

It is time to start thinking about what to bring for your 4th of July celebrations!
This week, we thought we would feature some patriotic foods that are sure to be the hit of any celebration! Enjoy!

Watermelon-Lime Cooler

Prep Time 15 min.
Yield: 12 servings

12 cups cubed seedless watermelon, frozen, divided
3/4 teaspoon grated lime zest, divided
6 cups chilled ginger ale, divided

Place 4 cups frozen watermelon, 1/4 teaspoon lime zest and 2 cups ginger ale in a blender; cover and process until slushy. Serve immediately. Repeat twice.

Strawberry Salsa

Prep Time: 15 min.
Servings: 4 cups

1 pint fresh strawberries, chopped
4 plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1 - 2 med. jalapeno peppers, minced
2 T. lime juice
1 T. olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced

In a large bowl, combine the strawberries, tomatoes, onion and jalapenos. Stir in the lime juice, oil and garlic. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours before serving.

Juicy Watermelon Salad

Prep Time: 20 min.
Servings: 10

8 C. cubed seedless watermelon (about 1 med.)
1 sm. red onion, cut into rings
1 C. coarsely chopped macadamia nuts or sliced almonds, toasted
1 C. fresh arugula or baby spinach
1/3 C. balsamic vinaigrette
3 T. canola oil
Watermelon slices, optional
1 C. (4 oz.) crumbled Blue Cheese

In a large bowl, combine watermelon and onion; cover and refrigerate until cold, about 30 min. Just before serving, add macadamia nuts and arugula to watermelon mixture. In a small bowl, whisk vinaigrette and oil; drizzle over salad and toss to coat. Serve over sliced watermelon if desired. Sprinkle with cheese.

Red, White and Blue Summer Salad

Prep Time: 25 min.
Servings: 12

2/3 C. extra virgin olive oil
1/2 C. julienned fresh basil
1/3 C. white balsamic vinegar
1/4 C. julienned fresh mint leaves
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 tsp. sea salt
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. pepper
2 C. cherry tomatoes
8 C. fresh arugula
1 carton (8 oz.) fresh mozzarella cheese pearls, drained
2 med. peaches, sliced
2 C. fresh blueberries
6 oz. thinly sliced prosciutto, julienned
Additional mint leaves

In a bowl, whisk first 9 ingredients. Add tomatoes; let mixture stand while preparing salad.

In another large bowl, combine arugula, mozzarella, peaches, blueberries and prosciutto. Pour tomato mixture over top; toss to coat. Garnish with additional mint leaves. Serve immediately.

Grilled Firecracker Potato Salad

Prep Time: 20 min.
Cook Time: 20 min.
Servings: 16

3 lbs. small red potatoes (about 30), quartered
2 T. olive oil
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper

Dressing:

1-1/2 C. mayonnaise
1/2 C. finely chopped onion
1/4 C. Dijon mustard
2 T. sweet pickle relish
1/2 tsp. paprika
1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

Salad:

6 hard-boiled large eggs, chopped
2 celery ribs, finely chopped
Minced fresh chives, optional

Toss potatoes with oil, salt and pepper; place in a grill wok or basket. Grill, covered, over medium heat 20-25 min. or until potatoes are tender, stirring occasionally. Transfer potatoes to a large bowl; cool slightly.

In a small bowl, mix dressing ingredients. Add dressing, eggs and celery to potatoes; toss to combine. Refrigerate, covered, 1-2 hours or until cold. If desired, sprinkle with chives.

Barbecue Brisket

Prep Time: 20 min.
Cook Time: 2 hrs. 15 min.
Servings: 6

1/2 C. packed brown sugar
1/2 C. ketchup
1/4 C. water
1/4 C. cider vinegar
1/4 C. canola oil
3 T. dark corn syrup
2 T. prepared mustard
1 T. prepared horseradish
1 garlic clove, minced

Brisket:

2 T. canola oil
1 fresh beef brisket (2 to 2-1/2 lbs.), trimmed

In a small saucepan, combine the first nine ingredients; cook and stir over medium heat 3-4 min. or until brown sugar is dissolved. Transfer to a disposable foil pan.

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Brown brisket on both sides. Place in foil pan, turning to coat with sauce. Cover pan tightly with foil.

Place pan on grill rack over indirect medium heat. Grill, covered, 2 to 2-1/4 hrs. or until meat is tender.

Remove from heat. Remove brisket from pan; tent with foil and let stand 10 min. Meanwhile, skim fat from sauce in pan. Cut brisket diagonally across the grain into thin slices; serve with sauce.

Banana Split Cake Bars

Prep Time: 25 min.
Cook Time: 25 min.
Servings: 2 dozen

1/2 C. butter, softened
1-1/2 C. sugar
2 lg. eggs, room temperature
1-1/2 C. mashed ripe bananas (about 3 lg.)
1 C. sour cream
2 tsp. vanilla extract
2 C. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking soda
3/4 tsp. salt
2 jars (10 oz. each) maraschino cherries, drained and chopped

2 C. semisweet chocolate chips
1 pkg. (10 oz.) miniature marshmallows
Optional: Chopped salted peanuts and banana slices or dried banana chips

Preheat oven to 375°. Grease a 15x10x1-in. baking pan.

In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar until crumbly, about 2 min. Add eggs; mix well. Beat in bananas, sour cream and vanilla. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to butter mixture. Transfer to prepared pan.

Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 18-20 min. Top cake with cherries, chocolate chips, marshmallows and, if desired, peanuts. Bake until chips are slightly melted and marshmallows puff, 3-5 min. longer. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack; cut into bars. If desired, top with banana slices or banana chips before serving.

Patriotic Ice Cream Cupcakes

Prep Time: 30 min.

Cook Time: 15 min.

Servings: 3 dozen

1 pkg. red velvet cake mix
1-1/2 qts. blue moon ice cream, softened if necessary
1 jar (7 oz.) marshmallow creme
3 C. heavy whipping cream
Red, white and blue sprinkles

Preheat oven to 350°. Line 36 muffin cups with paper liners.

Prepare cake batter according to package directions. Fill prepared cups about one-third full. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 11-14 min. Cool 10 min. before removing from pans to wire racks; cool completely.

Working quickly, spread ice cream onto cupcakes. Freeze until firm, at least 1 hr.

Place marshmallow creme in a large bowl. Add whipping cream; beat until blended and stiff peaks form. Pipe or spread over cupcakes. Decorate with sprinkles. Serve immediately or freeze until firm.

Rhubarb Berry Upside-Down Cake

Prep Time: 30 min

Cook Time: 35 min.

Servings: 8

2 T. butter
1-3/4 C. chopped fresh rhubarb
1/2 C. fresh blueberries
2 T. dried cranberries
2 T. brown sugar

Cake:

6 T. butter, softened
1 C. sugar
1 T. brown sugar
2 lg. eggs
1 T. seedless strawberry jam
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1-1/4 C. all-purpose flour
1-1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 C. 2% milk
1/4 C. orange juice

Preheat oven to 350°. Place 2 T. butter in an 11x7-in. baking dish. Place in oven 5-6 min. or until butter is melted; carefully swirl to coat evenly.

Place rhubarb, blueberries and cranberries in a bowl; sprinkle with sugar and toss to combine. Transfer to baking dish.

In a large bowl, beat softened butter and sugars until blended. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in jam and vanilla. In a small bowl, whisk flour, baking powder and salt. Add to creamed mixture alternately with milk and orange juice, beating well after each addition. Pour over fruit, spreading evenly.

Bake 35-45 min. or until top is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 min.

Loosen edges of cake from pan with a knife; invert onto a serving plate. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Quote of the Week:

“A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.”

~ James Dent