

summer LIGHT BITES

Keep it healthy with grilled aubergine, barbecued sardines and curried quinoa. **Words: Sonia Soltani**

at home



CURRIED QUINOA AND VEGETABLE PILAF WITH TOASTED COCONUT

Ingredients: 1 courgette, handful French beans, peas
2 tbsp sunflower oil 1 x 400ml can coconut milk
1 onion, chopped 400ml vegetable stock
2 tbsp mild curry paste 30g coconut flakes
300g quinoa
1 large carrot,

Method: Heat the oil in a saucepan, add the onion, and cook until lightly golden. Add the curry paste and cook for 30 secs. Stir in the quinoa until coated in the oil and curry paste. Add the carrot, turnip, coconut milk and stock. Season with black pepper. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat, stir, cover, and simmer for 12 mins. Add the remaining vegetables, cover, and cook for 8 mins. Fluff up with a fork. Meanwhile, toss the coconut in a hot, non-stick frying pan for 3 mins until golden. Spoon the quinoa pilaf onto warm plates and top with the toasted coconut.

aubergine

Underneath its beautiful dark skin, this vegetable originating from India, has many fantastic properties. First, it's very low in fat, at around 19 calories per 100g. It's also both an antioxidant and a diuretic — perfect for a fresh-looking face and trim body. And it's full of fibre — vitamins B, C and E, and minerals such as potassium, manganese and copper. Unfortunately, it has one flaw: it can soak up an awful lot of oil, even if tiny portions are used. But there's a healthy way to prepare it. Slice the aubergine in half, grill it for 30 minutes, then scoop out the flesh, which can be used to prepare dips with lemon juice, parsley, mint and a little olive oil. You can also use this flavoursome vegetable to make ratatouille, a traditional French summer dish. Simply combine aubergine with fresh tomatoes, green and red peppers, onions and garlic for a colourful accompaniment to any meat or fish.



Superpowers: Like other nightshades, it's packed with antioxidants and fibre for a lean, youthful body

Calories: 19 per 100g

Watch out: It can get fatty when cooked with oil, as its flesh is highly absorbent

In the spa: Learn how to cook healthily with Michelin-starred chef Adam Simmonds on his seven-night Health Hub break at the luxurious The Rou Estate in Corfu this September. www.healthmatters360.co.uk

APRICOT

Packed with beta-carotene — an antioxidant which protects the skin and enhances a suntan — apricots are a great source of fibre, keeping your appetite in check. In their dried form they taste great with muesli, and at less than 50 calories per 100g, they're an ideal summer snack, too.



SARDINES

Whether you eat them barbecued, grilled, or Spanish-style a la plancha, sardines are rich in omega-3, and could help prevent heart disease. They're a good source of protein, too, great for building muscles. Buy fresh and serve grilled with lemon juice.



TOMATOES

A favourite seasonal ingredient that adds enticing colour to salads, tomatoes are also ideal for making refreshing cold soups, and as a subtle complement to tasty main courses. This versatile fruit is also a great source of lycopene, an antioxidant, as well as vitamin C, which can boost energy levels.

