



## 6 ancient grains to help you move past quinoa

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If you've been in a grocery store, restaurant or anywhere with another living human in the past few years, you know quinoa has been everywhere.

Literally, everywhere. Salads, bread, meatballs, cookies, they've all **been made** with quinoa at some point.

It's gotten to the point where we don't blame you for being a little burnt out on quinoa. Luckily, ancient grains of all sorts are piggy backing on the quinoa craze and many are gaining traction. In January, Cheerios launched their new **Ancient Grains** variety, containing quinoa, spelt and kamut.

If you're looking to keep the health benefits of whole grains, but are sick of quinoa try these ancient grains instead.

## Spelt

### The Rundown

Spelt is a member of the **same family** as common bread wheat, rye and oats but is an entirely different species. Among the largest differences are that spelt has much less gluten (although still some) and can even be eaten by some people with wheat sensitivities. This grain makes a light loaf of bread and offers a somewhat nutty flavour.

### The Recipe

Ragu Al Carne with Spelt Pappardelle, Mascarpone



*[Photo by My Kitchen Rules]*

This recipe uses spelt flour to make a delicious homemade pasta. Combined with steak and a collection of fresh veggies this taste of Italy is a great way to introduce your whole family to spelt.

## Freekeh

### The Rundown

Freekeh is an ancient grain of Middle Eastern fame and has been around for **over 4000 years**. Though traditionally used for thick soups or stuffing chicken, freekeh is starting to make a new name for itself in the grain market. Plus it has probably the coolest harvesting method ever.



*[Photo by NPR]*

Farmers use a blowtorch on the wheat husks to roast the freekeh held inside. This helps give the freekeh a smoky taste.

### The Recipe

Chicken with Kale and Freekeh-Lentil Pilaf



*[Photo by Epicurious]*

This dish breaks away from traditional freekeh applications and uses a more modern approach, creating a pilaf. A great way to introduce Middle Eastern flavours to your cooking.

## Teff

### The Rundown

Teff is a traditional Ethiopian grain and it is a protein powerhouse. **One cup alone** contains 26 grams of protein. As a crop it thrives in even the most difficult conditions, making it a very sustainable product. It's also tiny. Really tiny. **Three thousand grains** of teff weigh one gram. Similar to spelt, teff has a mild nutty taste.

### The Recipe

#### Teff Porridge



*[Photo by PBS]*

This porridge is a hearty and healthy way to start the day. The creamy and nutty bowl is mixed with apples, dates and pecans to create a wonderful breakfast bowl.

## **Farro**

### **The Rundown**

The term farro actually refers to a **trio of Italian grown grains** with similar characteristics. Most varieties in North America can be cooked quickly (in about 25 minutes) and hold a good amount of nutrients. Farro is a versatile grain and it works in breakfast cereals, salads, as pasta and even as a sort of risotto. It has a nutty flavour (have you spotted a trend?) and contains less gluten than wheat, but more than spelt.

### **The Recipe**

**Butternut Squash, Kale and Farro Soup**



*[Photo by Chow]*

This delicious soup requires a bit of time but comes together easily to create a wonderful meld of flavours. It's a perfect, nutritious lunch.

## **Millet**

### **The Rundown**

Though it is best known as bird seed, millet was a staple in the middle Ages. It was even **more popular than wheat!** This grain is of African origin and is still used in many regional diets, including as an ingredient in many roti. It's also used in many beers in Eastern Africa. Most importantly this grain is gluten free and can be eaten by many with gluten sensitivities.

### **The Recipe**

**Bajrey Ki Roti – Millet Flatbread**



*[Photo by Divya's Indian Cookbook]*

Though making the perfect roti will take practice, it is certainly worth it. The traditional Indian flatbread is typically used for wrapped curries. The possibilities with this gluten-free wrap are endless!

## **Kamut**

### **The Rundown**

Another protein packed option, kamut has 30% **more protein** than traditional wheat. We however, prefer its nickname 'Pharaoh's grain' as it was discovered in Egyptian tombs. Kamut "berries" (grains) can be used whole and are great for salads and pilafs. Kamut flour is also lighter than traditional wheat, which makes it a great choice for pasta making!

### **The Recipe**

**Creamy Chicken and Kamut Casserole**



*[Photo by [Healthy Nibbles and Bits](#)]*

This recipe pairs deliciously chewy kamut with cheese, collard greens and red peppers to make a simple, one skillet dish. This one is sure to please the whole family!



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