Quinoa Timbales

About
Quinoa (pronounced keen-wa) is an ancient, staple grain from the Incans in Peru that has been slow to gain popularity in North America. Quinoa is a tiny, round grain that is usually considered to be a complete protein.

Quinoa is amazingly easy to prepare. It has to be well washed before cooking (to prevent bitterness), but then it cooks for only 15 minutes. When quinoa is done cooking, a tiny, white spiral comes out of the seed and wraps around the little seed.

Ingredients
3/4 cup quinoa, thoroughly rinsed
salt and freshly milled pepper
1 tbsp olive or sunflower oil
1 red onion, finely diced
3/4 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp ground ginger
1/4 tsp ground coriander
1/8 tsp turmeric
1/4 cup chopped cilantro or parsley
1/4 cup currants
3 tbsp pine nuts or almonds, toasted and chopped
1 tsp grated orange or lemon zest

Directions
Cook the quinoa in 1 1/2 cups water with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Meanwhile, warm the oil in a small skillet. Add the onion, spices, and several grinds of pepper, and cook gently until softened, about 10 minutes. Season with salt.

Drain the quinoa when it’s done and toss it with the onion mixture along with the cilantro, currants, pine nuts, and orange zest. Pack servings of the mixture into timbale molds, cups, or ramekins, then immediately turn them out onto individual plates.

Serves 4 to 6

Reference