



Healthy Summer Picnic and Barbecue Ideas

Who doesn't love the smell of a barbecue or sitting on a blanket snacking on yummy food in our favourite park?

Summer weather calls out for casual barbecues with friends and picnic lunches at the park or the beach.

In the summer we have to be sure to stay hydrated, replace our electrolytes and water soluble vitamins and minerals.

Main Dishes

- **Go for grilled fish instead of beef more often.** The healthiest types include salmon, trout and herring, which are high in heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Buy chicken breasts – and remember to remove the skin before eating** – instead of the fattier dark meat (legs and thighs).
- **Marinades made with vinegar or lemon** act as an invisible shield that changes the acidity of your meat and prevents cancer causing charring molecules from sticking to the meat you are grilling
- **Go for Bison, chicken or turkey burgers** using breast meat, and add diced onions for another layer of flavor.
- **Use a rack** so the fat drips away from the food.
- **Grill a Portobello mushroom instead of meat**
- **Grilled Vegetable Kabobs are colourful and delicious** – my favourite veggies for grilled kabobs are peppers. Onions, mushrooms and beets. Just brush with coconut oil and put on the grill!
- **Grilled Firm Tofu steaks are awesome** – I like mine marinated in a vinegar based or coconut amino marinade then coated in sesame seeds and grilled

Side Dishes

- **Corn on the Cob** – with lime and cayenne instead of butter. Try it, it's so good!
- **Go green... and red, orange, yellow, purple and more.** Serve green leafy salads or fruit salads (or a combination of both, like baby spinach with strawberries or mixed greens with orange slices) instead of mayonnaise-based salads.
 - Add crunch – and healthier fats – with some toasted walnuts or almonds instead of croutons.
 - If making coleslaw use different coloured cauliflower, carrots and broccoli and always use a vinegar based instead of mayonnaise based dressing
- **Instead of potato chips**, which can be high in saturated and *trans* fats, serve raw veggies like cucumber, carrot and celery sticks, cherry tomatoes and broccoli and cauliflower florets with hummus
- **Make yummy water options.** Add cucumber, berries, sliced citrus to water to give it some pep.
- **Cut back on commercially baked foods**, like cookies, pies and cakes. Remember that most store-baked goods are made with egg yolks, butter or shortening and other ingredients that are high in saturated fat and/or trans fat.
- **Bean salads** – beans are very high in protein and fibre. They do not contain cholesterol or saturated fat.
- **Fruit Kabobs.** Use strawberries, grapes, pineapple, honeydew, cantaloupe, and watermelon to make a candy-colored natural treat.

Sandwiches & Wraps

- **Don't bother with the cheese** – we really do not need it!
- **Use hummus, pesto and tahini as spreadable bases for sandwiches and wraps instead of mayonnaise and butter**
- **Choose whole-grain sprouted high-fiber breads and rolls**, In addition to being good for you, they add more flavor and texture to your meal.
- **Add sprouts to your sandwiches and wraps** – these add nutrients as well as a fabulous crunchy texture.

Yummy Recipes!

Hot & Sour Coleslaw

- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon coconut aminos
- 1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper, or to taste
- 3 cups shredded napa or green cabbage
- 1 cup thinly sliced red bell pepper
- 1/3 cup sliced scallions
- 1 8-ounce can bamboo shoots, drained and thinly sliced

Whisk vinegar, coconut aminos, oil, ginger, white pepper and crushed red pepper in a large bowl. Add cabbage, bell pepper, scallions and bamboo shoots; toss to coat.

Easy Flaked Almond "Tuna" Salad – from my favourite vegan recipe site: [Ohsheglows.com](http://ohsheglows.com)

<http://ohsheglows.com/2013/08/15/my-favourite-lunch-of-the-moment-easy-flaked-almond-tuna-salad/>

- 1 cup raw almonds, soaked
- 2 celery stalks, finely chopped
- 2 green onions, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3 tablespoons vegan mayo (veganise is awesome)
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2-1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon fine grain sea salt, or to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Pinch of kelp granules (optional)
- 1 English cucumber, peeled (if desired) and sliced into 1cm rounds (optional)

Soak almonds in a bowl of water for 3-9 hours until plump. Drain and rinse well.

Add almonds into a food processor and process until finely chopped. It should look a bit like flaked tuna. Place into a medium mixing bowl.

Add the chopped celery, green onion, garlic, mayo, mustard, and lemon into the bowl. Stir well to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add a pinch of kelp granules if desired.

Slice cucumber into rounds, if using. With a small spoon, gently scoop out the centre of each cucumber round to create a small well. Spoon the almond mixture onto each cucumber round. Serve on a platter if you wish. You can also serve it in a pita, with crackers, or on top of a salad. Refrigerate leftover salad for up to 3 days.

Lemon Lavender Cookie – from another favourite recipe site: www.elanaspantry.com

- 1 ¼ cups blanched almond flour
- ¼ teaspoon celtic sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons dried lavender, finely minced
- ¼ cup grapeseed oil
- 3 tablespoons agave nectar
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest

Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl

Stir together wet ingredients in a smaller bowl

Mix wet ingredients into dry

Form ½ inch balls and press onto a parchment paper lined baking sheet

Bake at 350° for 7-10 minutes

Cool and serve