

Everything Tastes Better Outdoors continued ...

Picnic season is upon us, so pack up the cooler and blaze a trail to your nearest park, lake, beach or backyard!

Great Picnic Recipes
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Marinated Cherry Tomatoes

This makes even grocery-store tomatoes taste great.

Ingredients

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 T. white wine vinegar
1 T. fresh parsley, minced
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 to 2 tsp. fresh thyme, oregano, marjoram, basil or rosemary, minced
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1 scallion, thinly sliced
1 garlic clove, minced
1 lb. cherry tomatoes, sliced in half

Preparation

In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients except tomatoes. Place tomatoes in a bowl and pour in the marinade. Stir, then cover. Marinate at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. Serves 6.

Pasta, Potatoes and Green Beans with Pesto

The combination of potatoes, pasta and green beans dressed with pesto is a popular one-pot in parts of Italy. At the height of summer, pesto is readily made from fresh basil, but store-bought can be substituted.

Ingredients

8 oz. small, red-skinned or fingerling potatoes, quartered (each potato should weigh about 1 oz.)
2 tsp. salt
8 oz. rotini or rigatoni pasta
8 oz. green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
3/4 cup pesto

Preparation

Place potatoes in a large pot of water with salt. Cover, put on medium-high heat and bring to a boil. Once the water is boiling, add the pasta. Leave uncovered and cook for 5 minutes. Add the green beans. Continue cooking until beans are crisp-tender and the pasta is al dente, about 5 minutes. Drain and put into a bowl; add pesto and toss. Taste and season with salt and pepper as desired. Serves 6.

Pesto Ingredients

3 cups fresh basil leaves
1/3 cup pine nuts or walnuts, toasted
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
1 to 2 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Preparation

Combine nuts, basil, garlic and Parmesan in a food processor and purée until finely chopped. With the machine running, slowly pour the oil through the feed tube and process until smooth.

Dill and Celery Seed Coleslaw

This German-inspired slaw keeps for two weeks in the refrigerator.

Ingredients

1 lb. cabbage, shredded
1 cup green, red and/or yellow bell pepper (whatever combination you prefer and is available), thinly sliced
1 medium sweet onion, such as Vidalia, cut in half vertically, then thinly sliced
1/3 cup canola oil
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
1 tsp. celery seed
1 tsp. dill weed (fresh or dried, more or less to taste)
1/2 tsp. salt

Preparation

In a large bowl, layer the cabbage, bell pepper and onion. In a saucepan, combine oil, sugar, vinegar, celery seed, dill and salt. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and boil for 2 minutes. Pour the hot dressing over the vegetables. Cover tightly and refrigerate for at least 4 hours before serving. Serves 6.

Blueberry Upside-down Cake

Try substituting other fresh berries in this easy-to-make dessert.

Topping Ingredients

3 T. butter
1/2 cup packed, light or dark brown sugar
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
3 cup fresh blueberries
1 T. lemon juice batter ingredients
2 cups white whole-wheat flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
4 T. (1/2 stick) unsalted butter at room temperature
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1 tsp. lemon peel, freshly grated
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 cup milk

Preparation

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. To make the topping, melt the 3 tablespoons of butter in a 9-inch, round cake pan, tilting to evenly coat the bottom. Stir in the brown sugar and cinnamon. Add the blueberries, spreading evenly. Sprinkle with the lemon juice. To make the batter, combine flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl. In a large mixing bowl, cream the 4 tablespoons butter and granulated sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, lemon peel and vanilla, and beat until smooth. Add half the flour mixture and stir until combined, then add the milk, stirring until smooth. Add the remaining flour and stir just until the batter is evenly moist. Pour the batter over the fruit in the cake pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool for 5 minutes in the pan. Invert onto a serving platter and let sit for 1 minute before removing the pan. Scrape any fruit that remains in the pan onto the cake. Serves 6.