



Diabetes
New Zealand

Summer day picnics

Dust off the picnic plates and have some fun. There's no better way to spend a sunny summer's day than having a spontaneous picnic.

Keep your picnic basket handy so it's easy to grab for last minute picnics. Whether it's in a park, at the beach or in your backyard - picnics are a lot of fun.

The word picnic comes from the French *pique-nique*, meaning 'a fashionable social entertainment' with each guest bringing a contribution to the feast. In other words, *pique-nique* is a fancy way of saying 'potluck'.

The tradition of the potluck lives on at a good many of today's picnics. However, the word picnic has developed a much broader meaning, encompassing virtually any portable meal.

While the 18th century French and English aristocracy enjoyed formal picnics with servants and chairs and table settings of fine china and

crystal, modern Kiwi picnics are usually more casual affairs.

A cardboard box full of the essentials is all you need. Ensure your food stays cool by adding in a frozen chilly pad or bottle of frozen water. There is a high risk of food poisoning if food is left sitting in the hot sunshine or inside a hot car.

Ask a friend or two to meet you at your favourite picnic spot and take the opportunity to go for a walk together.

Summer fruits
add a special
touch to a
picnic



Couscous salad

Couscous salad is a super quick meal to make for a picnic. Couscous needs no cooking; it is a precooked pasta that combines wonderfully with vegetables, meats and sauces.

It's as simple as tipping boiling water over the grains and leaving to sit for five minutes before adding other ingredients.

Combine 1 cup of each of the following:

- Cooked couscous
- Diced tomatoes
- Spring onions
- Fresh chopped parsley
- Cooked kidney beans or chick peas

Combine with:

- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 3 cloves crushed garlic
- ¾ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup olive oil

Serve either immediately or chilled.

Summer picnic ideas

- Toss potato, pasta or rice salads with red, green or yellow peppers - throw in some cherry tomatoes, zucchini and a handful of nuts for a rainbow of colour
- Brighten up left-over chicken by turning it into a salad with plenty of fresh lettuce, herbs, and chunks of fresh seasonal fruit e.g. peaches or apricots
- Top any green vegetables with a herb vinaigrette or yoghurt dressing - it's best to serve the dressing separately
- Tuck favourite sandwich fillings into Italian focaccia bread or pita bread - layer with strips of cheese and tomato slices, sprinkle with fresh herbs and drizzle with balsamic vinegar and olive oil
- A selection of nuts is a great addition to any picnic - add to a salad or sandwich or eat as accompaniments to any meal
- Summer berries add special touch to a picnic for dessert.

Drinks

Remember to take plenty of fluids. While ice water is your best bet, the following ideas may beat the heat and add some fun.

- In a blender, puree chunks of summer fruits such as peaches, pears or nectarines, along with a tablespoon of lemon juice. Pour into ice cube containers and freeze until firm. Serve as ice cubes in chilled water.
- Add a couple of berries to a bottle of water for extra flavour. If you freeze the berries first they retain their shape for longer and add a delicious flavour. When limes and lemons are in season, slice them and freeze ready to slash into summer drinks when needed.
- Make a refreshing lemon drink with fresh fruit.

Refreshing lemon drink

Serves 5

- 1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (4-5 lemons)
- 1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice (3-4 oranges)
- 3½ teaspoons Equal Spoonful
- 3 cups water
- Ice cubes
- Lemon slices
- Mint sprigs

In a large jug, combine juices and Equal, stir to dissolve.

Stir in water. Cover and chill.

Serve over ice cubes. Garnish each serving with a lemon slice and mint if desired.

Nutrition information per serve: 1 cup (225mls)

Calories 44 Fat 0g Carbohydrate 12g

A refreshing lemon drink will help to beat the heat



Summer doesn't get any better than a picnic in the sunshine.

But before you head out into the heat, keep these tips in mind:

- Freeze drinks the night before - not only will your drinks stay cold the next day, they'll help to keep your food chilled
- To keep your picnic comfortable, bring a blanket or chair to sit on and an umbrella to create some shade
- Set up your picnic in the shade
- Food spoils quickly in hot weather - be sure to keep your food cool with plenty of ice pads inside a chilly bin
- Throw away any food that's been sitting out for more than two hours
- Remember these essentials: insect repellent, sunhat, sunscreen, sunglasses, rubbish bag, sharp knife, and any medication you may need
- Take a good pair of walking shoes and wear a pair of beach shoes when in the water to protect your feet from sharp rocks or driftwood
- You may like to take a cricket bat and ball or a frisbee to throw around
- Don't forget your togs and a towel.

Enjoy the warmer weather and the taste of summer food while you can!