



A POSH PICNIC

All the makings of an idyllic feast afloat

BY VALERIE MUTTON

It's a perfect day to spend out on the lake, and you're in the mood for some nautical nourishment. Here are some ideas for an easy to prepare yet elegant picnic lunch that you can pack in an instant for a day on the boat. Best of all, this meal won't take up loads of room in your cooler.

Music: What could be better for a posh picnic with a European flair than Edith Piaf on the CD player? The soundtrack to the Oscar-winning movie *La Vie en Rose* will make you feel you are floating along the Seine. Then follow up with Il Divo's latest album, *Siempre*, and feel like you're being serenaded by gondoliers in Venice.

Beverage: Prosecco with Raspberry Purée

Sparkling wine used to be a poor substitute for champagne, but no more. Prosecco, a fabulous yet inexpensive bubbly from Italy, is deservedly trendy. It is delicious on its own; but for a beautiful summer cocktail, blend up some fresh raspberries, strain out the seeds and add a tablespoon of this raspberry purée and a tablespoon of orange juice to a champagne flute, then top up with Prosecco.

Appetizer: Homemade Tapenade on a Baguette

A loaf of French bread is easy to carry, and topped with homemade tapenade it is an elegant and very French way to start your picnic lunch. Making tapenade could not be easier. Into a blender or food processor, toss a clove of garlic, about one cup (250 ml) of your favourite kinds of pitted olives (black or green), 1 tbsp (15 ml) of capers, 2 to 4 tbsp (25 to 50 ml) of olive oil and the juice of half a lemon, and blend to the desired consistency. (Less oil makes it chunkier, like relish, while more oil makes it more of a spread.) Et voilà — tapenade. You can also add some grainy mustard, a little bit of anchovy paste, some fresh thyme or a little bit of brandy to jazz up the basic recipe.

Salad: Roasted Beet Salad with Oranges and Goat Cheese

The roasted beets have a deep, rich flavour. They can be cooked the night before, leaving quick assembly your only job on picnic day.

For the salad:

1	bunch of beets	1
2	oranges, sectioned	2
2 to 3 c	mixed greens	500 to 750 ml
4 oz	goat cheese (chèvre)	125 g

Vinaigrette:

Juice of one orange	(about 4 tbsp or 50 ml)	
Juice of half a lemon	(about 2 tbsp or 25 ml)	
2 tbsp	olive oil	25 ml
1 tsp	honey	5 ml
1	clove garlic, minced	1
½ tsp	Dijon mustard	2 ml
¼ tsp	hot pepper flakes	1 ml

To roast beets: Cut the stems off the beets and wrap beets in foil. Roast at 400 F (200 C) for about an hour, until tender.

Rinse beets under cold running water to remove skins, then slice thinly.

To make vinaigrette: Juice orange and half a lemon. In a small bowl, whisk together until blended the orange juice, lemon juice, olive oil, honey, garlic, mustard and hot pepper flakes.

To assemble salad: Assemble just before serving or everything will turn red from the beets. Place a bed of mixed greens on a plate. Lay one or two sliced beets on top of greens, then layer goat cheese on top of beets, then top with another beet and some orange sections. Drizzle vinaigrette over salad. Makes four servings.

Entrée: Cold Poached Salmon with Dill/Dijon Sauce

This delicious and healthy poached salmon fillet is easy to make, and cooks up in less than 10 minutes!

4	salmon fillets	4
½ c	white wine	125 ml
½ c	water	125 ml
1	carrot, sliced	1
1	stalk celery, sliced	1
1	onion, quartered	1

In a sauté pan, add salmon, white wine, water, carrot, celery and onion. Turn heat to medium high and bring to a boil, then turn down to simmer until salmon is cooked, about 8 to 10 minutes or until salmon is flaky when touched with a fork. Remove from pan and let cool while making sauce.

Dill/Dijon Sauce:

½ c	plain yogurt	125 ml
¼ c	light sour cream	60 ml
1½ tsp	fresh dill	8 ml
1 tsp	honey	5 ml
1 tsp	Dijon mustard	5 ml

In a small bowl, mix all ingredients until well blended. Place a generous dollop over salmon, or serve on the side for dipping.

Dessert: Fresh Fruit

Take advantage of nature's bounty at this time of year and enjoy some of the many local fruits available — fresh fruit is always in style. **LSL**



Tips for Quick Picnic Packing:

- Buy ice packs instead of ice to avoid soggy surprises.
- Put the items you'll need first and soft foods on top.
- Consider a separate cooler for drinks so that the food will stay an even temperature until needed.
- Precool your cooler with a few reusable gel ice packs before placing everything inside.
- Pack the cooler with food right out of the refrigerator. Don't let food sit out before packing.
- Pack the cooler as full as you can. Fill air pockets

with gel ice packs.

- Once the cooler is packed, keep it out of the sun and in the coolest spot in the boat.
- Do your food preparation beforehand so you don't have to bring extra utensils such as knives and cutting boards to chop fruits or vegetables.
- It's hard to look stylish eating salad with your fingers. Make a list so you don't forget the forks.
- Unless you keep the following on board, your list should also include items such as serving utensils, bottle openers, linens and enough glasses and plates for everyone.
- When it's time to clean up, use phosphate-free dish soap.