

## **Sarah's Quinoa Salad with Roasted Carrots and Balsamic Vinaigrette**

**Serves: 6 to 8**

### **For the roasted vegetables:**

1 ½ pounds baby rainbow carrots, washed  
(if using large carrots, cut them into pieces 2-3 inches long, ½-inch thick)  
1 red onion, cut into one-inch wedges  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
½ teaspoon kosher salt  
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

### **For the quinoa:**

1 cup quinoa, rinsed  
1 ¾ cups water  
¼ teaspoon kosher salt  
1 small bay leaf  
2 cups baby spinach leaves

### **For the salad:**

Cooked quinoa with wilted spinach  
½ cup balsamic vinaigrette, more as needed  
½ cup pistachios, shelled, coarsely chopped  
½ cup dried cranberries  
Roasted carrots and onions, cut into 1-inch pieces  
½ teaspoon kosher salt  
¼ teaspoon

### **For the Balsamic Vinaigrette:**

¼ cup balsamic vinegar  
2 tablespoons honey  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
1 clove garlic, minced  
½ teaspoon kosher salt  
½ teaspoon ground black pepper  
2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

### **Directions:**

Preheat oven to 400 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

### **Roast the vegetables:**

Place the carrots and onion wedges on the baking sheet. Drizzle the olive oil over the vegetables and toss until they are evenly coated. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake in the center of the oven until the carrots are tender and the onions start to caramelize, for about 40 to 50 minutes, depending on your oven. When done, remove from the oven and cool. Once cool, chop the roasted carrots and onion wedges into one-inch pieces and set aside.



**Meanwhile, prepare the quinoa:**

In a medium saucepan, add the quinoa, water, salt and bay leaf and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover the pan and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove the pan from the burner.

Add the spinach leaves and toss with the quinoa. Cover the pan and let the quinoa rest for 10 minutes until the spinach is wilted. The cooked quinoa can be refrigerated for up to 3 days before assembling the salad (with or without the spinach).

**Make the vinaigrette as the quinoa cooks:**

In a medium bowl or Mason jar, whisk together the vinegar, honey, mustard, garlic, salt and pepper until well combined. Add the olive oil in a slow, steady stream, whisking constantly until fully emulsified. Use immediately or refrigerate in a jar or airtight container for up to 2 weeks. Shake or whisk vigorously before serving.

**To assemble the salad:**

Toss the cooked quinoa and wilted spinach with ¼ cup of balsamic vinaigrette until combined.

Add the pistachios, dried cranberries, carrots, onions, ½ teaspoon kosher salt and ¼ teaspoon black pepper. Add another ¼ cup of vinaigrette and toss until well combined. Taste and add more dressing and seasoning as desired. Serve and enjoy.

The salad may be prepared a day in advance of serving. Store leftovers in an airtight container and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

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