Kale & Quinoa Salad with Dates, Almonds & Citrus Dressing

**Kale & Quinoa Salad with Dates, Almonds & Citrus Dressing**

6 tablespoons olive oil
6 large onions, diced
Salt
3 cups red quinoa
6 small cloves garlic, smashed
6 bunches **lacinato** kale
3 cups pitted dates
3 cups roasted salted whole almonds

*Dressing:*6 mandarin oranges, juiced (quick hand juicer beside radio)
3 limes, juiced
4 tablepoons maple syrup
1 ½ cups olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat the olive oil in electric fry pan over medium heat. Add the onion and sprinkle lightly with salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion has darkened to a toasty brown and smells caramelized — about 20 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside. You should have about 3 cups of cooked onions.

Rinse the quinoa. Add it and the garlic to a large stainless steel pot and set over medium-high heat and sauté for about 3 minutes both to dry the grain and toast it lightly (stir continuously). Add 6 cups water and 3 teaspoon salt and bring to a boil. Cover and turn the heat to low; cook for 15 minutes. Turn off the heat but leave the lid on for an additional 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, remove the lid and fluff with a fork.

Slice the kale leaves into ribbons and wash thoroughly and spin dry.

Slice the dates into quarters. Roughly chop the almonds into just two or three pieces, no more.

Make the dressing: Whisk the juices. Whisk in the maple syrup and olive oil. The dressing will be emulsified but still thin.

Assemble the whole salad, dressing and all ahead of time: Toss the kale with all of the still-warm quinoa and the caramelized onions. Toss with about half the dressing and taste. Add the remaining dressing if desired, then toss with the dates. Keep the almonds to have on the side. Taste a bite; if it needs more salt, add it now, as well as fresh pepper if desired. Store in two stainless steel trays in fridge.