(1) Make marinade
(2) " vinegrette →
(3) Make ~~Quinoa~~ Quinoa

VIETNAMESE BOWL
with Sweet and Tangy Vinaigrette

If I were to nominate one place as ground zero for the bowl movement, I'd name Axe (pronounced *ah-shay*), a (sadly) now closed restaurant in Los Angeles that was serving delicious healthy food long before "eating clean" became part of our culinary lexicon. Axe bowl is what happens when a Vietnamese rice bowl meets the Santa Monica Farmers Market: a scoop of steamed quinoa or brown rice in an enormous bowl topped with shrimp, chicken, or tofu, crunchy veggies and herbs, and a sweet, tangy vinaigrette. For me, ordering a "bowl" at Axe was not even a matter of free will because if I ordered anything else I'd find myself looking around the room with bowl envy. RIP, Axe.

This bowl is naturally g-free and, like at Axe, you choose your protein: salmon, shrimp, chicken, or tofu. They all use the same marinade so you could even offer a selection, but remember not to marinate chicken with anything else because of the dangers of salmonella.

Serves 4

FOR THE PROTEIN

¼ cup rice vinegar

¼ cup sesame oil

2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce or tamari

2 tablespoons honey

4 (4-ounce) skinless salmon fillets; 1 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined; 2 skinless boneless chicken breasts; or 1 package firm tofu, drained and cut into 1-inch slabs

Kosher salt

Canola oil (or another neutral-flavored oil)

FOR THE BOWLS

1 cup brown rice or quinoa, cooked (see page 36 or 42; about 3½ cups cooked grains)

½ head purple, green, or napa cabbage, cored and very thinly sliced

2 cups bean sprouts

2 large carrots, shaved into long ribbons with a U-shaped vegetable peeler

4 scallions (white and light green parts only)

1 cup fresh cilantro, mint, and/or basil (preferably Thai basil)

2 red Fresno chiles (or red or green serrano or jalapeño chiles), stemmed and very thinly sliced

Sweet and Tangy Vinaigrette (recipe follows)

1 cup roasted salted peanuts (or cashews), coarsely chopped

To prepare the protein, combine the vinegar, sesame oil, soy sauce, and honey in a glass or ceramic baking dish or bowl, or in a large zip-top bag. Put the fish, shrimp, chicken, or tofu in the marinade, turn to coat, and cover the bowl or close the bag. Refrigerate for 30 to 45 minutes for fish or shrimp, up to 2 hours for chicken or tofu. Remove the protein from the marinade and season with salt.

Pour enough canola oil into a large sauté pan to coat it lightly and heat it over medium-high heat until the oil slides easily in the pan and is sizzling hot but not smoking, 2 to 3 minutes; the protein should sizzle when it hits the pan.

For salmon, put the fish in the pan rounded-side down, and cook until brown and caramelized, about 4 minutes. Carefully turn the salmon, reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook for about 3 minutes, until it looks medium-rare on the side. Remove the salmon from the pan.

For shrimp, cook until they are pink and opaque on both sides, about 4 minutes total.

For chicken, lay the chicken breasts in the skillet and cook until the first side is caramelized, about 3 minutes. Turn the heat to medium, and cook for about 5 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through. (The juices will run clear when

the chicken is pierced with a small sharp knife, and the chicken will register 165°F on an instant-read thermometer.) Remove the chicken from the skillet and let it rest for 5 minutes before slicing it.

For tofu, cook until it is seared on each side, about 3 minutes per side. Remove it from the skillet and thinly slice it.

Spoon the rice into four bowls. Put one portion of protein on each bowl.

Drop a handful each of the cabbage, bean sprouts, carrots, and scallions around the protein and scatter the herbs and chiles over the top. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of the vinaigrette over the vegetables and rain on the nuts. Serve the remaining vinaigrette and any remaining vegetables in little bowls on the side.

Sweet and Tangy Vinaigrette

Makes about 1⅓ cups

½ cup canola oil (or another [illegible] flavored oil)

½ cup rice vinegar

1 (3- to 4-inch) piece fresh [illegible] peeled and grated on a Micro[illegible] minced (about 1 heaping table[illegible]

3 tablespoons fresh lime juice [illegible] about 2 limes)

1 generous tablespoon honey

2 garlic cloves, grated on a M[illegible] or minced

1 teaspoon kosher salt

Combine all the ingredients in [illegible] or mustard jar with a lid and [illegible] a good shake. (You could also [illegible] bowl with a whisk.) The vinai[illegible] keep, refrigerated, for up to a [illegible]