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# Wild Rice, Quinoa Cherry Salad

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Anyone out there possess an adventure seeking palate? I do, I do! I also have one living in my house, my six year old daughter! She loves anything with strong flavors, complex combinations or bold tastes. She welcomes very sharp cheeses, strong sauerkraut, roasted seaweed, sautéed garlic and onion on about anything and mouthfuls of pesto-drenched salmon.

What's even more fun for me is that when she enters the realm of eating, she transforms into a small-bodied, mature food coinsurer. Critiquing my concoctions in an adult-like manner and picking out specific flavors from a completed dish (like the time she asked if I used coconut oil in the dark chocolate sauce I made for her favorite raspberry sorbet…I did…just the tiniest amount!).

It's fun not only because it feels like I'm preparing for someone who appreciates it, but also because I see her Daddy in her while she's eating. He, by far, was my favorite eater! Always willing to try new recipes and restaurants, honest about the outcome and extremely enthusiastic when he enjoyed his food. He even had this little involuntary dance when standing in the kitchen sampling something he found flavorful. Ahhh…I'm sitting here smiling just thinking of those simple memories. Kevin was wonderful to eat with, especially for someone slightly obsessed with food like me!

Now, watching our first-born daughter with what I think will be a similar palate and passion for food is so much fun for me!  Eating with her brings back happy memories and helps me to hang on to a passion her Daddy and I shared. Only now it carries on in a smaller, more feminine form. Someday I will make sure she knows how her Daddy lives on in her through something so 'everyday' simple.

Now let's make a dish that dares to combine sweet and smoky—something I know those more adventurous eaters out there might appreciate.  It's different, this one. But I really like it. It took a taste or two but then away it went.

Wild rice and quinoa together provide a nice nutrient profile and texture. Then, the cheese, cherries and pecans really put the icing on the cake (or side dish!). I'm excited to hear what you think of this one. Does it make you dance? Do tell!

## Recipe category

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## Ingredients

- ¾ cup wild rice (well rinsed)
- ½ cup quinoa*
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup fruity vinegar (I used raspberry)
- ¾ teaspoon Celtic sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2 cups fresh sweet cherries (pitted and halved)
- ¾ cup diced smoked cheddar cheese (aged goat cheese would work nicely also)**
- ½ cup chopped pecans, toasted***

## Recipe Instructions

- Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil over a high heat. Add wild rice and cook for 30 minutes.
- Add quinoa to the pan and cook until the rice and quinoa are tender, about 15 minutes more.
- Drain and rinse WELL with cold water in a sieve with very small holes. Rinse until cool to the touch.
- Meanwhile, while rice and quinoa are cooking, whisk oil, vinegar, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Cut the cheese into small cubes. Pit and half the cherries. Toast the pecans. Add that all to the oil mixture.
- Put rice/quinoa mix into a large serving bowl. Add oil/cheese mixture to the serving bowl. Toss to combine. Serve at room temperature or chill and serve cold. I prefer room temperature. ENJOY!

## Featured Image




## Recipe Description

As in this fun, sophisticated salad, unique flavors blended together often lend to a surprisingly satisfying eating experience. Easy to digest rice, high protien quinoa, cheese and cherries all mixed up makes for the perfect special occasion side dish or vegetarian main plate.

## Recipe Notes

*I enjoy using red quinoa for this recipe. It lends nicely to a slightly sweeter taste and beautiful appearance.

**Pictured is a nice orange smoked cheddar. While that looks nice on the plate, I'd prefer a white, raw smoked cheddar but my grocery store was out of stock.

***To toast your pecans, simply put them in a clean pan on the stovetop and lightly toast over a low heat for a few minutes. Watch closely so they don't burn!

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