



Spring Vegetable Black Rice Pilaf



Serves 6

Ingredients:

- 1½ tablespoons neutral coconut oil or olive oil
- ½ green chili or jalapeño, seeded and sliced
- 2 large leeks, white and light green parts only, finely sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Zest and juice of 1 large or 2 small limes
- 2 cups vegetable broth or purified water
- 1 cup forbidden black rice
- 1 bunch asparagus, tough ends removed, sliced diagonally in about 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups fresh peas or thawed frozen peas
- 2 to 3 cups chopped spinach leaves or baby spinach

This quick and easy dish showcases vibrant spring greens against the dramatic, dark purple grains of forbidden black rice. You can improvise and add or substitute any available spring vegetables here—think fava beans, ramps, fiddleheads, snow peas, or sugar snaps.

Directions:

1. Warm the oil in a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. Add the chili or jalapeño and stir it around for 30 seconds. Add the leeks and sauté for 5 minutes until they begin to soften.
2. Add the garlic and salt and black pepper to taste (add more salt here if using water instead of vegetable broth), and sauté for another 2 minutes until the garlic is fragrant. Add the lime juice and cook for another minute until most of the liquid is absorbed.
3. Add the broth or water to the pan, increase the heat to high, and bring it to a boil. Add the rice, scattering it over the broth somewhat evenly. Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover the pot, and cook for 30 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender.
4. Add the asparagus to the pot and stir to incorporate. Cover the pot and let the pilaf cook for 7 minutes until the asparagus is crisp and tender. Add the peas, spinach, lime zest, and a pinch of salt. Stir thoroughly until the spinach wilts, then remove the pot from the heat.
5. Season to taste with more salt and pepper and serve immediately.

Simply Vibrant

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Colorful Plant-Based Cooking

By Anya Kassoff; Photos by Masha Davydova

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Cooking vibrant, healthy vegetarian dishes doesn't need to be time-consuming. These are simple, everyday recipes with an emphasis on easy-to-find ingredients and a focus on using in-season produce. Learn how to use the parts of produce often thrown in the compost, and discover ways to give new life to leftovers.

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