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FOOD EDITORS RELEASE

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It's Time to Let Your Culinary Skills Go Wild

"Get Wild with Wild Rice" Recipe Contest Kicks Off – Win Cash & Prizes

As summer approaches, kitchens across America are heating up – not because of a change in seasons, but because aspiring chefs are putting their creativity to the test for the 8th Annual “*Get Wild with Wild Rice*” recipe contest. Whether you are a culinary pro, an aspiring chef, or someone who simply enjoys the challenge of creating your own culinary masterpiece, we invite you to participate in this national competition. Enter your best creations featuring the deliciously distinct flavor of the only cereal grain native to North America – wild rice!

Here's how it works – recipes entered go head-to-head in a taste test conducted by our culinary specialists. Participants have three opportunities to win: 1) up to 16 finalists will be selected to have their recipes published and win *wild* prizes; 2) a Grand Prize of \$500 will be awarded to one winning recipe chosen by a panel of judges; and 3) in September, National Rice Month, America will vote for its favorite recipe online and one lucky winner will receive the \$250 People's Choice Award. The contest opens May 8 with a deadline of June 5, 2017, for recipe submissions. Visit mnwildrice.org for full contest details.

The “*Get Wild with Wild Rice*” Contest also serves as an Automatic Qualifier for the 2017 World Recipe Championship. One lucky winner will receive a Golden Ticket which qualifies them to compete for a total purse of \$300,000 in cash and prizes!

In its 8th year, this popular contest has led to scores of “wildly” imaginative recipes demonstrating both participant creativity and wild rice versatility. See for yourself – try these wildly delicious 2016 prize winning recipes:

People's Choice Winner – Tuscan Beefeater's Wild Rice Salad (Gilda Lester, Millsboro, DE)

The 2016 People's Choice winning recipe features grilled and slightly spicy beef tenderloin steak atop a bed of wild rice, fresh tomatoes, green pepper, and onion, garnished with blue cheese crumbles and a tangy vinaigrette dressing. *Tuscan Beefeater's Wild Rice Salad* is a light and elegant, quick and easy, protein-rich creation serving well as either an entrée or a side.

Grand Prize Winner – Italian Wild Rice Quesadillas (Jeanne Holt, Mendota Heights, MN)

The 2016 Grand Prize winning recipe puts a new twist on a familiar favorite, adding both freshness and originality. *Italian Wild Rice Quesadillas* combine wild rice with tender rotisserie chicken, prosciutto ham, shredded and cream cheeses, chopped spinach, and marinara sauce for a delicious “Italian” variation on this classic.

For these and other wild rice recipes, visit one of the most extensive wild rice recipe libraries found online (mnwildrice.org/search.php).

Healthy, nutritious, and delicious – no wonder wild rice is the grain of choice for those who love versatility, freshness, and flavor.



Tradition! Wild rice is rich with tradition. It has grown naturally in the clean, clear waters of the North for centuries and as an agricultural crop for over 50 years. Wild rice really isn't rice at all. It's the seed of *Zizania palustris*, a tall blooming water grass that prospers in the lush vegetation of the Great Lakes region. For many years, wild rice was an important staple food of Native American tribes. It was called "manoomin," which translates into "good berry." Today, most wild rice is cultivated, yet it remains a natural product.



Simple & Convenient! One great advantage of wild rice is that it can be cooked ahead of time, refrigerated or frozen, and added at the last moment to almost any dish. To prepare this convenient product, simply add one cup of uncooked, cultivated wild rice to 3-4 cups of boiling water. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 30-45 minutes or until grains begin to open. Drain and store in re-sealable freezer bags. Cooked wild rice can be refrigerated up to one week or frozen up to six months.



Gourmet Flair! Wild rice adds flair to entrees, soups, and salads, lending nutty texture and unique flavor to any dish. Keep cooked wild rice on hand to add elegance to your meals. Impress your family and friends by livening up some of your familiar favorites with style:

Pilaf: Stir in wild rice, dried cherries, and toasted almonds to cooked white or basmati rice for a quick but elegant accompaniment to your grilled meats.

Pancakes: Add texture and taste to your Sunday morning brunch by swirling wild rice into your pancake batter. Serve with real maple syrup.

Omelets: Sauté fresh mushrooms in flavored oil. Add cooked wild rice and shredded Swiss or Gruyere cheese for a tasty filling.

Italian Rice Salad: Combine chopped tomatoes, red onion, olives, and capers with a splash of Italian salad dressing and wild rice for a lovely, no-fuss accompaniment to grilled tuna or salmon.



Nutritious! Did you know wild rice has only 83 calories per ½ cup serving? It is a good source of fiber, protein, B-vitamins, and potassium. This nutritional grain is free of sodium, preservatives, and additives, making it the grain of choice for anyone who loves fresh ingredients, healthy dishes, and versatility.

To receive your free copy of the Council's latest recipe brochure, "*Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Recipes and Answers to Often Asked Questions*," featuring contest winning recipes and other wild rice favorites, including soups, appetizers, salads, entrees, and side dishes, send a self-addressed-stamped-envelope to:



Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council
Newest Recipes
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TUSCAN BEEFEATER'S WILD RICE SALAD

Gilda Lester, Millsboro, DE

- 12 oz beef tenderloin steak
- 2 tbsp canola oil
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp each: pepper and red pepper flakes

Salad:

- ¾ cup bottled Italian vinaigrette dressing
- 2 cups cooked wild rice
- 2 large tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 1 green pepper, julienned
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 1 container (4 oz) Crystal Farms® Blue Cheese Crumbles, divided

Brush steak with oil; sprinkle with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes. Grill to internal temperature of 145°F; thinly slice. In large bowl, toss all salad ingredients, reserving 2 oz of blue cheese. Top with steak and remaining blue cheese. 4 servings.

ITALIAN WILD RICE QUESADILLAS

Jeanne Holt, Mendota Heights, MN

- 4 oz Crystal Farms® Wisconsin Original Cream Cheese, softened
- ⅓ cup jarred basil pesto
- ⅓ cup chopped oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
- ½ tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 box (9 oz) frozen Green Giant® Steamers Chopped Spinach, thawed and squeezed to remove moisture
- 1 cup cooked wild rice
- 2 cups Crystal Farms® Finely Shredded 6 Cheese Italian, divided
- 8 (9") flour tortillas
- 1 Gold'n Plump® Deli Fresh Rotisserie Chicken, Original Flavor, shredded
- 4 oz thinly sliced prosciutto ham, cut into thin strips
- 2 tbsp canola oil
- 2 cups jarred marinara sauce, warmed

In medium bowl, stir first 4 ingredients until mixed. Stir in spinach, wild rice, and 2/3 cup shredded cheese. Top 4 tortillas with wild rice mixture; spread evenly to within ¼" of edges. Top with chicken and prosciutto. Sprinkle with remaining shredded cheese; top with remaining tortillas. Heat large, non-stick skillet over medium heat; brush with oil. Place quesadillas in skillet; brush tops with oil. Cook 4 minutes on each side until heated through. Keep warm in a 200°F oven. Cut into wedges. Serve with marinara. 4 servings.

Notes to Editor:

For an electronic copy of the photos, call or email our office.

Due to limited funds, we are unable to utilize a clipping service. Run our release and send us a copy – we'll return the favor by sending you a 1/2 pound of cultivated wild rice. If you cannot accept the wild rice, we'd still appreciate a clipping to show our growers – **thanks!**

Readers responding to the brochure offer receive a "Mail Order Supplier" list along with the *Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Recipes and Answers to Often Asked Questions* brochure. Due to limited funding, readers need to send a business size self-addressed-stamped-envelope to:

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Tuscan Beefeater's Wild Rice Salad

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council



Italian Wild Rice Quesadillas

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council

