



Epic Greek Spanakorizo Rice

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 20 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

simmer: to cook a food gently, usually in a liquid, until softened.

stir: to mix together two or more ingredients with a spoon or spatula, usually in a circle pattern, or figure eight, or in whatever direction you like!

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

toast: to brown and crisp food in a heated skillet or oven, or in a toaster.

Equipment

- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Measuring spoons
- Liquid measuring cup
- Dry measuring cups
- Large saucepan
- Whisk
- Wooden Spoon or rubber spatula
- Medium bowl
- Small bowl

Blender (or pitcher + immersion blender)

Ingredients

Epic Greek Spanakorizo Rice

2 tomatoes

2 green onions

2 C fresh spinach, or 1/2 C frozen spinach (thawed)

3/4 tsp dried dill

1 1/2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp black pepper

2 C vegetable stock

2 T olive oil

1 C instant white rice

1 T plain yogurt ****(For DAIRY ALLERGY sub plain soy yogurt)****

1/4 C feta cheese, optional for sprinkling on top ****(For DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free Parmesan cheese)****

Food Allergen Substitutions

Epic Greek Spanakorizo Rice

Dairy: Substitute plain soy yogurt for plain yogurt in Rice. Substitute dairy-free Parmesan cheese for optional feta cheese.

Instructions

Epic Greek Spanakorizo Rice

chop + measure

Say "Hello" in Greek: "Geiá sou" (YAH soo)! Start by chopping **2 tomatoes** and **2 green onions** into a small dice and add them to a medium bowl. Measure and add **3/4 tsp dried dill**, **1 1/2 teaspoon salt**, and **1/2 teaspoon black pepper** to the bowl of tomatoes and stir to combine. In a liquid measuring cup, measure **2 cups of vegetable stock** and set aside.

toast + stir + simmer

Heat **2 tablespoons of olive oil** in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add **1 cup of instant rice** to the pan and stir for 1 minute. Toasting the rice will give it a light brown color. After stirring for 1 minute, add the tomatoes, green onions, and seasonings from the medium bowl. Stir to combine and cook for 2 minutes. Pour all the vegetable stock into the pan, cover with a lid, and simmer for 10 minutes.

tear + sprinkle + serve

Tear **2 cups of spinach** and stir the spinach into the pan. It will wilt quickly. After about 2 minutes of stirring, the spinach should be wilted and incorporated. At this point, turn the heat to low and add **1 tablespoon of yogurt**. Stir the yogurt in thoroughly. Top with **1/4 cup of feta cheese** if desired! The consistency should be wet, but not so liquidy that it resembles soup. This dish is served best for dinner alongside Triumphant Tomato Feta Salad (see recipe), but can also make a tasty breakfast served with Fruit Ambrosia Shakes (see recipe).

Featured Ingredient: Rice!

Hi! I'm Rice!

"I'm just a little grass seed but loved the world over! I'm Rice! I'm an essential part of the diets of almost every culture! You may have eaten me with Mexican tacos, Korean bibimbap, Indian curries, Mongolian fried rice, Southern Creole gumbo, Filipino adobo, Hawaiian poke, or Japanese sushi, just to name a few!"

History & Etymology

Rice is a grain or grass, like wheat, millet, or barley. It was first cultivated in China somewhere between 6,000 and 9,000 years ago.

Rice is a seed from a grass species, usually *Oryza sativa* or Asian rice. The other domesticated rice species is *Oryza glaberrima* or African rice. African rice has been grown for 3,000 years and is hardier, more pest-resistant, and nuttier tasting rice than Asian rice.

Rice is a staple food and supplies as much as half of the daily calories for half the world's population. In many countries, they eat rice at every meal. No wonder a few Asian countries value rice so highly that some of their translations of the word "eat" or "meal" also mean "rice."

China consumes the most rice worldwide. Annually, Asians eat over 300 pounds of rice per person, and Americans eat about 26 pounds per person.

Rice is the second-highest worldwide crop produced after maize (corn). However, since maize is mainly grown for purposes other than human consumption, rice is the most important grain for human consumption.

The English word "rice" comes from Middle English which comes from the Old French "ris," from the Italian "riso," and finally, from the Greek "oruzo."

Anatomy

Most types of rice are annual plants, meaning they live only one year. But several types of rice can survive and produce grains for up to 30 years.

Rice is often categorized by its size—either short, medium, or long grain. Short grain, or japonica rice, has the highest starch content and makes the stickiest rice, while the long grain, or indica variety, is lighter and tends to remain separate when cooked.

In addition to japonica and indica, there are two other categories: aromatic and glutinous. Aromatic is a medium to long-grained rice that generally results in a light and fluffy texture. Varieties in this category include Basmati and Jasmine, which you can find in grocery stores (more about these below). Glutinous rice (also called sticky, sweet, or waxy rice) has very low amylose (starch component) content, making it very sticky when cooked.

Rice is also classified by its milling process. White rice has been milled the most, having had its hull (or husk), bran, and germ layers removed. Brown or whole grain rice has been milled to remove its hull, and rough or paddy rice has not been milled at all and cannot be consumed.

There is an abundance of different kinds of rice—globally, over 120,000 varieties.

Rice cultivation is suited for countries with low labor costs and high rainfall as it is very labor-intensive and needs large amounts of water to grow.

How to Pick, Buy & Eat

Brown rice is 100 percent whole grain and, therefore, the most nutritional of the many different forms. Brown rice retains the bran and germ because it is not milled as much as white rice, which loses a lot of nutrients in the milling process. However, brown rice takes longer to cook, about 45 minutes, compared to white rice, which takes 15 to 20 minutes.

Aromatic rices, named because they have distinct flavors and aromas (especially while cooking), include Basmati and Jasmine. Basmati is long-grained rice from India. It contains a compound also present in freshly baked bread and pandan spice and has nutty, spicy, and floral flavors. Jasmine rice is long-grained rice from Thailand and Cambodia. It also has the same compound found in Basmati rice and is similar but perhaps adds more of a grassy floral and slightly sweeter fragrance to a meal. Some people describe its flavor as close to popcorn. Jasmine is also stickier.

Arborio is short-grained rice from Italy. Its grains remain firm when cooked and are chewy and creamy. Arborio rice is often used in making risotto and rice pudding because of its creamy texture and starchy taste that goes well with other flavors.

Rice is truly an international food, found in the cuisines of just about every country. It is often served as a side dish but can also be a vital component of main dishes and desserts.

Rice flour is made from finely ground rice. It is a thickening agent that prevents liquids from separating in refrigerated and frozen foods. Rice noodles used in many Asian dishes are made with rice flour, and you can also find it in desserts, like "mochi" and other rice cakes. It is a gluten-free alternative to wheat flour.

Nutrition

Rice is a complex carbohydrate with very little sodium or fat, and it supplies 20 percent of the world's food energy.

Rice contains several B vitamins and manganese. Brown or whole grain rice is more nutritious than white rice, but white rice is often enriched by adding some B vitamins and iron back in. Brown rice is also high in magnesium, phosphorus, protein, and fiber.