

Brown rice salad with celery hearts & orange zest

Season: Winter

Type: Salads

Difficulty: Easy

Serves:
24 tastes in the classroom or 6 serves at home

Fresh from the garden: celery, lemons, mint, oranges, oregano, parsley, spring onions, thyme

Recipe Source: Collingwood College, VIC

When a recipe calls for 'celery hearts', it really means using the tender inner stalks where they are still packed close together and attached to the base. Home-grown celery is not usually as pale and large as commercial bunches. Remove any coarse outside stalks (they are ideal for stock) and cut the bunch about 12 centimetres from the base. This 'clump' of pale celery is a 'celery heart'. If very large it can be halved lengthwise.

Reserve the pale inner leaves. Dipped into a tempura batter they will make a delicious and crunchy alternative garnish.

Equipment:

- colander
- * rice cooker (or a large pot with lid if using the absorption method)
- tea towel
- chopping board
- large knives
- measuring cups
- measuring spoons
- large heavy-based pan or pot
- wooden spoon or spatula
- 2 small bowls
- lemon zester
- orange juicer
- large serving bowl

Ingredients:

- 2 cups long-grain brown rice
- 4 cups water
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 bunches of celery
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 oranges
- 1 lemon
- small bunch of spring onions
- couple of handfuls or more of flat-leaf parsley
- oregano sprigs
- thyme sprigs
- mint sprigs
- 1 ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper



What to do:

- Wash the brown rice under cold water in a colander. Put it into the rice cooker with the water and bay leaves and turn on the rice cooker.*
- Dampen a tea towel and place it under the chopping board to keep it from slipping.
- Trim each celery bunch as described in the introduction. Wash the celery hearts, removing any damaged parts. Slice the celery hearts into 5 mm slices.
- Finely chop the garlic.



- Heat the olive oil in the heavy-based pan over medium heat, then add the celery hearts and chopped garlic. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally with the spoon or spatula. Set aside in a small bowl for later.
- Zest the oranges and set aside the zest in another small bowl.
- Juice the oranges and the lemon. Keep the juice. (The lemon and orange juice can be mixed together.)
- Wash the spring onions and remove any damaged outer leaves or tops. Cut away any roots. Slice the onions thinly and put them in the large serving bowl.
- Wash and gently dry the parsley, then chop it and add it to the large serving bowl.
- Wash and dry the oregano, thyme and mint. Pluck the leaves from the stems, place the stems in the compost bucket, and chop or slice the leaves. Add them to the large serving bowl.
- Add the cooked celery hearts to the large serving bowl.
- Add the orange zest and toss the salad gently to mix.
- Now add the lemon and orange juice, salt and pepper.
- When the rice is cooked, remove the bay leaves and add to compost. Add the cooked rice to the large serving bowl.
- Stir the salad gently and taste for seasoning.
- You can garnish the salad with edible flowers and fresh herbs from the garden or with crisp fried celery leaves.



* **Notes:** If using a rice cooker, the rice will take 30–40 mins to cook. If you don't have a rice cooker, you'll need to use the absorption method.