Red Quinoa and Bacon Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

1 cup uncooked quinoa, rinsed
2 cups water
8 pieces of bacon, chopped
1/4 medium red onion, thinly sliced
1/4 cup chopped Italian parsley
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons spicy brown mustard
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon ground chipotle
1 teaspoon black pepper

Directions:

1) Combine the quinoa, water and 1 teaspoon of salt in a medium saucepan. Bring the water to a boil reduce the heat to low and cover the pan. Gently simmer, covered, for 15 minutes (there may still be some water not yet absorbed). Remove from the heat.

2) Keeping the pan covered, let it stand for 5 minutes, or until the remaining water is absorbed. After 5 minutes, gently fluff the quinoa with a fork and set it aside to cool.

3) Using another pan, cook the bacon on medium-high until it is browned and crispy. Remove the pan from the heat, drain the bacon and set aside.

4) Whisk the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, mustard, brown sugar, smoked paprika, chipotle, remaining teaspoon of salt and pepper in a small bowl.

5) In a large serving bowl, add the quinoa, bacon pieces, red onion and parsley, gently mixing them together. Stir in the dressing until all ingredients are fully incorporated.

6) Serve the salad at room temperature.