



Simple sharing recipes for summer

Summer is the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors and boost your mental health. These simple sharing recipes are a great way to connect with friends and family while enjoying the summer weather. Plus, they're all easy to make and delicious!



Ingredients:

480g jar of roasted red peppers, drained
100g walnut halves
25g breadcrumbs
4 tbsp olive oil, divided
1 tbsp pomegranate molasses (or honey)
1 lemon, juiced
2 cloves of garlic, grated
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp cumin
Salt, as needed
Flatbread, to serve

Muhammara (v) [serves 6-8]

This Syrian pepper and walnut spread is a guaranteed crowd-pleaser.

Method:

1. Toast your walnut halves in a pan with a tablespoon of olive oil. Once they smell toasted, transfer them to a plate to cool, and repeat with the breadcrumbs, adding another tablespoon of oil if needed.
2. Transfer the walnuts and breadcrumbs to the basin of a food processor with peppers, lemon juice, pomegranate molasses (or honey), garlic, spices, and salt.
3. Pulse until combined, and then process until completely smooth. Scrape into a bowl and refrigerate until ready to serve. You can even prepare it up to three days in advance and store it until needed.
4. Before serving, season with salt, lemon juice, or pomegranate molasses until it tastes right to you - it should be bright, lively and spiced.
5. Dress the top with more oil and a few flakes of salt, and serve with flatbread.



Chicken spiedies [serves 6-8]

A fool proof skewer that keeps your picnic free of dry meat.

Method:

1. Dice your thighs into three equal-sized parts then transfer to a zip lock bag.
2. In a blender or food processor, add your oil, vinegar, lemon juice, mixed herbs, chilli flakes, parsley and garlic, and blend on high until thoroughly combined.
3. Pour marinade into the zip lock bag, seal, and refrigerate for at least 24 hours. This may seem a while, but keeping the chicken juicy before cooking is essential.
4. When ready to cook, light your grill or heat your griddle pan. Build your skewers, and once arranged, season with salt and pepper.
5. Grill for 15 minutes, turning often until the chicken is charred all over. Place chicken in a hot dog bun, hold tightly and remove the skewer.

Ingredients:

1kg boneless, skinless chicken thighs
125ml olive oil
200ml white wine vinegar
1 lemon, juiced
2 tbsp mixed herbs
1 tsp chilli flakes
A handful of parsley, roughly chopped
6 cloves of garlic
Salt and pepper, as needed
Metal or bamboo skewers
Hot dog buns or rolls



Harissa tofu skewers (v) [serves 6-8]

A great veggie option that's spicy, smoky, and better than a burger.

Method:

1. Drain blocks of tofu, wrap in kitchen roll, and sandwich between two oven trays before placing a heavy weight on top (a book, some tinned vegetables) to draw out excess moisture.
2. After an hour, remove the pressed tofu and dice before adding it to a zip lock bag.
3. In a bowl, combine the harissa, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, honey and salt until the mixture is loose and pourable. You may need to add more water to bring it to this consistency.
4. Once thinned, pour over the tofu, seal and shake the bag, and refrigerate until needed. This can be done a day or two in advance.
5. When ready to cook, light your grill or heat your griddle pan. Skewer the cubes of marinated tofu and grill for ten minutes until well-seared on all sides. Eat from the skewer, remove with a fork and serve with salad and flatbread.

Ingredients:

2x 396g packs of fresh tofu
3 tbsp harissa
2 tbsp olive oil
1 lemon, juiced
1 garlic clove, grated
1 tsp honey
Pinch of salt
Metal or bamboo skewers
Flatbread, to serve



German potato salad (v) [serves 6-8]

A classic side dish for a reason – it really does go with everything.

Method:

1. Boil the unpeeled potatoes with salt and the fresh mint for around 20 minutes until cooked through.
2. While the potatoes are boiling, make your dressing. First, mix the mustard and vinegar, then incorporate the oil one teaspoon at a time to form a thickened emulsion.
3. Once thick and voluminous, add your shallots and reserve until needed.
4. Remove the fresh mint, and drain the potatoes thoroughly, leaving them to cool in the colander for a moment.
5. When cool enough to handle, halve them, and add them to a serving bowl. Pour over the dressing, the diced pickled cucumbers, and the chopped dill before folding until thoroughly combined.
6. Serve warm or room temperature as an accompaniment to the dishes above.

Ingredients:

1kg new potatoes
A bunch of fresh mint
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
2 tbsp red wine vinegar
6 tbsp olive oil
1 shallot, diced
2 pickled cucumbers, diced
A bunch of dill, finely chopped



Freezer-box ice cream (v) [serves 6-8]

A desert more straightforward and tastier than you'd ever expect.

Method:

1. In one bowl, whip your double cream to stiff peaks. In another, stir the evaporated milk, vodka or rum, vanilla extract and mix-in until combined.
2. The end result won't taste like your chosen spirit, but the alcohol will slow the freezing process, leaving you with smoother ice cream.
3. Thoroughly fold the evaporated milk mixture into the whipped cream before transferring the ice cream base into a Tupperware box. Freeze for at least six hours or until solid.
4. Remove from freezer 10 minutes before serving, and scoop into bowls with a warmed tablespoon.

Ingredients:

397ml tin of evaporated milk
500ml carton of double cream
2 tbsp vodka or rum
1 tsp vanilla extract
Mix-in (M&Ms, chopped nuts, grated chocolate, etc.) to taste

These dishes are easy to prepare, needing no more than half an hour's preparation each, all of which can be done well in advance of your summer soirée. Apart from the ice cream, every dish can be enjoyed hot or cold. So, should you want to pack them up and take them for a picnic, you can trust that your guests will still be satisfied.

Contact us

The recipes we've shared are simple and easy to follow, but they can make a big impact on your mental health. We hope you enjoy them! If you ever need more support than what our blog posts can offer, don't hesitate to contact the counsellors at Validium. They have years of experience helping people just like you get back on track and feeling like yourself again.