

# The Healthy Lunchtime Challenge Cookbook

54 WINNING RECIPES FROM AMERICA'S JUNIOR CHEFS



OHIO



## Kickin' Colorful Bell Peppers Stuffed with Quinoa

ANISHA PATEL, 11

"I came up with this recipe by watching my mom cook a lot of healthy vegetarian dishes that had a little kick to them with some spice," says Anisha. "I love eating lots of different types of fresh vegetables and fruits. For vegetarians my dish can be served with a garden salad and any nice fresh fruit. And for non-vegetarians I would serve it with grilled chicken or any other protein and fruit on the side."

Makes 4 to 6 servings

### INGREDIENTS

#### For the pesto:

1 cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro leaves  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1/4 cup pine nuts  
2 cloves garlic, peeled and mashed  
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice  
2 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan  
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper (add more if you want it spicier)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1/4 cup diced green bell pepper  
1/4 cup diced zucchini  
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan  
3 tablespoons panko or plain bread crumbs  
Olive oil

#### For the filling:

1 cup cooked quinoa  
1 (16-ounce) can chickpeas, drained and thoroughly rinsed  
1/3 cup diced tomatoes  
1/4 cup diced red onion

#### For the peppers:

1 green bell pepper, stem and seeds removed  
1 red bell pepper, stem and seeds removed  
1 orange bell pepper, stem and seeds removed

## PREPARATION

### Make the pesto:

1. In a blender or food processor, combine the cilantro, olive oil, pine nuts, garlic, lime juice, Parmesan, and crushed red pepper and blend until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. If the pesto is too thick, add a couple more drops of olive oil.

### Make the filling:

1. In a large bowl, combine the quinoa, chickpeas, tomatoes, red onion, green bell pepper, and zucchini. Add the pesto, season with salt and pepper, and stir to combine.

2. In a small bowl, stir together the Parmesan, bread crumbs, and a little olive oil to lightly moisten the mixture.

### Make the peppers:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.

2. Arrange the peppers in a large baking dish and stuff each one with an equal amount of the quinoa-vegetable mixture. Top each pepper with an equal amount of the Parmesan-bread crumb mixture. Pour about 1/4 inch of water into the bottom of the baking dish, cover it with foil, and bake until the peppers are tender, about 20 minutes. Remove the foil and place the peppers under the broiler, broiling just until the Parmesan-bread crumb mixture is light golden brown.

371 calories; 11g protein; 19g carbohydrates; 27g fat (7g saturated fat); 332mg sodium

