

## Simple and Elegant Picnic Recipes to Say Goodbye to Summer

By Amber Smith

Labor Day, the unofficial end to pool parties, summer holidays, and luxuriously long sunny days is right around the corner. While many choose to mark the occasion through charcoal or propane-fueled barbeques and backyard shindigs, picnics are, for me, the epitome of summer and the essence of trying to capture those fleeting sunny rays. And what better way to send summer on its way than enjoying a few hours lazing idly on a blanket with friends, grazing your way through the afternoon soaking in some sun. Oh sure, picnics can be a bit stressful. I hear you. They require planning, packing lots of food containers, sunscreen. There's sand and dirt to contend with (not to mention bugs, nature!). Nevertheless, they can also be blissfully relaxing and rejuvenating if you plan just a few things ahead. Take the angst and store-bought chips and dips out of picnics and grab your notebook. Here's a round up of some of our easy, seasonal, and picnic-perfect recipes to get you going, and outside into that sunshine.



Photo credit: New School of Cooking

*[Prosciutto & Cantaloupe Caprese](#)* comes together quickly and easily. This salad looks gorgeous without being tedious to make and takes advantage of summer melon before it's gone from the farmer's markets. Burrata would be a lovely swap for the fresh mozzarella.



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[Lemon Pepper Pappardelle with Artichoke Pesto and Asparagus](#) is full of bright flavors. While totally vegetarian as-is, feel free to make it even more substantial by adding grilled chicken. The pappardelle pasta can be swapped out for a different shape, such as fusilli or farfalle. These shorter pasta shapes aren't as delicate as pappardelle and may hold their shape and desired al dente texture a bit longer.





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[Classic Tzatziki](#) comes together quickly (with just a little chopping and stirring) for those who cannot fathom a get-together without a creamy dip. With the delicate flavors of fresh dill and cucumber, it's definitely better than anything store bought. Serve with some crudité, such as radishes, heirloom carrots, and cherry tomatoes.



Photo credit: New School of Cooking

[Mixed Berry Galette](#) is unfussy, takes total advantage of summer berries, and looks beautiful. Good quality store-bought pie dough can work in a pinch, too.

Make beverages simple and grab a couple bottles of mineral water and lemonade. Don't forget the cutlery and plates, an assortment of blankets for sitting, and large tea towels for napkins (which can double as placemats). Now go find your last piece of summer and enjoy.