



Home on the Range

Celebrate Independence Day With a Traditional, All-American Picnic



Independence Day is a time for families, fireworks, parades and picnics—a combination that has been the all-American way to celebrate the Fourth of July since the early 1800s.

Whether you're planning to celebrate the first Independence Day of the new millennium in your own backyard or at the local park, American favorites such as lean pork, cherries and vanilla wafers are the perfect choices for an easy, festive picnic menu.

From a loin roast to a hearty slab of ribs, versatile pork is a natural for an outdoor Independence Day feast. The mild flavor of pork marries well with the sharp, smoky flavors imparted by grilling. For optimal, fork-tender pork, grill large cuts like loin roasts to medium-doneness or an internal temperature of 160 degrees F over indirect heat. Ribs should be slow-cooked

over indirect heat until the meat is tender, about 1 1/2–2 hours—enough time to relax with friends and family while “tending” the grill.

Sweet cherries—at the height of their season in July—are another perfect choice for any picnic menu. Not only do sweet cherries pair well with grilled meats, they are a colorful and delicious addition to desserts and refreshing summer drinks.

Finish your picnic meal with an all-American favorite—vanilla pudding with vanilla wafers. Vanilla wafers offer a light, crispy texture and delicate flavor that make them a natural in many recipes, especially when paired with fruits. They are also perfect for today's lighter eating. Paired with a yogurt dip, vanilla wafers are a great, light-tasting snack to enjoy while waiting for the grill to heat up and the festivities to begin.

A Touch of Elegance

Picnics can be fun in the park with the whole family, but they can also be more refined parties for a select few. Try these tips to help bring a touch of elegance to your next picnic:

- ★ Choose a quiet, shaded location away from the masses and main park thruways.
- ★ Use a linen tablecloth and napkins. Spread a sturdy, waterproof ground cloth first and then top with a pretty tablecloth.
- ★ Serve on real china instead of paper products. Use linen napkins placed between plates to keep dishes safe in transit.
- ★ Bring a portable CD or tape player and play classical music or smooth jazz.

For More Information

- ★ For more tips on pork and grilling, visit www.otherwhitemeat.com
- ★ For additional recipes, visit www.nabiscorecipes.com and for family fun and games, visit www.nabiscoworld.com
- ★ For more culinary ideas using Northwest cherries, click on www.nwcherries.com

Easy Yogurt Dip

Makes 1 cup

- 1 (8-ounce) container vanilla nonfat yogurt
- 2 tablespoons jam, jelly or preserves

1. Swirl together yogurt and jam in small bowl. Refrigerate until serving time.
2. Serve as dip with wafers.



Firecracker Rubbed Pork Loin

Makes 8 to 12 servings

- 1 tablespoon fresh sage leaves, finely chopped
 - 2 teaspoons garlic powder
 - 2 teaspoons onion powder
 - 2 teaspoons salt
 - 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
 - 2 teaspoons dry mustard
 - 2 teaspoons paprika
 - 1/2 teaspoon ground red pepper
 - 1 (4 to 5-pound) boneless pork loin, not rolled or tied
1. Mix herbs and spices in small bowl; rub over all surfaces of pork. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight (can be stored up to 2 days).
 2. Prepare grill with a banked medium-hot fire. Unwrap pork and place over indirect heat. Grill for 1 to 1 1/2 hours or until meat thermometer registers 150° to 155° F. Remove from grill; let rest 10 minutes before slicing (temperature will increase slightly).
 3. Serve sliced pork with cherry salsa (see recipe).

Cherry Salsa

Makes 2 cups

- 2 cups sweet cherries, pitted and chopped
 - 1/4 cup chopped onion
 - 1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
 - 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
 - 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 - 1 tablespoon sugar, optional
 - 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
1. Mix all ingredients until well combined. Refrigerate at least 1 hour to blend flavors. Serve with sliced pork loin.
- Note: Salsa is best when freshly prepared.

Cherry Pudding

Makes 8 servings

- 2 (4-serving size) packages instant vanilla pudding & pie filling
 - 4 1/2 cups milk
 - 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
 - 43 vanilla wafers
 - 2 1/2 cups sweet cherries, pitted and halved
 - 2 cups prepared whipped topping
 - Additional vanilla wafers and sweet cherries, for garnish
1. Prepare pudding according to package directions using milk and almond extract.
 2. Spoon 1/2 cup pudding in bottom of 2-quart serving bowl. Top with 8 wafers, a generous layer of cherries and 2/3 cup pudding. Stand 10 wafers around outside edge of dish. Continue layering 11 wafers, cherries, 2/3 cup pudding, 14 wafers, cherries and remaining pudding.
 3. Cover; refrigerate 3 hours or overnight. To serve, spread whipped topping over pudding; garnish with additional wafers and cherries if desired.

Revolutionary Ribs

Makes 12 servings

- 1/2 cup packed light or dark brown sugar
 - 2 tablespoons five-spice powder
 - 1 tablespoon paprika
 - 2 teaspoons celery seed
 - 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
 - 1 tablespoon salt
 - 6 pounds pork back ribs
1. Mix sugar, spices and salt in small bowl until well combined. Rub over all surfaces of ribs. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour to blend flavors.
 2. Prepare grill with a banked medium-hot fire or turn on one side of a gas grill. Place ribs upright in a rib rack over indirect heat. (If desired, add hickory or other wood chips to fire for smoky flavor.) Cover grill and grill for 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until ribs are tender and meat thermometer registers at least 160° F. Remove from grill.

Cherry-Citrus Punch

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 2 cups sweet cherries, pitted
 - 2 cups chilled orange juice
 - 2 cups chilled lemon-lime flavored soda
 - 1 (8-ounce) can pineapple chunks in juice, chilled, undrained
 - 1 orange, peeled and sectioned
1. Place cherries in single layer on baking sheet; freeze until firm.
 2. Blend orange juice, soda, pineapple with juice and orange sections in pitcher. Pour into glasses to within 2 inches of top.
 3. Divide frozen cherries between glasses. Serve with spoons.

Double Peanut Squares

Makes 9 servings

- 25 vanilla wafers, finely crushed (about 1 cup crumbs)
 - 1/2 cup dry roasted peanuts, finely chopped
 - 1/3 cup butter, melted
 - 2 tablespoons sugar
 - 1 (8-ounce) package regular or light cream cheese, softened
 - 3/4 cup powdered sugar
 - 1/2 cup creamy or chunky peanut butter
 - 2 cups prepared whipped topping
 - Additional prepared whipped topping, for garnish
1. Mix wafer crumbs, peanuts, butter and sugar. Reserve 2 tablespoons crumb mixture. Press remaining crumb mixture on bottom of 9-inch square baking pan; set aside.
 2. Beat cream cheese and powdered sugar in large bowl with electric mixer at medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in peanut butter until smooth. Fold in 2 cups whipped topping.
 3. Spread evenly over prepared crust. Refrigerate 4 hours or until firm. Garnish with additional whipped topping and reserved crumb mixture.