

# ASPARAGUS

## Selection Info

Look for bright green asparagus. The stems should be crisp and firm and should snap (not bend) when bent them. Look for dark green spear tips that have a hint of purple, which shows freshness. Avoid asparagus with yellow or dry tips (these indicate old asparagus).

## Preparation

Rinse asparagus under a stream of cool water and snap off the bottoms at their natural breaking point. Discard the bottoms or use them in vegetable stock. Most edible portions are 7-9 inches long. You can microwave, boil, steam, sauté, roast, or grill asparagus. Do not overcook; asparagus is best when still crisp.

**Microwave:** Cut spears into bite-size pieces and place in a microwave safe bowl with ½ cup water. Cover and cook on high at 1 minute intervals until bright green and just tender.

**Steam:** Fill a saucepan with about 1 inch of water and insert steamer basket. Bring water to a boil, and put asparagus into the steamer. Steam for about 5-7 minutes until bright green and crisp.

**Boil:** Bring a large pot of water to a boil with 2 teaspoons of salt. Immerse the asparagus in the water and blanch for 2 ½-3 minutes. The asparagus should

be crisp and bright green. Serve hot or plunge into cold water to stop the cooking process.

**Sauté:** Heat 1 tablespoon of oil or butter in a saucepan on medium to high heat. Add the cut asparagus or whole spears to the pan. Sauté until bright green.

**Roast:** Heat oven to 400°F. Lay asparagus flat on an oven safe baking sheet or pan and drizzle with olive oil (about 2 tablespoons). Season with salt and pepper or your favorite seasoning to taste. Roast for 12 minutes.

**Grill:** Cut asparagus as desired and place in large bowl. Add 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil, and toss to coat each piece. Add seasoning to taste. Place on a hot grill for about 90 seconds on each side.

## Storage

**Short-Term Storage:** Store asparagus in an upright container filled with water or in the refrigerator in a plastic bag with a damp paper towel. Asparagus will last up to about 5 days in the refrigerator. Do not use asparagus if the tips are slimy, yellow, soft, or rotten.

**Long-Term Storage:** Asparagus can be frozen or pickled. To freeze, blanch or steam asparagus for 30 seconds in boiling water then plunge into cold water for 5 minutes. Dry the asparagus with a lint-free towel. Put into freezer bags and store up to 3-4 months in a freezer.



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# ASPARAGUS AND SHRIMP QUINOA SALAD WITH LEMON VINAIGRETTE

## Ingredients

### For the vinaigrette

- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel (optional)
- 3 tablespoons fresh or bottled lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

### For the salad

- 2 cups fresh asparagus (cut large spears into 1-inch pieces)
- 1/2 yellow or red sweet pepper (cut into 1/2-inch pieces)
- 1 clove garlic (minced)
- 1 14-ounce can quartered artichoke hearts (drained)
- 12 ounces fresh or frozen large raw shrimp (peeled and deveined)
- 1 1/2 cups dry quinoa (cooked according to package directions)



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Share your recipes!

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## Directions

1. Place all the vinaigrette ingredients in a small bowl and whisk. Set aside.
2. Cut vegetables.
3. Heat grill and grilling tray.
4. Place vegetables and shrimp in a large bowl. Add about 1/3 of the vinaigrette to the bowl (about 3 tablespoons) and toss.
5. Spread shrimp-vegetable mixture over hot grilling tray.
6. Grill, turning shrimp and vegetables, until the flesh of the shrimp is opaque color (about 5-6 minutes). Remove from grill.
7. Serve grill mixture over cooked quinoa, and drizzle with remaining vinaigrette.

### Nutrition Information

Serving Size ¼ of recipe

Nutrients	Amount	% Daily Value
Protein	33g	17
Carbohydrates	52g	17
Dietary Fiber	7g	28
Total Sugars	6g	
Cholesterol	125mg	42
<b>Minerals</b>		
Calcium	200mg	20
Sodium	570mg	24
Iron	6.3 mg	35
<b>Vitamins</b>		
Vitamin A	96mcg RAE	
Vitamin C	54mg	90

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