



Tasty Thai Rainbow Rice Salad + Zesty Coconut Lime Dressing

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 25 / **Cook Time** 25 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

mince: to chop into teeny tiny pieces.

simmer: to cook a food gently, usually in a liquid, until softened.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

toast: to brown and crisp food in a heated skillet or oven, or in a toaster.

Equipment

- Medium saucepan
- Dry measuring cups
- Liquid measuring cup
- Cutting board + kid-safe knife
- Blender
- Metal spoon
- Zester (or grater with small zesting plate/side)
- Citrus juicer (optional)

- Measuring spoons

Ingredients

Tasty Thai Rainbow Rice Salad + Zesty Coconut Lime Dressing

- 1 C jasmine rice
- 1 red/yellow/orange bell pepper (or all three!)
- 1 handful Brussels sprouts (or broccoli/baby bok choy)
- 1 carrot
- 1 shallot
- 5 to 6 mint leaves
- 5 to 6 basil leaves
- 1/2 C dried coconut flakes or shreds
- Dressing:
 - 1/4 C coconut milk
 - 2 limes
 - 1/4 C fresh pineapple chunks (or frozen (thawed)/canned)
 - 1 half-inch piece fresh ginger
 - 1 T brown sugar + more to taste
 - 1 pinch garlic powder
 - 1/4 C olive oil
 - salt and pepper to taste

Food Allergen Substitutions

Tasty Thai Rainbow Rice Salad + Zesty Coconut Lime Dressing

Instructions

Tasty Thai Rainbow Rice Salad + Zesty Coconut Lime Dressing

measure + add + simmer

To a medium saucepan, add **1 cup of rice** and **2 cups of water**. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer

for 15 to 20 minutes until the water has evaporated and the rice is cooked! Fluff rice with a fork and scoop into a mixing bowl.

chop + mince + tear

Chop or mince **1 bell pepper, 1 handful of Brussels sprouts, 1 carrot,** and **1 shallot.** Mince or tear **5 to 6 mint leaves** and **5 to 6 basil leaves.** The smaller the veggies, the better! Add veggies to the rice bowl.

toast + add + mix

Meanwhile, adults can toast **1/2 cup of coconut flakes** over low heat in a skillet until golden brown. Add the toasted coconut to the rice and veggies and mix well!

dressing: peel + zest + squeeze

Peel ****1 half-inch piece fresh ginger**** using a metal teaspoon. Add to a blender. Zest and squeeze juice from **2 limes** and add to the blender.

measure + blend

Measure and add to your blender **1/4 cup of coconut milk, 1/4 cup of pineapple chunks, 1 tablespoon of brown sugar, 1 pinch of garlic,** ****1/4 cup of olive oil,** and salt and pepper to taste. Purée until dressing is very smooth!

pour + mix

Pour 1 cup of Zesty Coconut Lime Dressing over rice, veggies, and coconut and mix well. Season with more salt, pepper, and sugar and enjoy!

Featured Ingredient: Coconut!

Hi! I'm Coconut!

"Knock, Knock! Who's there? Coco. Coco Who? Coco Nut! You guessed it! I'm a Coconut! I'm kind of like the moon because you can sort of see a face on my outer shell. See those indentations? They could be my eyes and nose! (Or maybe you see a really small, hairy bowling ball!) I may be a hard case to crack, but I'm tasty inside! Try me flaked or shredded, sweetened or unsweetened, in cookies, pies, cakes, salads, and shakes! Yum!"

History

Coconuts are native to tropical islands in the Pacific around Southeast Asia, but they were spread around the globe by explorers hundreds of years ago.

In Thailand, for about 400 years, pigtailed macaque monkeys have been trained to pick coconuts.

In the United States, you can write an address on the outside of a coconut, slap on the correct postage,

and drop the whole thing in the mail. Amazing! Yes, coconuts are mailable as long as they are presented in a dry condition and not oozing fruit juice! Try it!

A coconut can survive months of floating in the ocean, and when it washes up on a beach, it can germinate into a tree!

Globally, coconut oil was the leading oil until the 1960s, when soybean oil overtook it.

May 8 is "National Coconut Cream Pie Day" in the United States.

Anatomy & Etymology

Coconuts are related to olives, peaches, and plums. Coconuts are NOT nuts; they are big seeds!

The term "coconut" can refer to the whole coconut palm tree, the seed, or the fruit, which technically is a drupe, not a nut! A drupe refers to a fleshy fruit with a stony seed inside that's protected with thin skin or hard, stony covering. Examples are peaches, coconuts, and olives. The word "drupe" comes from "drupa," meaning overripe olive.

An average coconut palm produces about 30 coconuts a year, although it's possible for a tree to yield 75 to 100 annually.

A coconut will ripen in about a year; however, if you want to harvest it for the coconut water, it will be ready within six to seven months. If you shake a coconut and hear water sloshing around, it's not fully ripe, and there won't be as much meat.

The outer skin of the coconut covers a thick, fibrous husk, which can be used for making ropes, mats, brushes, sacks, caulking for boats, and stuffing for mattresses.

Coconut leaves have many uses, too, such as making brooms, weaving baskets or mats, or drying for thatch roofing.

Traditionally, the trunk of the coconut palm tree was used for its wood to build boats, bridges, houses, and huts.

The word "coconut" comes from the mid-16th-century Spanish and Portuguese word "coco," which can mean "bogyman" or "grinning face" after the three indentations on the coconut shell that resemble facial features.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

The coconut comes from the coconut palm tree. These trees prefer hot weather. Where in the world do you think they grow? Throughout the tropics and subtropical parts of Earth, in over 80 countries!

The three highest coconut-producing countries are the Philippines, Indonesia, and India.

The coconut palm tree can grow up to 98 feet tall!

Coconut milk is sweet and water-like but eventually dries out as the coconut ripens.

The coconut palm is sometimes referred to as the "Tree of Life" because it's useful from top to bottom.

Except for the roots, every part of the coconut tree is harvested in the tropical areas where coconut palms are common.

If buying a coconut whole, choose one that feels heavy for its size. Young coconuts will be full of coconut water and covered in a green, smooth shell with tender flesh. While older, mature coconuts have a more brown and fibrous outer shell with firmer and drier meat inside.

Coconuts are not easy to open! You have to forcefully crack them open to get to the edible goodness inside.

Coconut meat can be dried and shredded and used in salads, baked recipes, sprinkled over fruit, and enjoyed as a snack. It can also be eaten fresh and added to smoothies.

Coconut water is hydrating and can be enjoyed straight or poured over ice with other juices for a refreshing treat.

Nutrition

Electrolytes! Fresh coconut water is a source of electrolytes like potassium, sodium, and manganese. What do electrolytes do? They replenish the body by helping our muscles to move, our hearts to beat, and our brain cells to communicate with each other.

Coconuts are rich in a type of fat called lauric acid, which is known for being antiviral, antibacterial, and antifungal. These properties help prevent us from getting sick by protecting our immune system.

Coconut is very nutritious and has lots of fiber, vitamins, and minerals. It is classified as a "highly functional food" because it provides many health benefits beyond its nutritional content.

Pacific Islanders especially value coconut oil for its health and cosmetic benefits.