

LUNCH *for a* PERFECT DAY

A glorious May afternoon and the company of friends and family set the stage for a memorable meal to savor outdoors.

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FOOD STYLING: MARY BRENNEN ANKAR AND KATHLEEN KANEN. PHOTOGRAPHY: (LEFT) DOMINIQUE VORILLO/N/JUPITER IMAGES

ALFRESCO MENU

(Serves 8)

Prosciutto-Melon Bites with Lime Drizzle
Grilled Pizza with Asparagus and Caramelized Onion
Grilled Halibut with Three-Pepper Relish
Haricots Verts Salad
Italian Grilled Zucchini and Red Onion
Wine: Sauvignon blanc
Limoncello-Mint Sorbet with Fresh Blackberries



Grilled veggie pizza is a unique starter that hints at the sublime nature of the meal to come.

◀ Grilled Pizza with Asparagus and Caramelized Onion

For an out-of-the-ordinary first course, offer guests a wedge of this veggie-topped pizza with smoky flavor from the grill. Start with purchased fresh pizza dough; many supermarkets now offer fresh dough in their delis or bakeries.

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 cups thinly vertically sliced onion
- 2 cups (2-inch) slices asparagus (about ½ pound)
- 1 tablespoon thinly sliced ready-to-use sun-dried tomatoes
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 (8-ounce) portion fresh pizza dough
- ¾ cup (3 ounces) shredded fontina cheese
- 1½ teaspoons fresh oregano leaves
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Prepare grill to medium-high heat.
- 2 Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion to pan; sauté 5 minutes.

Reduce heat to medium-low; cook 5 minutes or until browned. Add asparagus to pan; cook 5 minutes or until asparagus is crisp-tender. Stir in tomatoes and salt.

- 3 Roll dough into a 12-inch circle on a lightly floured surface; brush each side of dough with ½ teaspoon remaining oil.
- 4 Place dough on a grill rack; grill 1½ minutes or until crust bubbles and is well marked. Reduce grill heat to low; turn dough over. Arrange onion mixture over crust; sprinkle evenly with cheese. Cover and grill over low heat 3½ minutes or until cheese melts; remove pizza from grill. Sprinkle with oregano and black pepper. Yield: 8 servings (serving size: 1 slice).

CALORIES 152; FAT 5.8g (sat 2.3g, mono 2.2g, poly 0.9g); PROTEIN 6.3g; CARB 19.4g; FIBER 1.7g; CHOL 12mg; IRON 1.7mg; SODIUM 314mg; CALC 74mg

5 tips for grilling



YOU'LL NEED TO FIRE UP THE GRILL FOR THE APPETIZER PIZZA, THE ENTRÉE, AND THE SIDE DISH IN THIS MENU. HERE'S HOW SUCCESS IS SERVED.

1 Break up your prep work. Grilling most of the menu ahead of time eases your stress once the company arrives and enables you to cook the main course halibut during the party with confidence.

2 Get the grill grates clean and hot. This ensures that the food won't stick, while also preventing any cross-flavoring. Allow a gas grill to heat for 10 to 15 minutes, or for coals to become white-hot.

3 Don't fiddle. Flipping the food too frequently may cause it to

stick, and doing so also doesn't allow for great grill marks.

4 Stay close. The fire demands a little more finesse (if not watchfulness) than the oven or stovetop. Once you start cooking, remain at your station.

5 Skewer vegetables for ease. Although it's not necessary, threading small metal skewers through the red onion slices and bell pepper quarters makes it easier to flip both and also helps prevent them from falling through the grill grates.

PARTY TIMELINE

WITH SOME SMART PLANNING, YOU CAN HAVE MOST OF THE WORK DONE BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE.

UP TO 1 WEEK AHEAD:

- Make the sorbet.

UP TO 2 DAYS AHEAD:

- Make and refrigerate relish for halibut.
- Blanch haricots verts and toast nuts for salad.

THE DAY BEFORE:

- Prepare onion mixture and shred cheese for pizza.
- Cube melon.

2 HOURS BEFORE DINNER:

- Bring pizza dough to room temperature.
- Assemble melon skewers; refrigerate on serving platter. Make drizzle.

1 HOUR BEFORE:

- Light the grill.
- Roll out pizza dough.
- Take relish out of refrigerator and allow to come to room temperature.
- Spoon sorbet into dessert bowls and keep in freezer.

30 MINUTES BEFORE:

- Grill the zucchini and red onion, and finish with seasonings.
- Make dressing for salad, and toss.

AS GUESTS ARRIVE:

- Pour drizzle over melon skewers.
- Grill pizza.

JUST BEFORE SERVING:

- Grill halibut.

ON THE WEB

Ultimate
grilling guide

- Five-star grilled recipes
 - Video: Get perfect grill marks
 - Video: Direct vs. indirect heat
- CookingLight.com/grilling

*It's a menu of firsts: the year's first outdoor meal,
the first time you light the grill,
and your first taste of spring halibut.*

◀ Haricots Verts Salad

- 1½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted and divided
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 16 large basil leaves (about ½ cup)
- 1½ pounds haricots verts
- 3 tablespoons chopped ready-to-use sun-dried tomatoes

1 Heat oil and garlic in a small skillet over medium heat; cook 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; cool slightly. Combine garlic mixture, 1 tablespoon nuts, vinegar, ¼ teaspoon salt, pepper, and basil in a food processor; pulse until well combined.

2 Cook beans in boiling water 4 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain. Rinse under cold water; drain. Place in a large bowl. Add basil mixture and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt; toss to coat. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons nuts and tomatoes. Yield: 8 servings (serving size: about ¾ cup).

CALORIES 76; FAT 4.9g (sat 0.5g, mono 2.5g, poly 1.4g); PROTEIN 2.3g; CARB 7.6g; FIBER 3.3g; CHOL 0mg; IRON 1.3mg; SODIUM 150mg; CALC 40mg

◀ Grilled Halibut with Three-Pepper Relish

RELISH:

- 1 yellow bell pepper, quartered
- 1 red bell pepper, quartered
- 1 orange bell pepper, quartered
- Cooking spray
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons chopped capers
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 garlic clove, minced

FISH:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 (6-ounce) skinless halibut fillets
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

- 1 Prepare grill to medium-high heat.
- 2 To prepare relish, coat bell pepper

pieces with cooking spray. Place pepper pieces on a grill rack; grill 3 minutes on each side or until lightly charred. Remove from grill; cool slightly. Coarsely chop bell pepper pieces. Combine chopped bell peppers, parsley, and next 6 ingredients (through garlic); set aside.

3 To prepare fish, brush 1 tablespoon oil evenly over fish. Sprinkle fish evenly with thyme, ¾ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon black pepper. Place fish on grill rack; grill 4 minutes on each side or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork or until desired degree of doneness. Serve with relish. Yield: 8 servings (serving size: 1 fillet and ¼ cup relish).

CALORIES 224; FAT 7.3g (sat 1g, mono 3.7g, poly 1.6g); PROTEIN 34.6g; CARB 3.5g; FIBER 1.1g; CHOL 52mg; IRON 1.8mg; SODIUM 392mg; CALC 85mg

WINE NOTE This dish begs for a good sauvignon blanc. Bell peppers, herbs, and capers all have bold flavors ranging from fresh green to herbal to briny. A good sauvignon will mirror all the green flavors here and provide a crisp counterpoint to the subtle flavor of the fish. Try the Kunde Sauvignon Blanc 2007 from the Sonoma Valley (about \$16).

—Karen MacNeil

Prosciutto-Melon Bites with Lime Drizzle

- 16 (1-inch) cubes cantaloupe
- 16 (1-inch) cubes honeydew melon
- 16 (¼-ounce) very thin slices prosciutto, cut in half lengthwise
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh mint

1 Wrap each cantaloupe cube and each honeydew cube with ½ prosciutto slice. Thread 1 wrapped cantaloupe cube and 1 wrapped honeydew cube onto each of 16 (4-inch) skewers. Arrange skewers on a serving platter.

2 Combine juice, oil, and pepper, stirring with a whisk; drizzle evenly over skewers. Sprinkle evenly with mint. Yield: 8 servings (serving size: 2 skewers).

CALORIES 61; FAT 3g (sat 0.8g, mono 1.7g, poly 0.5g); PROTEIN 4.2g; CARB 5g; FIBER 0.3g; CHOL 13mg; IRON 0.3mg; SODIUM 282mg; CALC 5mg



Italian Grilled Zucchini and Red Onion ▲

This simple side dish is tastiest at room temperature, so it's an ideal make-ahead. Any leftovers would be good the next day for lunch with couscous.

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 (½-inch-thick) slices red onion (about 1 large)
- 2 pounds small zucchini, cut lengthwise into (¼-inch-thick) slices
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ⅓ cup (about 1½ ounces) shaved fresh Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh mint

- 1 Prepare grill to medium-high heat.
- 2 Combine first 3 ingredients in a large bowl. Sprinkle zucchini mixture with ¼ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper;

toss gently to coat. Arrange vegetables in a single layer on a grill rack; grill 4 minutes on each side or until zucchini is tender and vegetables are well marked. Remove zucchini from grill; reduce grill heat to medium-low. Grill onion an additional 5 minutes or until tender. Combine zucchini, onion, and vinegar in a large bowl, tossing to coat. Sprinkle with remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper, cheese, and mint. Yield: 8 servings (serving size: about ¾ cup).

CALORIES 63; FAT 3.3g (sat 1.2g, mono 1.7g, poly 0.3g); PROTEIN 3.5g; CARB 5.9g; FIBER 1.6g; CHOL 4mg; IRON 0.6mg; SODIUM 215mg; CALC 86mg

Limoncello-Mint Sorbet with Fresh Blackberries

Limoncello, the citrusy Italian liqueur, brightens this sorbet. It's nice to have a bottle on hand to splash with soda in a spritzer or macerate with fruit for a quick dessert.

- 2 cups water
- 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cups sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup limoncello
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice (about 6 large lemons)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fresh mint
- 2 cups blackberries
- Lemon slices (optional)

① Combine first 3 ingredients in a saucepan over medium-high heat; bring to a boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat; add lemon juice and mint. Cover and chill.

② Strain juice mixture through a sieve into a bowl; discard solids. Pour mixture into the freezer can of an ice-cream freezer; freeze according to manufacturer's instructions. Spoon sorbet into a freezer-safe container; cover and freeze 1 hour or until firm. Serve with blackberries; garnish with lemon slices, if desired. Yield: 8 servings (serving size: about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sorbet and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup berries).

CALORIES 184; FAT 0.2g (sat 0g, mono 0g, poly 0.1g); PROTEIN 0.6g; CARB 39.3g; FIBER 2g; CHOL 0mg; IRON 0.2mg; SODIUM 1mg; CALC 13mg

Anthony Rosenfeld is a food writer and cookbook author based near Boston.

