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Broccoli, Bean, and Brown Rice
with a Sesame-Ginger Vinaigrette

Serves 6 as an entrée

A colorful collection of vegetables stars in this recipe along with whole-grain brown rice. The nutritional power of beans anchors the assortment along with the cruciferous clout of broccoli, beta-carotene-packed carrots and a host of other colorful cohorts. Each player adds their own unique flavor to the dish while the sesame-ginger vinaigrette ties it all together.

Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 cups cooked white beans
(3/4 cup dry, or (1) 15 oz. can)
- 1-1/2 cups cooked black beans
(3/4 cup dry or (1) 15 oz. can)
- 1 cup brown rice
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1-2 stalks broccoli,
(separate florets from stalk)
- 3 carrots
- 1 red bell pepper, 1/4-inch dice
- 1 yellow bell pepper, 1/4-inch dice
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1 can water chestnuts, julienned
- 1/2 cup cilantro leaves, packed

Sesame-Ginger Vinaigrette: (makes about 1 cup)

- 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1/2 cup olive oil

Directions:

1. If using dried beans, soak the beans in water overnight. Over low heat, cover the beans with water (unsalted), and simmer until tender, about 45-60 minutes. (Different beans will cook at slightly different rates, so test each for tenderness. If you forgot to soak the beans, do the quick soak method: Bring the beans to a boil, turn off the heat and let sit one hour. Exchange the water and cook as above.)

Continued on Page 2



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Page 2, continued

2. Using a 2:1 liquid-to-grain ratio, cook the brown rice in vegetable stock (or lightly salted water) until tender, about 35-45 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, prepare the vegetables including spiralizing the broccoli stalk using a “spaghetti-sized” blade. Also, spiralize the carrots using an “angel hair-sized” blade. Dice the red and yellow bell peppers, and slice the scallions.
4. Sauté the broccoli stalk spirals and carrots in a sauté pan with the olive oil for 3-4 minutes, add the broccoli florets, diced bell peppers, scallions, and water chestnuts. Continue to sauté until the vegetables are just tender, but still brightly colored.
5. Add the cooked rice, beans, and cilantro leaves to vegetables and toss to combine.
6. Prepare the dressing by whisking together the rice vinegar, soy sauce, crushed garlic, grated ginger, sesame oil, sugar, and red pepper flakes. Gradually drizzle in the olive oil while continuing to whisk. Or, place all ingredients in a salad shaker or jar, and shake vigorously.
7. Drizzle half the dressing over the rice and vegetables, toss again to combine. Serve the remaining dressing on the side.