

Your guide to

Summer cookouts

Bonus:
7 tasty
recipes

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When the weather heats up, barbecue meals are a must. And while cookouts don't exactly have a healthy reputation, it's easier than you might think to fire up the grill and keep the focus on your wellness goals. Here are a few simple ways you can stay healthy through barbecue season.



Curb hunger with a healthy appetizer

Starting a meal when you're ravenous can be a recipe for overeating. Before you reach for the chips, seek out a healthier, lower-calorie option. Mouthwatering starters like a crisp garden salad, tomato-basil-mozzarella skewers, or crunchy veggies with hummus can help you take the edge off hunger and still leave plenty of room for your meal.

Prioritize produce

Everyone expects to see burgers on the grill. But thick slices of eggplant, smoky Napa cabbage, or lightly charred zucchini and other produce delights can raise your barbecue to the next level. Brush veggies with a light layer of olive oil and cook directly on the grill; you can also use a grill pan so you don't have to worry about any pieces slipping through. Putting fruit like peaches, nectarines, and watermelon on the barbecue makes for unusual and delicious desserts, too.





Cut the carbs

That roll or bun you put your burger on can have as many as 50 grams of carbohydrates. Instead, try your burger between two pieces of a hearty green like iceberg lettuce or collards. You can also try slicing a bun into thirds, and sharing the middle portion with a friend. When it comes to carb-rich sides like pasta salad, potato salad, or corn on the cob, choose one favorite and have a small serving. Otherwise, opt for lower-carb sides like coleslaw, chopped salad, and grilled vegetables.

Go lean for protein

Try making burgers with a lower-fat cut of ground meat. Lean beef, turkey, or bison can all make good choices. Another option is to skip the burger and go for a healthier protein that you'd eat with a fork and knife like fish, chicken, or marinated tofu. Not only will the protein be lower in saturated fat than a traditional beef burger, but you'll also cut carbs by eliminating the need for a bun.



Be choosy about your toppings

Even the healthiest burger can go downhill fast if you load it up with saturated fat-laden fixings. Instead, look at toppings as an opportunity to add in some nutrients you need more of, like fiber. Dark leafy greens such as baby spinach or arugula, a slice of red onion, and a juicy slice of tomato are all nutrient-rich, low-calorie choices. Cooked veggies like grilled zucchini or sautéed mushrooms can add another layer of intrigue. And instead of mayo or sugary ketchup, try mustard or a tablespoon of mashed avocado.



Caprese kababs with balsamic drizzle (Appetizer)

Ingredients

Balsamic drizzle:

- 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp no-calorie sugar substitute (granulated, 1 packet)

Kebabs:

- 2 cups cherry or grape tomatoes (red or yellow)
- 1 bunch fresh basil leaves (washed)
- 2 part-skim mozzarella string cheese sticks
- 8 wooden skewers

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings

Preparation time: 12 minutes

1. Cut each string cheese into 12 rounds (24 cubes total).
2. Assemble each kebab with 3 tomatoes, 3 mozzarella slices, and 3 basil leaves (tomato, basil, cheese; tomato, basil, cheese; tomato, basil, cheese). Gently fold the basil leaves 2-3 times before skewering; larger leaves may be torn in half.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together balsamic vinegar, olive oil, and no-calorie sweetener. Lightly drizzle over skewers before serving.

Nutrition per serving (2 kababs)

| Calories | Fat | Sat.Fat | Sodium | Cholesterol | Carbs | Fiber | Sugars | Protein | Potassium |
|-----------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 68 | 3 g | 1 g | 83 mg | 5 mg | 5 g | 1 g | 3 g | 4 g | 5 mg |



Grilled chicken with vegetables (Main dish)

Ingredients

Cooking spray
1½ tsp dried basil, crumbled
1½ tsp garlic powder
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 tsp grated lemon zest
1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
2 tsp olive oil
(extra-virgin preferred)
4 boneless, skinless chicken
breast halves (about 4 oz each),
all visible fat discarded
1 small zucchini, cut lengthwise
into ¼-inch-wide slices
1 small red bell pepper, cut
crosswise into 4 rings
¼ small eggplant (about 4 oz),
cut crosswise into ½-inch slices

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings

Preparation time: 20 minutes (or up to 8 hours for marinating)

Cook time: 16 minutes

1. In a small bowl, stir together the basil, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Transfer 1 teaspoon of the mixture to a large shallow dish. Reserve the remaining mixture.
2. Stir the lemon zest, lemon juice, and olive oil into the basil mixture in the shallow dish. Dip the chicken in the mixture, turning to coat. Transfer to a large plate. Cover and refrigerate for anywhere from 10 minutes to 8 hours.
3. Preheat the grill on medium high.
4. Put the zucchini, bell pepper, and eggplant on a flat surface. Lightly spray both sides of the vegetables with cooking spray. Sprinkle both sides with the reserved basil mixture. Using your fingertips, gently press the mixture so it adheres to the vegetables.
5. Grill the chicken for 4 to 5 minutes on each side, or until no longer pink in the center. After grilling the chicken on one side, put the zucchini, bell pepper, and eggplant on the grill. Grill the vegetables for 2 to 3 minutes on each side, or until tender. Serve the chicken with vegetables on the side.

Nutrition per serving (3 oz chicken and ½ cup vegetables)

| Calories | Fat | Sat.Fat | Sodium | Cholesterol | Carbs | Fiber | Sugars | Protein | Potassium |
|------------|------------|------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| 162 | 5 g | 1 g | 328 mg | 65 mg | 5 g | 2 g | 3 g | 24 g | 207 mg |



Red, white and blue hamburger (Main dish)

Ingredients

1 lb extra-lean ground sirloin (96/4)

1/8 tsp salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 jarred whole red bell pepper, quartered

4 whole wheat hamburger buns

1 large sweet white onion (Vidalia or Walla Walla), sliced

2 Tbsp crumbled blue cheese

1 tsp olive oil

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 12 minutes

1. Preheat grill to medium-high heat.
2. Using your hands, lightly shape the ground sirloin into four 1/2-inch-thick patties. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Lightly drizzle the red pepper quarters with olive oil.
4. Cook the burgers on both sides over the hot grill for about 5 to 6 minutes per side for medium burgers.
5. At the same time, grill the peppers for 2 to 3 minutes on each side.
6. Lightly toast the buns on the grill.
7. Serve the burgers on toasted buns with grilled red peppers, slices of sweet white onion, and crumbled blue cheese.

Nutrition per serving (one hamburger + one bun)

| Calories | Fat | Sat.Fat | Sodium | Cholesterol | Carbs | Fiber | Sugars | Protein | Potassium |
|------------|-------------|------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| 344 | 12 g | 5 g | 381 mg | 75 mg | 30 g | 5 g | 5 g | 31 g | 125 mg |



Fruit salad with lemon mint yogurt dressing (Side dish)

Ingredients

Dressing:

- ½ cup fat-free vanilla yogurt
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh mint
- 1 tsp honey
- ½ tsp grated lemon zest
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

Salad:

- ½ cup cantaloupe balls
- ½ cup blackberries
- ½ cup raspberries
- 4 sprig fresh mint (optional)
- ½ cup fresh or canned pineapple chunks, packed in their own juice, drained (fresh preferred)

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings

Preparation time: 15 minutes

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients.
2. In a medium bowl, gently stir together the salad ingredients except the mint, being careful not to crush the berries. Spoon onto small plates. Drizzle with the dressing. Garnish with the mint sprigs.

Nutrition per serving (½ cup)

| Calories | Fat | Sat.Fat | Sodium | Cholesterol | Carbs | Fiber | Sugars | Protein | Potassium |
|-----------|------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| 70 | 0 g | 0 g | 18 mg | 1 mg | 16 g | 2 g | 12 g | 2 g | 98 mg |



Watermelon feta salad (Side dish)

Ingredients

6 cups watermelon, cubed
¾ cup crumbled reduced-fat feta cheese
¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced
¼ cup fresh mint, chopped
1 tsp Olive Oil
2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

Makes: 6 servings

Preparation time: 10 minutes

1. Mix all ingredients in a large serving bowl, except for the feta. Add feta on top and gently toss.

Nutrition per serving (½ cup)

| Calories | Fat | Sat.Fat | Sodium | Cholesterol | Carbs | Fiber | Sugars | Protein | Potassium |
|----------|-----|---------|--------|-------------|-------|-------|--------|---------|-----------|
| 97 | 5 g | 2 g | 262 mg | 7 mg | 12 g | 1 g | 10 g | 5 g | 175 mg |



Fresh corn salad with tomato, basil & feta (Side dish)

Ingredients

5 tsp olive oil, divided
 1 Tbsp lime juice
 ¼ tsp salt
 ¼ tsp hot pepper sauce
 1½ cups fresh or frozen corn, thawed
 1½ cups cherry tomatoes, halved
 ½ cup finely chopped cucumber
 ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
 2 Tbsp minced fresh basil
 or 2 tsp dried basil
 ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings

Preparation time: 20 minutes

1. In a small bowl, whisk 4 teaspoons olive oil, lime juice, salt, and hot pepper sauce; set aside.
2. In a large skillet, cook and stir corn in remaining oil over medium-high heat until tender. Transfer to a salad bowl; cool slightly.
3. Add the tomatoes, cucumber, onion, and basil. Drizzle with dressing and toss to coat.
4. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving or refrigerate until chilled. Sprinkle with cheese just before serving.

Nutrition per serving (¾ cup)

| Calories | Fat | Sat.Fat | Sodium | Cholesterol | Carbs | Fiber | Sugars | Protein | Potassium |
|------------|------------|------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| 157 | 9 g | 3 g | 249 mg | 13 mg | 16 g | 3 g | 6 g | 4 g | 228 mg |



Non-alcoholic piña colada smoothie (Beverage)

Ingredients

4 cups unsweetened vanilla almond milk
2 cups ice
2 cups fresh or frozen pineapple cubes
½ tsp coconut extract

Preparation

Makes: 4 servings
Preparation time: 8 minutes

1. Place all of the ingredients in a blender and blend on high until smooth. Pour into 4 glasses and serve immediately.

Nutrition per serving (1½ cup)

| Calories | Fat | Sat.Fat | Sodium | Cholesterol | Carbs | Fiber | Sugars | Protein | Potassium |
|-----------|------------|------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| 70 | 2 g | 0 g | 171 mg | 0 mg | 11 g | 2 g | 8 g | 1 g | 248 mg |