

National Picnic Month

As the outdoors are calling for adventures in the sun, the parks are flourishing from the cover of gray skies, there is no better time to have a picnic.

July is National Picnic Month! It is all about getting out to celebrate the warm summer days and to remember the joy of being in nature while enjoying some good food!

It is easy to celebrate picnic month! Get your friends and family together at a local park and bring your favorite foods that can be eaten cold or grill something warm and delicious on the spot!



1. **Choose a whole grain:** 100% whole wheat pita bread, sandwich rolls, quinoa salad
2. **Choose a protein:** Hard-boiled eggs, lentils, lean low-sodium assorted deli meats (turkey, chicken)
3. **Choose a variety of fruits and veggies (at least 2):** humus snack platter with assorted raw vegetables (carrots, pepper, broccoli, cucumber), assorted chopped melons, grapes
4. **Add some healthy fats:** assortment of nuts/seeds, an assorted cheese platter (mozzarella, blue cheese, feta)
5. **Remember hydration** and pack some beverages for the road! (fruit-infused water, tea)

DON'T FORGET ABOUT FOOD SAFETY - ESPECIALLY OUTDOORS!

Time and Temperature: The basic rule is to keep your hot food hot and cold food cold when traveling to and enjoying your picnic outdoors. Never leave your food out for more than two hours and always cook your meats thoroughly.

Non-Perishable Foods: Reduce your worries by sticking to non-perishable foods for your picnic basket. Try bringing baked potato or make some corn on the cob instead of potato salad. Some washed whole fruit or dried fruits instead of a fruit salad; and other snacks such as granola and trail mix, nuts/seeds, and crackers.

Secure your Food: Pack insulated containers with cold packs for food and snacks. If available, bring one cooler for your perishable food, and one cooler for your beverages. Try to open as infrequently as possible and never leave food out in direct sunlight.

Keep it Clean: Use clean dishes and utensils to serve the food. Never use the same utensil that you used when preparing raw food without thoroughly cleaning it first. Make sure that you have extra available water for cooking and cleaning.



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Avoid Cross-Contamination: Cross-contamination is when harmful bacteria from food transfer to other foods from cutting boards, and utensils like knives and tongs when they are not cleaned and handled safely. This usually happens when preparing, grilling and serving food and is the number one cause of food-related illnesses. Keep raw meat wrapped and packed separately from other foods. Always wash your hands thoroughly with warm water and soap before and after handling raw meat.

Now, you've put together the perfect picnic basket! All you have to do is grab some friends and find the perfect picnic spot!



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