



Dining for Women

Food for Thought March 2010 Improving Maternal Health



"For what is done or learned by one class of women becomes, by virtue of their common womanhood, the property of all women." -- Elizabeth Blackwell (*The first woman in the U.S. to become a physician*)

"If you really want to change a culture, to empower women, improve basic hygiene and health care, and fight high rates of infant mortality, the answer is to educate girls." -- Greg Mortenson, author *Three Cups of Tea*

"Countries must recognize that they are violating their own values by allowing unsafe motherhood." – Rebecca Cook, *University of Toronto Faculty of Law*

Maternal Health is one of the eight **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** developed by the United Nations in 2000 and supported by 192 United Nation member states and 123 international organizations. By 2015, the UN hopes to reach every MDG, each of which aims to improve social and economic conditions in the developing world. **The United Nations Millennium Development Goal 5 – to reduce maternal mortality by 75 percent and to achieve universal access to reproductive health services by 2015 - has made the least progress of all MDGs.**



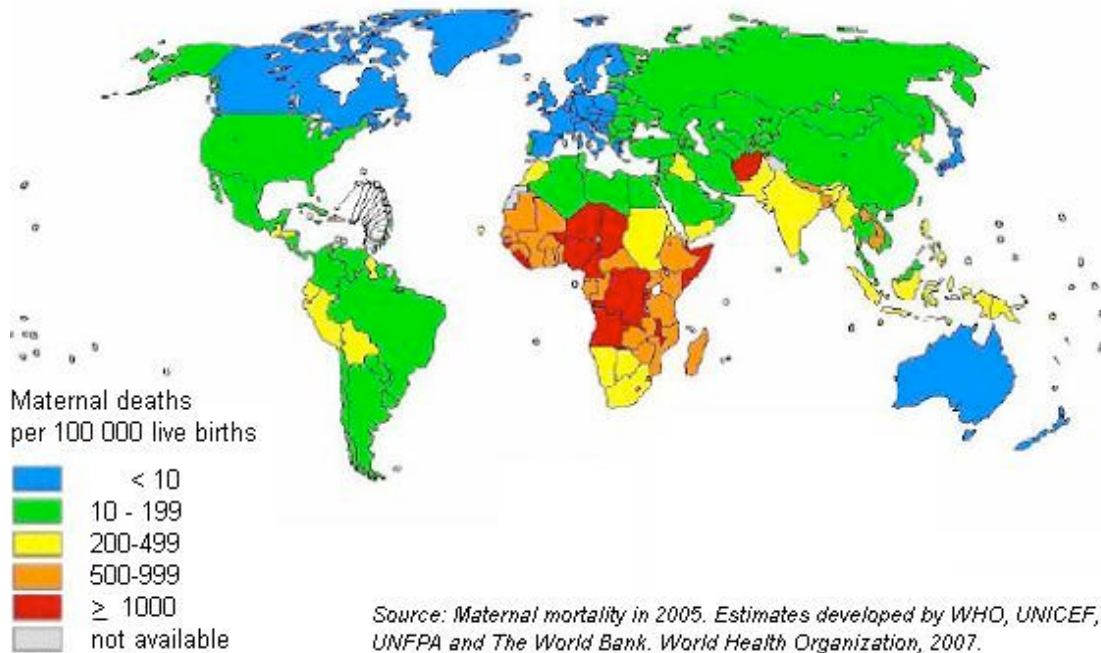
At the global level, maternal mortality decreased by less than 1 percent per year between 1990 and 2005 – far below the 5.5 percent annual improvement needed to reach the target.



The 8 MDGs are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
- 5. Improve maternal health**
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Create a global partnership for development.

Maternal mortality ratio, by country, 2005



Maternal Health Fast Facts

Also known as "maternal death" or "obstetric death," maternal mortality refers to any death of a woman occurring during or, at most, 42 days after her pregnancy.

- Pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death and disability for women in developing countries.
- Mothers play a vital role in the economic health of their families and communities. Each year an estimated U.S. \$15.5 billion in potential productivity is lost when mothers and newborns die
- A woman dies from complications in childbirth every minute. A quarter of the women are not officially counted. They're simply buried.
- For every woman who dies, another 30 suffer long-lasting illness or injury.
- Maternal mortality has long-term implications on a child's education, care and health.
- When a woman dies in childbirth, her infant and any other children's survival is threatened. Infants of mothers who do not survive the delivery are more likely to die within two years. Every year an additional 2 million children worldwide are maternal orphans.
- Children who have lost their mothers are up to 10 more times more likely to die prematurely than those who haven't.
- Girls aged 15 - 20 are twice as likely to die in childbirth as those in their twenties. Girls under the age of 15 are five times as likely to die.
- Almost 14 million girls between the ages of 15 and 19 give birth every year, accounting for nearly 10% of all childbirths.
- Low-cost, low-tech interventions have an immediate and meaningful impact for mothers and newborns: package of maternal health services costing less than U.S. \$1.50 per person could make significant improvements in women's health in the 75 countries where 95 percent of maternal and child deaths occur.
- The vast majority of maternal deaths are avoidable when women have access to vital health care before, during and after childbirth.

Related Issues and Discussion Points

In Peru: Mayua, an expectant mother in the Peruvian Amazon, has no choice but to deliver her baby in her remote mountain home. However, she fears the risks, knowing that mothers and their infants often die from infection or lack of medical attention shortly after birth.



The solution is simple: in 2003, Peru's Ministry of Health reported that 100% of maternal deaths could have been avoided if: the women and their families had recognized the problem, gone to a health establishment once the problem was recognized (or earlier), and surgical intervention performed. But 59.1% of the communities covered in the 2007 national census of Indigenous Peoples did not have a health facility. Of those that did, 45.4% had no more than a first aid post; 42.3% had a health post, one of the most basic classifications of health facilities; and 10.9% had access to a health centre, the next more equipped type of facility after a health post (2007 National Census of Indigenous Peoples).

Discussion Questions:

Recent decentralization of Peru's health care system has weakened it at the sub-district level, and many health professionals have little or no management training.

Do the negative effects of Peru's decentralized health care system translate, in any way, into American's current Health Care debate?

Most UN treaty monitoring bodies have addressed specific interventions to prevent maternal death, including skilled attendance at birth and access to emergency obstetric care. And in June 2009, the UN Human Rights Council adopted a landmark resolution on maternal mortality. But there is not a single human rights mechanism with a focus on the immense problem of maternal deaths. **Why hasn't the issue of maternal health still not gained traction in the 21st Century? What are some ways women's health issues can be given the priority they deserve?**

Because four out of five maternal deaths are the direct result of obstetric complications, the single most important intervention for safe motherhood is to make sure that a trained provider with midwifery skills is present at every birth and that quality emergency obstetric care is available. So by 2015, another 330,000 midwives are needed to achieve universal reproductive health coverage for expecting mothers.

It is estimated that almost three-quarters of maternal deaths can be eliminated by increasing women's access to comprehensive reproductive health services, within the larger context of promoting human rights and reducing poverty. **How does eliminating maternal deaths, which would consequentially increase the populations of developing nations, reduce poverty?**

Voices

In her own words:



From a young Peruvian mother:

My baby is almost a year old, and she and I are healthy thanks to the Healthy Babies program and the education that it gave me, including the importance of a birth plan. I started labor pains at about 11 or 12 at night. My husband works the last shift in the sawmill and I had no one to help or support me. But I knew I would start labor at any time, so I already had everything ready, thanks my birth plan. I had all my stuff in a bag, so I grabbed it and walked with my daughter to the health post. My husband arrived the next day.

From INMED health professional:

The [Healthy Babies] team does not impose its plan like other organizations; instead they accompany us step by step. Every training is a benefit...to strengthen and improve knowledge.

Meeting Resources and other information



White Ribbon Alliance For Safe Motherhood <http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org/> is an international coalition of individuals and organizations formed to promote increased public awareness of the need to make pregnancy and childbirth safe for all women and newborns in the developing, as well as, developed countries. Their website provides a wealth of information on maternal health. Recourses they recommend:

The Global Dinner Party Guide provides tips, anecdotes and recipes. The Guide can be downloaded at http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org/internationalwomensday/gdp_guide.pdf

*Handouts can also be downloaded if they go to the WRA website and click on **Resources and then Fact Sheets**. Birth Atlas is the best for a global overview http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org/Resources/Documents/G8_BirthAtlasFlyer.pdf Note: but unless it is printed in color, it's not as effective.*

Focus on 5: Women's Health and the MDG's by Women Deliver
Download free at <http://www.unfpa.org/public/publications/pid/3888>

For more information on MDGs, <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Products/ProgressReports.htm>, provides yearly, clear reports on MDG progress.

Great minds think alike! Important Dinner for Women: Jessica Alba, Sara Brown, and more gather in New York for Maternal Health Event. Full article at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/09/24/important-dinner-for-wome_n_298482.html



Short Films:

"Barriers to Maternal Health in Peru," produced by Amnesty International.
http://inmed.org/programs/health/child_survival.htm

Three short films posted on the White Ribbon Alliance website: (go to <http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org/resources.cfm?a0=video>).

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Birth and Death - go to

<http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org/resources.cfm?a0=video&play=BirthandDeath>

Play Your Part - go to

<http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org/resources.cfm?a0=video&play=PLAYYOURPART>

Igniting a Global Movement for Safe Motherhood: WRA Commemorates 10 Years of Galvanizing Change - go to

<http://www.whiteribbonalliance.org/resources.cfm?a0=video&play=tenthAnn>

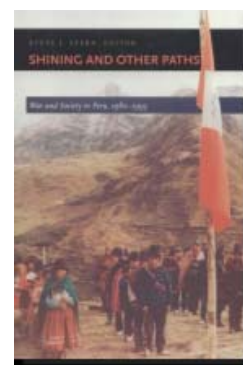
Full-Length Film

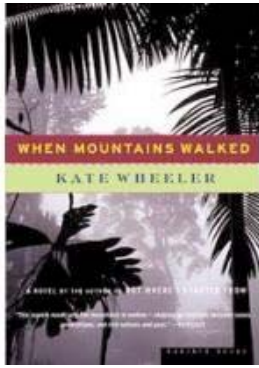


Claudia Llosa's film "*La Teta Asustada*" ("*The Milk of Sorrow*") won top honors at the 31st International Festival of New Latin American Cinema, held in Havana in December 2009 for "its approach to the violence in Peru, showcasing in the process the country's rich tradition and culture."

Suggested Reading

Nonfiction: **Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980-1995**, Duke University Press, Steve J. Stern, editor, et al
A systematic account of the social experiences at the heart of the war waged between Shining Path and the Peruvian military during the 1980s and early 1990s. Provides historically grounded explication of the conflicts that reshaped contemporary Peru, *Shining and Other Paths* is recommended reading for Latin Americanists, historians, anthropologists, gender theorists, sociologists, political scientists, and human rights activists.



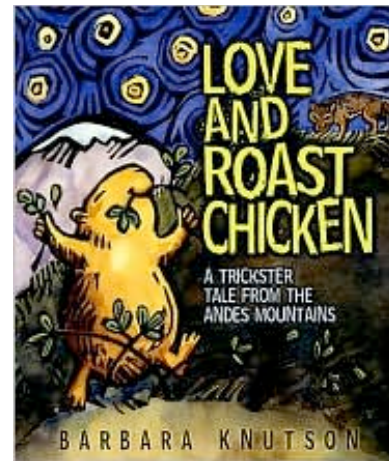


Fiction: *When Mountains Walked*, by Kate Wheeler.

"Descriptions of the interior of Peru are both lush and graphic, conveying the "pulsing, vivid heat" in sensuous terms, the abject poverty of the villages as well as the harsh beauty of the landscape. Aply articulating the themes of a woman's role as wife and mother in a patriarchal society, and the political realities that occur when relentless economic deprivation victimizes people in Third World cultures, she has written a psychologically lucid and emotionally resonant novel." Publishers Weekly

Children's: *Love and Roast Chicken: A Trickster Tale from the Andes Mountains* by Barbara Knutson

Elements of Chicken Little and Breh Rabbit and the Tar Baby can be found in this clever trickster tale from South America. Cuy Guinea Pig is quick to act and always one-step ahead of the wily fox whose only desire is to enjoy Cuy as a tasty meal. Vibrant paintings in muted earth tones with a heavy black outline reflect the flavor of the locale in the Andean dress and the landscape. A source note provides background for the tale and a pronunciation guide helps with the Spanish words scattered throughout the text. In the best folkloric tradition, this is a tale filled with charm, and humor. 2004, CarolRhoda Books, Ages 6 to 10. – *Barnes and Noble*



Free Trade Shopping *Courtesy of Carolyn Mayers*

Chocolate covered, rainforest grown Brazil nuts!

<http://www.serry.org/Gourmet/ChocolateFood/GourmetSnacks/72379.aspx>



A gorgeous hand crafted belt

<http://www.globalgoodspartners.org/cart/Details.cfm?ProdID=263&category=0>

You can always find beautiful Peruvian products at the **Novica website** - pottery, wallhangings, jewelry, blankets, table runners.

<http://www.novica.com/search/searchresults.cfm?searchtype=quick&txt=1®ionid=1&keywordsubmit=&keyword=peru+>

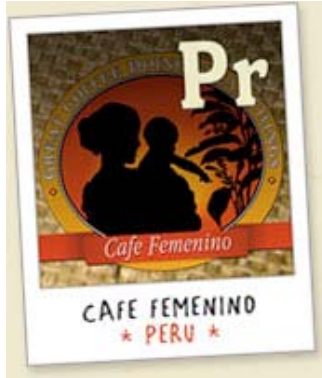
Piggy banks seen on the Today Show!

<http://www.oneworldprojects.com/products/banks.shtml>



Coffee from female coffee growers. Also available in decaf:

“Out of Peru comes a story of strength, unity and hope. A new niche coffee, Cafe Femenino Peru, has evolved that is changing the role of women in rural coffee communities. Female coffee growers have become better educated, organized, and for the first time are producing women's coffee as a specialty commodity. This Fair Trade and organic certified coffee is grown, processed and traded exclusively by women. The women then decide how to use the additional funds to better their lives and those of their children.”



Purchase Café Femenino Peru at:

<http://www.groundsforchange.com/shop/product.php?pid=79>

“GoodShop.com is an online shopping mall which donates up to 3 percent of each purchase to your favorite cause! Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, eBay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop, and every time you place an order, you'll be supporting INMED Partnerships for Children - at no extra cost to you.”



The white ribbon is dedicated to the memory of all women who have died in pregnancy and childbirth. 100% of all profits go directly to our projects supporting safe motherhood and safe pregnancy around the globe. Contact whiteribbonalliance.org

Recipes

Courtesy of Carolyn Mayers and Shannon Gordon

Peruvian cuisine is a blend of Amerindian and Spanish food with strong influences from African, Arab, Italian, Chinese, and Japanese cooking. Because of Peru's diverse climates, a wide range of plants and animals is available for cooking. Peruvian cuisine has recently received acclaim due to its diversity of ingredients and techniques.



Peruvians are extremely hospitable and enjoy preparing and eating meals with company. Guests often consider dinner invitations semiformal occasions. Often, they wear nice clothes and offer a small gift of flowers, chocolates, or wine to the host.

Peruvian cooking differs by region. While potatoes, corn, quinoa and rice are still the staples of everyday cuisine, the three varying climates each have their own influences on what is cooked.

Along the costal region, as one might expect, the concentration is on seafood and shellfish with other favorites being kid goat and chicken. In the central highlands, a style more suitable to the colder climate prevails, and meat served with rice or potatoes are the main components of the diet. In the Amazon jungle regions, the diet consists mainly of fish such as river trout, supplemented with tropical fruit and vegetables such as sweet potatoes, avocados and plantains. Wild boar, turtle, monkey and piranha fish are some of the more exotic ingredients used.



A common ingredient used throughout Peru is Aji, a hot chili pepper which is used to spice up many dishes. Aji paste, which is a very suitable substitute for the fresh, and is called for in several

of the recipes to follow, may be found at <http://www.tienda.com/food/products/l-sp-04.html> or possibly at a Hispanic Foods market. La Tienda, the site given above, is a mail

order store that carries all sorts of hard-to-find Spanish and Latin American specialties. This paste is only \$3.95, plus shipping and is well worth getting. It is fairly hot and fruity, very delicious!

Sudado de Conchas (Sea Scallops Poached in Wine)

Adapted from <http://peruviancooking.com/english/recipe.asp?idreceta=467>. Loads of great recipes on this site! This one is very quick and easy.

Serves 4.

2T olive oil
1 onion, diced
1t flour
1/2c diced canned tomatoes or sauce (I actually used a touch more than this)
1T aji amarillo paste, recommended (any other hot pepper maybe be used)
Salt and pepper
1lb. sea scallops
1/3-1/2c dry white wine
juice of 1 lime
Hot cooked white rice



Heat oil in skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring, for about 8 minutes. Add flour, stir in and cook for 1 minute. Add tomatoes and cook, stirring, for 4 minutes. Add the aji or other pepper and cook about 2 more minutes, adding a little water if it seems too thick. Turn heat to medium-high, allow pan to get hot, then add scallops and a little salt and ground black pepper, cover and cook 2 minutes. Turn scallops, add wine, stir gently, cover and cook 1-2 more minutes (it should be boiling) or until scallops are just cooked DO NOT OVERCOOK or they will be rubbery. Remove from heat, stir in lime juice and serve immediately over hot rice.



Sopa de Pallares (Lima Bean Soup)

Adapted from <http://www.justperu.org/peru/recipes/beans-soup.asp>. Slightly Americanized version of this traditional Peruvian comfort foods, with the addition of bacon. The lima beans are pureed and the resulting soup is smooth and silky.

Serves 6-8

1T olive oil
8oz. bacon, thinly sliced crosswise
1 large onion, chopped
1 stalk celery, chopped
1 leek, white and light parts only, halved lengthwise, sliced, washed well
1 bay leaf
ground black pepper (lots!)
¼ t ground allspice
1T oregano
1lb. frozen lima beans, thawed
4c low salt beef broth
2 carrots, peeled and diced
grated parmesan

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add about 1/3 of the bacon and cook 5 minutes, stirring.
3. Add the onion, celery and ½ of the leek, and cook 10-15 minutes or until onions are translucent.
4. Stir in bay leaf, a generous amount of ground black pepper, allspice and oregano and lima beans.
5. Add 3 cups of beef broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and keep at a low boil, partially covered, for about 20 minutes or until beans are soft. Meanwhile, cook the rest of the bacon until crispy and set aside.
6. When beans are soft, remove pot from heat and allow to cool for a little while so you don't burn yourself when you puree it. REMOVE BAY LEAF.
7. You may use an immersion blender, or use a blender and puree the soup, in batches.
8. Return to pot, add leeks and reheat to a low boil. Cook for 15 minutes, adding broth as necessary if it seems too thick, and stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Add carrots and cook about 8-10 minutes longer.
9. Serve hot, sprinkled with grated parmesan and crumbled bacon. Another option calls for diced cooked potatoes to be added, another for it to be served over rice.

Albondigas (Peruvian Meatballs)

Adapted from <http://peru-recipes.com/2008/09/albondigas-meatballs#more-319>

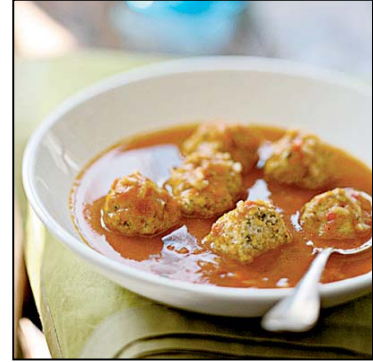
Absolutely delicious, and satisfying. Not your Grandmother's meatballs!

These are a bit spicy – reduce chili if desired. Serve over rice.

Serves 4-6 – about 20-24 meatballs

2T olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
2T tomato paste
1½ T aji Amarillo paste, or seeded jalapeno, finely chopped
1lb lean ground beef
¾ c fine, unseasoned breadcrumbs, or panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)
2 eggs, beaten
2T raisins, chopped into at least halves
6 black olives, any kind, chopped
Salt and pepper
Flour
¾ - 1 ½ c beef broth

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat and add the onion. Cook for 10 minutes. Stir in garlic, tomato paste, aji or other pepper, and 2 tablespoons of water. Cook 4 minutes, remove from heat and allow to cool. Place beef in a large bowl. Add breadcrumbs, a little more than ½ of cooked, cooled mixture (leaving other half in skillet) and a little salt and ground pepper. Mix well. Add the eggs, olives and raisins and mix well again, using your hands if necessary to distribute the ingredients evenly. Allow to sit about 10 minutes to set up. Put about ¾ cup of flour on a large plate. Shape the meatballs with your hands, making them about the size of a ping pong ball, and place on the plate with the flour. Heat the skillet with the remaining mixture and ¾ cup of the beef broth to a low boil. Roll the meatballs in flour and add to the hot broth. You will probably need to do two batches. Cover and cook the meatballs 5 minutes, then turn them using tongs. Cook another 4 minutes, continuing to keep the broth boiling and the pan covered. Remove the cooked meatballs to a warm platter and keep warm in the oven while you are cooking the rest. Add about ½ cup more beef broth to the pan and heat it up, repeat meatball procedure. Remove cooked meatballs to platter and keep warm. If there is still a lot of broth in the pan boil it down a little. If there is no juice in the pan, add a little more broth and heat. Serve meatballs hot over rice with sauce from pan.



Ceviche de Verduras (Vegetarian Ceviche Salad)



Adapted from <http://southamericanfood.about.com/od/saladssidedishes/r/cevichesalad.htm>

Refreshing and filling at the same time, this salad would make a great staple for anyone's repertoire. Limey!

Serves 4-6

4 scallions, sliced
1 red pepper, chopped (optional but pretty!)
1 ½ c cooked corn
2t aji Amarillo paste or a seeded, chopped jalapeno
6 oz. fresh mozzarella, cut into ½ inch cubes
1/4c cilantro or parsley, your choice
8 grape tomatoes, cut in half
1 avocado, ripe but not mushy, cut into ½ inch cubes
juice of 3 limes
Salt and ground black pepper

Combine the first 7 ingredients - scallions through grape tomatoes - in a bowl and toss to mix. Add avocado, lime juice and salt and pepper, mix again. Serve cool.

Peruvian Cilantro rice

Adapted from allrecipes.com

2 (4 ounce) skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
1 bunch fresh cilantro, stems removed
1/2 cup water
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1/4 cup frozen, chopped carrots
1/4 cup frozen peas
1 tablespoon cumin
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 cup uncooked white rice

Directions:

1. Place the chicken into a large saucepan and fill with enough water to cover, about 3 cups. Bring to a boil and cook for about fifteen minutes, or until chicken is done. Dice chicken, and reserve cooking liquid.
2. In a food processor or blender, puree cilantro with 1/2 cup water.
3. Heat oil in a saucepan and cook garlic until lightly browned. Pour in 2 cups of the cooking liquid and stir in the cilantro puree, diced chicken, carrots, peas, cumin and rice. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a simmer, then cover; cook on low heat until rice is tender and liquid has been absorbed, 15 to 20 minutes.



Quinoa en Salpicon

Serves 4-6

- 2 fl.oz. Fresh Lime Juice
- 4 fl.oz. Olive Oil
- Salt and Ground White Pepper
- 1 Fresh Jalapeno Chili, deseeded and finely chopped
- 200g/7oz Quinoa
- 600ml/20 fl.oz. Water
- 5oz Cucumber, peeled and diced
- 8oz Fresh Tomatoes, diced or good canned
- 8 Spring Onions (Scallions), sliced (white parts only)
- 1 tbsp freshly chopped Parsley
- 1 tbsp freshly chopped Mint

Instructions

In a small bowl, whisk together the lime juice, olive oil white pepper, jalapeno, and salt. Set aside.

*Wash the quinoa well under running water then place in a large saucepan together with the water, bring to the boil then reduce the heat, cover and simmer 15 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and allow to cool.

Place the cooled quinoa in a serving bowl with the cucumber, tomato, spring onions, parsley and mint and mix well.

Add the vinaigrette, toss well and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve cold.

*Note: Give the Quinoa a good rinse. It's coated with a natural repellent, a bitter substance that protects the grain from insects and birds. To avoid a raw or bitter taste, place the grain in a fine strainer and rinse thoroughly with cold water. Drain. During cooking, a fine, white spiral appears around the grain. -recipezaar.com

Quinoa: the super "Mother Grain"

Originally grown in the high plains of the Andes Mountains in South America, quinoa (pronounced "keen-wa") was considered the "Mother Grain" that kept the Incan armies strong and robust.

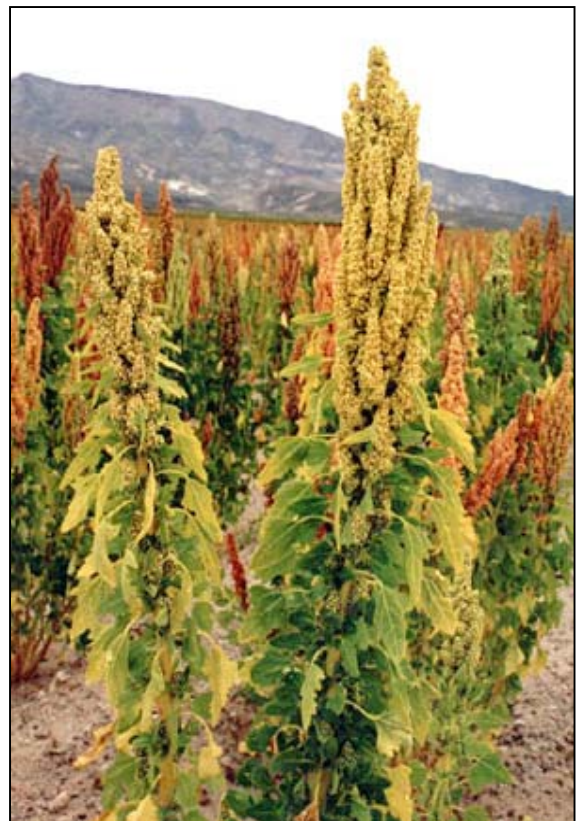
The grain was rediscovered and brought to the U.S. in the 1980's and test grown in Colorado. Today, quinoa is sold in many markets.

No single food can supply all of life's essential nutrients, quinoa comes close.

One of the more popular "supergrains," it is extraordinarily rich in nutrients, containing up to 50% more protein than most other grains.

One of the best sources of vegetable protein in the vegetable kingdom, quinoa has a subtle, smoky flavor.

--recipezaar.com





Turrón de Chocolate (Heavy Chocolate Cake)

Turrón in Peru, and all over Latin America for that matter, comes in many shapes, sizes and choices of ingredients. Most of them resemble candy more than cake, though in Peru turrón is usually soft. I took some culinary license here and made a recipe for flourless chocolate cake. Since I made this EXACTLY (minus the raspberry garnish) as called for in the recipe I am attaching the link here, rather than retyping it:

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/emeril-lagasse/flourless-chocolate-cake-recipe/index.html>

Normally, Turrón de Chocolate would have almonds or other nuts in it so feel free to garnish this with chopped almonds, or sprinkle some on top before putting it in the oven. I plan on serving mine that way, with whipped cream that will have some Kalua added, since Peru is famous for its coffee. ENJOY! It is rich and decadent! Serves 16.

NOTE: This needs to be refrigerated for 8 hours, after cooling, before serving, so be sure to allow time. Also, you will need a 9-inch spring-form pan.

Sources

- <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/maternal.html>
- http://www.who.int/making_pregnancy_safer/topics/mdg/en/index.html
- <http://www.ifrc.org>
- <http://www.unfpa.org/rights/quotes.htm>
- <http://www.inmed.org>
- <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/women/womday97.htm>
- <http://righttomaternalhealth.org/>
- <http://www.foodbycountry.com/Kazakhstan-to-South-Africa/Peru.html>
- <http://www.wikipedia.org>
- <http://www.recipezaar.com>