
THE COMPLETE WHOLE GRAINS COOKBOOK

Judith Finlayson is a Toronto-based author and journalist whose new book, her eighth, is a real treat for anyone with a serious interest in eating healthfully. *The Complete Whole Grains Cookbook: 150 Recipes for Healthy Living* provides the reader with a concise overview of whole grains in a chapter entitled “A Whole Grains Primer,” and goes on to provide comprehensive descriptions, culinary and nutritional profiles, and buying and storage information for a total of thirteen various grains (plus their sub-varieties), a few of which – like amaranth and millet – are just now becoming more widely available, and more commonly used.

All of Finlayson’s one hundred fifty recipes are written in a straightforward, easy-to-follow manner and are suitable for any level of home

cook. Each recipe is accompanied by tips and variations, as well as nutritional analysis and vitamin and mineral content.

The Complete Whole Grains Cookbook certainly is “complete”: The recipe categories range from bread, breakfast, soups and salads, to desserts. Enjoy the following recipes, courtesy of Judith Finlayson.

—Gail Gordon Oliver

The Complete Whole Grains Cookbook, by Judith Finlayson. Robert Rose Inc., 2008. Recipes and photos reprinted with permission of the publisher.

PEPPERY COCONUT CHICKEN WITH WHEAT BERRIES

BY JUDITH FINLAYSON

If your appetite is desperately seeking stimulation, this flavorful chicken with toothsome wheat berries may be just the thing. There’s just a hint of coconut, but it’s enough to add intriguing depth to what could be an uneventful tomato sauce. The wheat berries partially cook while you’re doing prep work for the rest of the dish, making this a relatively time-efficient meal. Once it’s in the oven, you can relax while it cooks. A green vegetable is the only addition you need.

6 servings

2 1/2 cups	reduced-sodium chicken stock
1 cup	wheat berries, rinsed and drained
2 lbs	skin-on bone-in chicken thighs, patted dry
1 tbsp	sweet paprika (see Tips)
1 tbsp	olive oil (see Tips)
2	onions, finely chopped
2	stalks celery, diced
1	bell pepper, any color, seeded and diced
4	cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp	cayenne pepper
1/2 tsp	cracked black peppercorns
	Salt
1 can (14 oz/398 mL)	no-salt-added diced tomatoes with juice (see Editor’s Note)
1/2 cup	coconut milk

In a saucepan over medium-high heat, bring stock to a boil. Add wheat berries and return to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. (Wheat

berries will not be fully cooked and liquid won’t be completely absorbed.)

Meanwhile, rub chicken all over with paprika. In a skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat for 30 seconds. Add chicken, in batches, and cook, turning once, until nicely browned, about 6 minutes per batch. Transfer to a plate. Drain off all but 1 tbsp (15 mL) fat from pan.

Reduce heat to medium. Add onions, celery and bell pepper and cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic, cayenne, peppercorns and salt to taste and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add tomatoes with juice, coconut milk and partially cooked wheat berries with liquid and bring to a boil. Transfer to a 13-by 9-inch (3L) baking pan or dish and lay chicken, skin side up, over top.

Bake in preheated 350° oven until wheat berries are tender and juices run clear when chicken is pierced, about 45 minutes.

Variation

Substitute an equal quantity of spelt or Kamut berries for the wheat berries.

Tips

If you have a favorite spice rub for chicken that complements the flavors in this recipe, by all means substitute it for the paprika. I’ve had excellent results using a prepared rub containing paprika and a variety of herbs.

If you prefer a more pronounced coconut flavor, substitute an equal amount of extra virgin coconut oil for the olive oil.

Editor’s note: Not being a lover of salt-free products, I tested the recipe using my favourite brand of salt-in canned organic tomatoes (Utopia, and they’re local!) and a very small amount of kosher salt in the preparation. It was scrumptious.