

Keiko Uenishi's Vegan Stuffed Red Bell Pepper(s)

For Catherine Lamb and Bryan Eubanks (& the 6 years old too!), March 17th, 2021



Ingredients:

- **Large red bell pepper(s)** - Decide how many depending how many of you + how hungry you are. (FYI, I couldn't finish half of one large stuffed red pepper;)
- **Onion** - ½ of a large one or 1 small one
- **Eggplant(s)** - Two if it's the small type. ½ or ⅓ if it's the giant one typically available in the U.S.
- **Chickpeas** - One if it's canned. 1-½ cup if it's cooked from raw (or just as you like)
- **Garlic** - One clove (or more... I'm not so good at garlic. So, I just use one clove but you can put a lot more if you love garlic.) Note: If you're like me, you can substitute or add fresh ginger.
- **Cilantro** - Fresh preferred (If you don't like cilantro, parsley would be fine.)
- **Quinoa** - 1-½ cooked (You can just follow cooking instructions on the package of quinoa. But basically, you first rinse them well in a colander and cook w/ water, a little less than twice that of quinoa, just like you cook rice - bring them to boil w/ the lid slightly open. Reduce heat to simmer immediately after it boils & close the lid, and cook for

approx 20min. After turning the heat off, leave the lid closed for 5 more min. It's already ready to eat then. But for this recipe, it would be better (if you have time) to roast the quinoa with the lid off while you'd turn it occasionally. Optional: I added Flax seed (grounded) here to add nuttiness.

- **Spices** - To make this one child-friendly, I didn't make it spicy at all. But I still used **Cumin** (just a little), **Coriander** (whole seeds), **Oregano** (dried, fresh is better...), **Sea Salt** (adjust to your liking.) If you'd love a spicy version, add chili pepper (your choice), etc.
- **Lemon (½ for juice) & Lemon Zest**
- **Olive oil**
- **For optional sauce: Yogurt (if you are totally vegan, soy/oat yogurt would work)**

Instructions:

1. **Cut the Red Bell Pepper in half** (Stuffed peppers can be made horizontally or vertically but I chose to cut it horizontally/side-way as it may bake faster at the end.)
2. **Grill/roast the halved red bell pepper** with very little olive oil painted on the surface and let them get charred a bit. (You can do this stovetop easily.) Note: You don't need to roast too much as you will bake it at the end. This is just to get the roasted fragrance and let it become a little softer (but not like making a roasted pepper). Approx 7 min for each side would be enough.
3. While you're grilling the red bell pepper, **prepare** the following:
 - 3.1. Smash or finely cut the garlic clove(s)
 - 3.2. Mince onions
 - 3.3. Dice eggplant(s) - I typically already start sauté (see below) while I'm dicing eggplant(s)
4. **Sauté & Stuff:**
 - 4.1. Before adding olive oil on a pan, add coriander seeds (if they are whole, if grounded, never mind. Add them later) and roast with low fire with the lid on. After roasting them to the point they look darker (golden), add olive oil.
 - 4.2. Add minced/smashed garlic
 - 4.3. Add minced onions
 - 4.4. When onions are half translucent & about to become golden, add diced eggplant(s). Sauté a bit and cover the pan with the lid. **Note: Around this point, turn the oven on and set the temperatures at 400F.**
 - 4.5. Season with spices (as less or more spicy as you like) and add salt.
 - 4.6. Add chickpeas (from a can or cooked) and let them cooked together for 10min
 - 4.7. Add cooked quinoa and let it cook for a few more min.
 - 4.8. Stop fire. Add chopped cilantros and mix.
 - 4.9. Squeeze lemon (½) and add zests. Mix them together.
 - 4.10. Stuff the halved bell pepper

5. **Bake:**

- 5.1. By this time, the oven should be reached to 400F. On a baking pan, place the stuffed peppers (face up) covered with aluminum foil.
- 5.2. Place the pan in the middle.
- 5.3. Bake for 25~30min
- 5.4. Check how it's baking. If it looks good, uncover the pan & cook for another 10min. (For the last 10min, I added chopped almonds on top - optional.)

6. **Optional sauce:**

- 6.1. It's nice to eat as is. However, if you made it mild for everyone, and want your portion to be spicier, you can of course use something like "Sriracha" but here is what I do for mine.
- 6.2. Take a few big spoons of yogurt (greek yogurt works great for its thickness. But regular one or alternative non-dairy yogurt also works) and put it into a small bowl.
- 6.3. Now, I tried to avoid using anything that might be difficult to get where you live... but I used "Yuzu pepper" (in paste form in a small glass jar) - that's my favorite. But you can mix other spices you like (cumin, curry powder, chili... etc.) - oh, yeah. Sriracha should work here too;) I also tried a type of miso in the yogurt. It's yummy but not working w/ the cumin-based stuffed bell pepper;) In any case, yogurt & a small amount of salty hot spice combo works great with this recipe.

Side dish (optional) - very quick!!!

**Mushrooms (shiitake or other brown kind) + Spinach + Mustard Green
marinated with creamy tahini soy milk sauce**

Ingredients:

- A. **Spinach** (some leaves)
- B. **Mustard Green** (some leaves)
- C. **Shiitake mushroom (or brown cremini, or any brown mushrooms)** - 2 pieces if it's big shiitake. If it's other 'button' kind, 4~5 pieces
- D. **Fresh ginger**
- E. **Tahini sauce/paste** - 2 tbs
- F. **Soy milk (or almond milk or oat milk)** - ½ tbs
- G. **Soy sauce** - ½ tbs
- H. **A bit of sugar (raw cane sugar - I normally use tiny bit of maple syrup)** - 1 ts
- I. Optional: tiny bit of **apple cider vinegar or lemon juice**

Instructions:

1. Wash greens. Separate the thick stem parts out of soft leaves.
2. chop both stems and leaves in pieces but separately (not finely but just about an inch length)
3. Slice mushrooms finely
4. Chop fresh ginger in very small pieces (mince)
5. Heat a pan with sesame oil with the middle fire. When it's heated, put the fresh ginger and Sauté.
6. Add sliced mushrooms and stems of greens & sauté (approx for 3min)
7. Add chopped leaves of greens & sauté for 10~20secs.
8. Take them out of the pan (on a plate for a moment to avoid further cooking)
9. In a bowl, mix E, F, G & H (Note: Add a smaller amount of the sugar or maple syrup first and add little by little to your liking)
10. Mix the sautéed mushrooms & greens together.
11. Optional: If you'd like to add a pinch of apple cider vinegar or lemon juice, add at the end but do not over-do it!
12. Serve!

Enjoy!!

Keiko