



Kitchen Companion

Introducing: The Rice Cooker/Steamer

What is a rice cooker?

A rice cooker or rice steamer is a self-contained tabletop kitchen appliance for cooking rice. They vary in size from small (for one to two people) to large (10 people or more). Rice cookers range in price from inexpensive (around \$15.00 at Target or Wal-mart) to more than \$100.00 (Zojirushi). The Zojirushi brand can be purchased through Target online. Good rice cookers come in all price ranges and will produce rice that is full-bodied and evenly cooked, but not burned.

What are the benefits of having a rice cooker?

- ✓ Small, easy-to-clean appliance
- ✓ Cooks rice and other grains to perfection
- ✓ Convenient, quick, and easy to use
- ✓ No worries about water temperature or stovetop messes
- ✓ No need to “watch the pot” while it is cooking
- ✓ Frees stovetop space for other cooking
- ✓ Steam rack allows for vegetable cooking with or without rice
- ✓ Cooks rice when you are not at home
- ✓ Cooker turns off when finished and keeps rice warm
- ✓ Provides “ready-to-eat” healthful food that discourages fast-food intake

What creative ways can I use my rice cooker?

1. Use brown rice as a morning cereal with fruit, raisins, and walnuts
2. Add cooked, rinsed beans of any type to cooked brown rice for a delicious complete protein
3. Experiment with wild rice blends
4. Enjoy your rice with seasonings, sauces, tofu, beans, or vegetables
5. Use a rice cooker with a steamer tray and add raw sliced sweet potatoes, beets, or other vegetables for a complete meal (beets will stain the rice red)
6. Use your rice cooker to prepare quinoa, couscous, or hot whole grain cereals