

Private Chef, Catering & Cooking Classes

I'd be delighted to help you with any and all of your celebrations.

Join Me Around the Table for an Eat Well-Do Good Dinner!

Support the fight against Alzheimer's Disease & Enjoy delicious food & fun!

Treat Yourself to an Around the Table Chef's Apron

Cook like a chef or just look like one!

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For cooking tips, recipes and more, connect with me on FaceBook

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**As I sit down at the keyboard, all I want to do is lie down** or, at the very least, curl up on the sofa with a blanket. I am sniffly and sneezy and ache all over. Everything, yes everything, hurts. My head hurts, my shoulders hurt, my back hurts, my fingers hurt, even my skin hurts. Okay, I may be exaggerating but only the tiniest little bit. There is nothing like a cold to make you stiff and sore all over.

**This whole head cold thing started on Saturday.** Although I did my best to ignore it, I woke up with the hint of a sore throat. True to form, instead of crawling back into bed, I headed off to ski. It wouldn't be the first time I'd solved a scratchy throat and a heavy head by ignoring them. I spent the morning and early afternoon on the slopes. When my legs began to feel like lead and the snow like cement, I called it quits. Not to be daunted, I ran some errands and filled a cart at the supermarket instead of going straight home.

Although my two big, canvas bags of groceries were admittedly heavy, I managed to lug them into the kitchen. But not much more; it took an almost herculean effort to move the perishables into the refrigerator. Leaving the half-empty bags on the kitchen floor, I staggered upstairs for a nap. I'm not sure if I slept but an hour under the covers followed by a steaming shower got me going again.

**While I wasn't my usual perky self,** it was clear that all I needed was a decent meal and a good night's sleep. All would be right with the world. If nothing else, I am an optimist. Oh, but that little burst of energy was just a tease, an illusion of almost-good health.

**On Sunday morning, my body waved a white flag or cried uncle or whatever it does to admit defeat.** To placate it, I stayed in bed an extra hour but that wasn't enough. The old bod didn't want anything to do with play or work. It didn't want to see anyone or talk to anyone. No indeed, if such a thing is possible, my body was out on strike. All it wanted to do was laze around, sip lemon-ginger tea and watch Law and Order reruns. I never actually watched Law and Order when it was on in prime time so I have a lot of catching up to do. By midday, I was tired of Jack McCoy's sanctimonious, holier-than-thou ranting or maybe I'd started to recover because I found the energy to start a new novel. Read one, not write one.

**I'm still not thinking straight** and I continue to sneeze, cough and, yes, I admit it, complain. That said, I guess I'm on the mend. I'm not quite ready to leap tall buildings in a single bound, run a marathon or cook a five-course meal for eight. However, I'm spending most of the day upright and have not been tempted to check in with Jack McCoy.

**With the change of seasons and April showers, it can be difficult to stay healthy.** Get plenty of rest, don't forget to exercise, eat healthy and maybe pamper yourself, at least a little bit. As for me, I think I'm just about due for another nap.

Bon appétit!




## Quinoa with Sweet Potato and Spinach

*This mixture of super foods may not cure the common cold but it could help you build up your resistance for a healthy spring. Serve it as a side dish or add chickpeas for a one-dish supper on Meatless Monday. Enjoy!*

Serves 6-8

About 1 pound sweet potato, peeled and chopped  
Olive oil  
Apple cider vinegar  
1 teaspoon smoked paprika  
1 teaspoon cumin  
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper  
1 red bell pepper, chopped  
1 large onion, finely chopped  
1 carrot, finely chopped  
1 stalk celery, finely chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 1/2 cups quinoa  
3 cups chicken broth  
1 sprig fresh thyme or 1/2 teaspoon dried  
(1 1/2-2 cups cooked chickpeas, rinsed and drained – optional)  
8-10 ounces fresh baby spinach  
About 1/3 cup pine nuts, toasted  
2-3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro or flat leaf parsley  
2-3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives



Put the sweet potato onto a rimmed baking sheet, drizzle with just enough equal parts olive oil and vinegar to lightly coat, season with half the paprika and cumin, salt and pepper and toss to coat. Spread the sweet potato in a single layer and roast at 425 degrees for 10 minutes. Add the bell pepper, and adding more olive oil and vinegar if necessary, toss and continue roasting until the vegetables are tender, 10-20 minutes more.

Put the quinoa in a fine mesh sieve and rinse well with cold water.

Heat a little olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onion, carrot and celery, season with the remaining paprika and cumin, salt and pepper and sauté for about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more.

Stir in the quinoa (and chickpeas) add the chicken broth and thyme and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover and cook for about 20 minutes or until the quinoa is tender.

Add the spinach in 3-4 handfuls, tossing to combine and wilt the spinach. Add the sweet potato and toss again. Transfer the quinoa to a large serving platter or individual plates and garnish with pine nuts and fresh, chopped herbs.