

Somethin' different picnic

By Katie Workman

As the weather warms up, many of us start thinking about enjoying our meals outdoors. But a seamless, successful picnic takes some planning. Having a checklist and some ideas for what foods work best can keep the easy-breezy notion of a summer picnic just that.

Whether you are looking to create a simple alfresco lunch or a more stylish meal, a potluck menu for a group or a romantic repast for two, be prepared. I have learned the hard way that garbage bags and bottle openers don't just appear in fields.

The carriers

Anything from a classic picnic basket to a sturdy, flat-bottomed bag to a metal or plastic bin or box. Include some sort of cooler.

The food

Choose simple dishes that require no fussing over at the picnic. Steer clear of fragile foods, and take items that won't get soggy, are delicious at room temperature, can stand up to some time in the



This May 2019 photo shows containers being packed in a picnic basket in New York. (AP)

sun, and can be eaten with your hands or just a fork – it's hard to cut things on a paper plate balanced on your lap.

Usually, picnics don't have the prescribed flow of a regular indoor meal. It's quite acceptable and lovely that someone might be munching on a piece of frittata while others are eating cookies.

But if you plan on a more leisurely afternoon, you may want to put out some nibbly things to start. Cheese plus bread or crackers are always welcome, supplemented by olives, cornichons, nuts, dried fruit, and condiments like fig jam or chutney. If you make a crostini topping or two, put that out along with some toasted

baguette slices brushed with olive oil and let people assemble their own. Think about a dip and some cut-up vegetables. There are lots of interesting salsas to make or buy to pair with chips.

If you are bringing a lettuce salad or anything that can wilt quickly, pack the dressing separately and toss it there. Sturdier grain and vegetable salads can be made and dressed just before leaving (some grain, pasta or potato salads can happily be made up to a couple days ahead of time).

Sandwiches are always good, but pack them tightly so they don't fall apart. Fried chicken, grilled or roasted chicken (so good cold), salads featuring proteins like chicken or tuna, quiches, frittatas – truly, anything you are happy eating at room temperature is fair game. Include at least one vegetarian and one gluten-free option if you think those might be needed.

Avoid desserts that need to be cut and plated, like pies and cakes. Go with pre-cut durable sweets like brownies, bar cookies, drop cookies.

Grapes, cherries, cut melon and strawberries are good, packable fruit offerings.

As for drinks, bring an assortment in cans or bottles. If you are going to a park, make sure glass bottles and/or alcohol are allowed; boxed or canned wine may be your friend, and there are some good ones out there. Maybe pack a thermos or two of iced tea or lemonade. Keep drinks chilled with lots of ice.

Disposable or reusable?

We are all trying to be greener. And for a smaller group, at least, reusables are often more attractive and eco-friendly. Bring an extra bag for recycling.

Make that list!

Here is a sample checklist, to prevent those "did anyone pack the napkins?" moments:

Picnic basket or other portable container; cooler with ice or cold packs; picnic blanket (preferably waterproof in case the ground is damp); picnic chairs; portable picnic table; plates; cups; utensils (eating and serving); napkins; paper towels (and maybe wet wipes);

dishtowels (these can be used to anchor dishes in transport, and also for cleanup); drinks (including plenty of water); bottle opener and/or corkscrew; cutting board (also useful as a level serving surface, perfect for drinks); sharp knife; salt, pepper, condiments (leftover ketchup, mustard or mayo packets from take-out can be put to use!); sunscreen and insect repellent; hats; garbage/recycling bags; flashlight; games and activities; Frisbees, balls, bubbles, water guns, etc.; extra containers or sealable bags for leftovers, utensils, etc.

Packing your picnic

Put the heaviest, sturdiest items on the bottom of your container, and the lighter, more delicate items on top. Have your picnic blanket accessible – it's the first thing you'll want to unpack.

Chill drinks and perishable foods before you pack them.

And finally, of course, leave the picnic site the way you found it. Shake those last few crumbs off the blanket, but otherwise nobody need know you were there. (AP)

Food

click

Latest

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May 25

Creating an Exhibition workshop:

Join this 'man', a dozen other South Arabian objects, four trainers, and a host of like-minded individuals for Creating an Exhibition Workshop by Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, in cooperation with the UNDP from May 25 through June 1, 2019.

With support from the UNDP, the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah has brought together four exceptional scholars, each with special skills and unique perspectives on exhibition development and implementation. Over the course of a week, you are invited to work with each of these scholars in hands-on workshops designed to provide practical experience in each skill.

In addition, throughout the process you will enjoy informal lessons on South Arabian history from the 7th century BCE to the dawn of Islam. The scholars, all steeped in the history of the region, will share their knowledge as they share the stories being told in the new exhibition to open Spring 2020.

Please note: With the exception of Dr Leila Ali Aquil's sessions which will be held in Arabic, the training will be done in English.

Agenda – May 25, 2019, Yarmouk Cultural Centre (Bold)
09:30 – 09:45 – Registration
09:45 – 10:00 – Welcome
10:00 – 11:15 – How to 'See and Read Objects' by Dr Leila Ali Aquil and How to 'See and Read Objects' by Dr Christian Robin

11:15 – 12:30 – Exhibition Curation by Dr Sabina Antonini
12:30 – 12:45 – Break
12:45 – 02:00 – Exhibition Curation (continued) by Dr Sabina Antonini
02:00 – 03:00 – Daily review and homework assigned by all

Agenda – May 26-May 30, 2019, Yarmouk Cultural Centre (Bold)
09:45 – 10:00 – Arrival
10:00 – 11:15 – How to 'See and Read Objects' by Dr Leila Ali Aquil (Arabic) and How to 'See and Read Objects' by Dr Christian Robin (English)

11:15 – 12:30 – Exhibition Curation by Dr Sabina Antonini
12:30 – 12:45 – Break
12:45 – 02:00 – Exhibition Design by Architect Roberto Fabbri
02:00 – 03:00 – Daily review and homework assigned by all

Agenda – June 1, 2019, Field Trip to Amricani Cultural Centre (Bold)
09:45 – 10:00 – Arrival
10:00 – 03:00 – Exhibition Design by Architect Roberto Fabbri
To sign up, please e-mail info@ darmuseum.org.kw

General

IEI Kuwait membership: The Institution of Engineers (India), Kuwait Chapter invites all its members to update their membership information for the year 2018-19 and actively participate in the chapter activities. Indian engineers residing in Kuwait are welcome to join the pool of more than 750,000 engineers by becoming corporate or non-corporate members of The Institution of Engineers (India).

IEI, Kuwait Chapter conducts many technical events for the benefits of its members. Please watch for further details in your registered e-mail or announcement in media. The chapter has science club activities for members' children, and ladies wing activities for the member's family. IEI, Kuwait Chapter has facility to register student members for AMIE Examination for those interested in pursuing career enrichment.

For more information and on chapter membership, kindly contact IEI, Kuwait Chapter on Mob: 90098667 or through email to ieikwt@hotmail.com

Advisory for OCI card holders: All those having OCI Cards are required to carry both their OCI Card and passport to travel to India so that they do not face any difficulty in immigration clearance.

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This undated photo provided by America's Test Kitchen in May 2019 shows Crispy Salt and Pepper Shrimp in Brookline, Mass. (AP)



This undated photo provided by America's Test Kitchen in May 2019 shows California-Style Fish Tacos in Brookline, Mass. (AP)

Chinese salt and pepper shrimp a savory-spicy joy

Fish tacos a light and fresh surfside treat

By America's Test Kitchen

Asurfside treat, California fish tacos feature battered and fried crispy white fish and sprightly pickled vegetables. When done right, they are light and fresh, with a lively mix of textures and flavors.

This recipe may look involved, but the components come together quickly, so invite your friends to help. The frying uses a mere 3/4-inch layer of oil (no splattering vats).

We made an ultrathin batter by adding two sources of carbonation and baking powder; they provided lift and their slight acidity limited gluten development. Frying in batches helped maintain the oil's temperature.

For toppings, we quick-pickled onion and jalapeños and then used the brine to brighten shredded cabbage. Slice fish on the bias if your fillets are not 4 inches wide. Serve with green salsa if desired.

California-style Fish Tacos
Servings: 6
Start to finish: 1 hour
Pickled Onion and Cabbage:
1 small red onion, halved and sliced thin
2 jalapeno chiles, stemmed and sliced into thin rings
2 tablespoons lime juice
1 tablespoon sugar
Salt and pepper
3 cups shredded green cabbage

Tacos:
2 pounds skinless white fish fillets, such as cod, haddock, or halibut

Salt and pepper
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup cornstarch
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 quart peanut or vegetable oil
18 (6-inch) corn tortillas, warmed

1 cup fresh cilantro leaves
1 cup crema

For the Pickled Onion and Cabbage: Combine onion and jalapeños in medium bowl. Bring vinegar, lime juice, sugar, and 1 teaspoon salt to boil in small saucepan. Pour vinegar mixture over onion mixture and let sit for at least 30 minutes, or refrigerate for up to 2 days. Transfer 1/4 cup pickling liquid to second medium bowl, add cabbage, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and toss to combine.

For the Tacos: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 F. Set wire rack in rimmed baking sheet. Cut fish crosswise into 4 by 1-inch strips. Pat dry with paper towels; season with salt and pepper. Whisk flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and 1 teaspoon salt together in large bowl. Add fish and toss to coat evenly.

Add oil to large Dutch oven until 3/4 inch deep. Heat over medium-high heat to 350 F.

Remove 5 or 6 pieces of fish from batter, allowing excess to drip back into bowl, and add to hot oil, briefly dragging fish along surface of oil to prevent sticking. Adjust burner, if necessary, to maintain oil temperature between

325 F and 350 F. Fry fish, stirring gently to prevent pieces from sticking together and turning as needed, until golden brown and crisp, about 8 minutes.

Using slotted spoon or spider skimmer, transfer fish to prepared wire rack and place in oven to keep warm. Return oil to 350 F and repeat with remaining fish. Serve fish and pickled onions and cabbage with tortillas, cilantro, and crema.

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There's probably no recipe that better showcases salt and pepper working in multiple ways and together than Chinese salt and pepper shrimp, an enticing dish of plump, moist fried shrimp with shells as shatteringly crispy and appealing to eat as fried chicken skin, and a killer savory-spicy flavor profile.

The Sichuan peppercorns gave the dish sparkling spice and aromatic piquancy, while black peppercorns provided a straightforward hit of heat.

We added the black peppercorns and Sichuan peppercorns along with cayenne and sugar to the coating and then fried more of the same with ginger and garlic to make a flavorful paste that we tossed the fried shrimp in for great depth. For an extra jolt of spiciness, we also fried a couple of thinly sliced jalapeños.

We like to use frozen shrimp; thaw them overnight in the fridge or under running cold water and

blot them dry. Use a Dutch oven that holds 6 quarts or more for this recipe. Serve with steamed white rice.

Crispy Salt and Pepper Shrimp

Servings: 4-6
Start to finish: 1 hour
1 1/2 pounds shell-on medium-large shrimp (31 to 40 per pound)
Kosher salt
2 1/2 teaspoons black peppercorns, coarsely ground
2 teaspoons Sichuan peppercorns, coarsely ground
2 teaspoons sugar
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
4 cups vegetable oil
5 tablespoons cornstarch
2 jalapeno chiles, stemmed, seeded, and sliced into 1/8 inch-thick rings
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger

2 scallions, sliced thin on bias
Shredded iceberg lettuce
Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 225 F. Set wire rack in rimmed baking sheet and line large plate with triple layer of paper towels. Toss shrimp and 1 teaspoon salt in large bowl and let sit at room temperature for 15 minutes. Combine black peppercorns, Sichuan peppercorns, sugar, and cayenne in small bowl.

Heat oil in large Dutch oven over medium heat until oil registers 385 F. Meanwhile, drain shrimp and pat dry with paper towels; wipe bowl dry with paper towels. Transfer shrimp to now-empty bowl, add 3 tablespoons

cornstarch and 1 tablespoon peppercorn mixture, and toss until well coated.

Carefully add one-third of shrimp to hot oil and fry, stirring occasionally to keep shrimp from sticking together, until light brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Adjust burner, if necessary, to maintain oil temperature between 375 F and 385 F. Using wire skimmer or slotted spoon, transfer shrimp to prepared plate and let drain briefly. Transfer shrimp to prepared rack and keep warm in oven. Return oil to 385 F and repeat frying shrimp in 2 more batches, re-tossing each batch thoroughly with coating mixture before frying. Line plate with clean paper towels as needed.

Return oil to 385 F. Toss jalapeno rings with remaining 2 tablespoons cornstarch in separate bowl. Shake off excess cornstarch, then carefully add jalapeño rings to oil and fry until crisp, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer jalapeno rings to prepared plate. After frying, reserve 2 tablespoons frying oil.

Heat reserved oil in 12 inch skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add garlic, ginger, and remaining peppercorn mixture and cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture is fragrant and just beginning to brown, about 45 seconds. Add shrimp, scallions, and 1/2 teaspoon salt and toss to coat. Line serving platter with shredded lettuce. Arrange shrimp on platter and sprinkle with jalapeno rings. Serve immediately. (AP)