shallot and stir to mix with the corn. Spread the corn and shallots over the surface of the baking pan. Return to the oven and bake until the corn kernels *just begin to brown*—about 10 minutes more. *Remove from oven.* Turn into a mixing bowl.

Add vinegars, *finely* chopped basil, and black pepper. Toss to mix well. Set aside for about 30 minutes so that salad cools to room temperature. Stir occasionally to insure uniform flavoring. Turn into a serving bowl.**

When ready to serve, sprinkle grated cheese over.

Serve at room temperature or chilled, as preferred.

Yields 6 servings
adequate for 4 people

Notes: *Both vinegars can be found in volume II of *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods that Nourish America's Immigrant Soul*. If you do not make these vinegars, substitute herbal vinegars of choice.

**If a chilled salad is preferred, refrigerate until ready to serve.

This recipe can be halved, when required.

1/6 SERVING – PROTEIN = 5.2 g.; FAT = 3.5 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 31.3 g.;
CALORIES = 156; CALORIES FROM FAT = 21%

MILLET SALAD WITH VEGETABLES AND CHEESE

TPT - 30 minutes

The term millet is not applied to just a single grass species but to many different grasses that have nourished mankind for centuries. Cooked millet looks and tastes much like couscous and can be used as a side, just as you would use couscous. Cooked millet also resembles bulghur wheat after it has been prepared for a tabouleh salad, so it too is part of my menu arsenal. Considered a food of the poor, this ancient source of grain protein is regularly ignored . . . and it really should be preserved and celebrated.

1/4 cup millet

2 tablespoons *extra virgin* olive oil

1 1/2 cups *boiling* water

1 scallion—well-washed, trimmed, and *thinly* sliced

2 large red radishes—well-washed, trimmed, and diced

1/2 medium cucumber—peeled, seeds, and diced

3 tablespoons diced broccoli stem

1/4 cup diced *low-fat, low moisture mozzarella*

Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**1 1/2 tablespoons *calorie-reduced or light mayonnaise*
with olive oil**

In a skillet set over *LOW-MEDIUM* heat, heat oil. Add millet and cook, stirring frequently until the seeds are dry and there is fragrant aroma.

Add *boiling* water. Reduced heat to *LOW*, cover, and allow to cook for 15 minutes. Drain and rinse well in cold water. Drain well and turn into a mixing bowl.

Add sliced scallion, and diced radishes, cucumber, broccoli, and *mozzarella*. Toss *gently* with a fork to mix well. Season with black pepper. Add mayonnaise. Toss again with a fork to mix well.

Refrigerate until ready to serve.

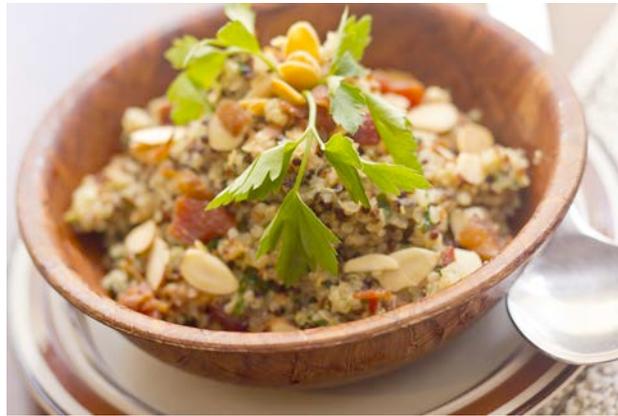
Yields 6 servings
adequate for 4 people

Notes: **This recipe may be prepared to this point several hours ahead of time and refrigerated.

When required, this recipe may be doubled.

Check *A Worldwide Vegetarian Journey to Discover the Foods That Nourish America's Immigrant Soul* for the millet *tabouleh* referenced above—volume I, pp. 526-527—in addition to several other millet salad recipes.

1/6 SERVING – PROTEIN = 2.3 g.; FAT = 6.0 g.; CARBOHYDRATE = 6.5 g.;
CALORIES = 63; CALORIES FROM FAT = 86 %



Grains in salads, grains in casseroles . . . These are indeed novel ways to move on from the 1950s restaurant menu that so often simply said “with rice” and from the clumps of naked steamed grains that were plunked on your dinner plate in the 1970s to affirm your dedication to the cosmos.

Have you explored grain desserts?

Next month I will share some of the ways in which we use wheat, in the form of farina, to add nutrition, interest, and, yes, comfort to a menu.

Please visit again,

Judy

Please note that all food value calculations are approximate and not the result of chemical analysis.