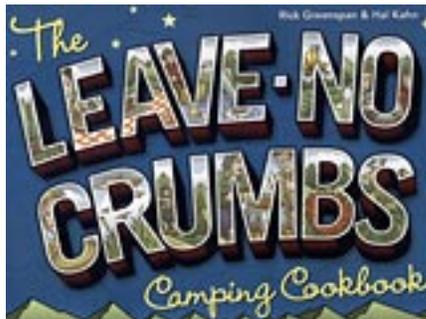


GOURMET RECIPES

The Even Greater Outdoors

Hey, it's gorgeous this weekend... let's get outdoors. For us, that's our tiny back garden; for others, it's camping in the wilderness miles from nowhere. Whatever, eating outdoors is part of the plan, and after a day trimming the roses or tromping the trails we're hungry and ready for a good meal.



No problem for us in town... but camping out and eating well takes talent! Sure enough, Rick Greenspan and Hal Kahn, both Northern California outdoorsmen, adapted their love of food to the limitations of wilderness cooking... and the result is a

deliciously funny original cookbook for those of us who travel on our stomachs, down the steps or up a mountain! It's all in *The Leave-No-Crumbs Camping Cookbook* – and best of all, these dishes translate easily into the home kitchen.

Not so far from home, but still requiring planning, is the picnic. We love picnics; from the cooking to the unpacking, picnics are fun. Sandwiches and lemonade used to do the trick, but today's picnics are a gourmet feast *al fresco*. Food writer Sara Deseran has written *Picnics: Delicious Recipes for Outdoor Entertaining*, which includes everything from the packing list to grilling to how to handle food safely outdoors. The recipes are all tempting yet simple, giving you the time to relax and enjoy the event! Sara Deseran, who wrote the book, is food editor of *7x7* magazine in San Francisco and writes for the *San Francisco Chronicle*.



Closer to home is *Eating Outdoors: Cooking and Entertaining in the Open Air* by Lindy Wildsmith. This is for the elegant meal eaten steps from your kitchen, but under the wide blue sky. Take out the pretty plates and nice wine glasses, and oh, we do love that blue linen tablecloth and crisp white napkins. This book is full of great recipes and ideas for long, lazy afternoons and warm evenings, wonderful food and friends.

More wine, anyone?

On today's menu:

- [Bruschetta](#)
 - [With Baby Mozzarella, Cherry Tomatoes, and Arugula](#)
 - [With Smashed Butter Beans and Lemon Dressing](#)
 - [Chopped Spring Salad with Asparagus and Peas](#)
 - [Wilderness Cakes](#)
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Bruschetta

We all love this rich Italian sandwich; it's perfect for outdoors, as it's deliciously sloppy to eat! Both versions are wonderful, and we confess we'd never seen the recipe with smashed butter beans, but once we tried, we were hooked. This recipe is *From*



Eating Outdoors: Cooking and Entertaining in the Open Air by Lindy Wildsmith. The author is an expert in Italian regional cooking and has her own cooking school in Herefordshire, England. We're not surprised to learn that she's well known for staging Italian lunch party cooking events!

With Baby Mozzarella, Cherry Tomatoes, and Arugula

Serves 4

Topping:

- 7 oz. small fresh mozzarella balls (bocconcini), drained and halved
- 8 oz. cherry tomatoes cut in half

- ¼ cup good olive oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

To serve:

- 1 ciabatta loaf, if possible left overnight to dry out
 - 1 large garlic clove, unpeeled and cut in half
 - 1 large handful arugula leaves
 - Extra virgin olive oil
 - Balsamic vinegar
-
- A stovetop grill pan

Put the prepared mozzarella and cherry tomato halves in a large bowl, add ¼ cup olive oil, plenty of salt and freshly ground black pepper and mix well. Leave for 1–2 hours to marinate.

When ready to serve, cut open the ciabatta lengthwise and toast both sides on a preheated stovetop grill pan. Alternatively, put the sliced bread on a baking sheet and bake in a hot oven until crisp, or simply toast under a hot broiler. Rub the cut sides of the bread lightly with the garlic and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. Toss the arugula with the mozzarella and tomato and spoon the salad onto the toasted bread. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar and serve at once.

Tony's wine recommendation:

A medium-bodied red with good acidity: Chianti, Valpolicella, Barbera, Beaujolais or Ontario Gamay.

With Smashed Butter Beans and Lemon Dressing

Serves 4

Butter beans

- 1½ cups dried butter beans, soaked overnight and boiled until tender, or 2×15 oz. cans cooked butter beans, drained and rinsed

Lemon dressing

- 6 salted anchovy fillets, rinsed and dried
- Good handful of fresh parsley
- Freshly grated zest and freshly squeezed juice of 1 unwaxed lemon
- 3 Tbsp olive oil

- 1 garlic clove
- 3 oz. pancetta, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- Freshly ground black pepper

To Serve

- 1 ciabatta loaf or baguette, if possible left overnight to dry out
 - 1 large garlic clove, unpeeled and cut in half
 - Extra virgin olive oil
 - Finely chopped parsley
-
- A stovetop grill pan

Put the anchovies, parsley, and lemon zest on a chopping board and chop together finely. Put the olive oil and garlic in a small pan over a very low heat. When the garlic starts to brown, discard it, increase the heat to medium and add the chopped pancetta to the chopped anchovy mixture. Add pepper and fry for 3 minutes, stirring all the time. Add the lemon juice and wine and cook over low heat for 5 minutes. Stir from time to time. Add the beans and stir for a few minutes. Lightly smash the beans with a potato masher to break them up a little.

When ready to serve, cut the bread open lengthwise and toast both sides on a preheated stovetop grill pan. Alternatively, put the sliced bread on a baking sheet and bake in a hot oven until crisp, or simply toast under a hot boiler, split the bread in half horizontally. Rub the cut toasted sides of the bread with the garlic and drizzle with olive oil. Spoon the beans onto the bruschetta, drizzle with more oil and sprinkle with parsley. Serve at once.

Variation: Serve the dressing with chickpeas, haricot beans, lentils, rice or pasta.

Tony's wine recommendation:

Unoaked Chardonnay, Chablis, Muscadet, Soave or Gavi.

Chopped Spring Salad with Asparagus and Peas



This fresh seasonal salad comes from *Picnics: Delicious Recipes for Outdoor Entertaining*; author Sara Deseran says, "What better way to celebrate the spring than with this salad made with the best pick of the season, in every shade of green? Although the avocado can be left out entirely, if using, make sure to bring it to the picnic whole, cutting and tossing it with the salad at the last minute to keep it from turning brown and mushy. If it's going to be over an hour before you serve the salad, it's best to pack the dressing separately as well and dress the salad on location; this will keep it bright and green."

Serves 6 to 8

- 2½ Tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pound asparagus
- 1 cup fresh or frozen peas
- ½ English cucumber, unpeeled, quartered lengthwise and sliced
- 3 green onions, white part only, cut into thin slices
- 1 ripe, slightly firm avocado, peeled, pitted, and cut into 1-inch dice (optional).

In a small jar with a lid, combine the lemon juice, olive oil and garlic. Shake well and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Snap the tough bottoms off of the asparagus where they break naturally, then trim and slice the asparagus on a diagonal into 1-inch pieces. Blanch in a medium pot of lightly salted boiling water for 1½ minutes. Use a strainer to remove and run the asparagus under cold water to stop the cooking. Set aside.

Using the same boiling water, blanch the peas for about 30 seconds if fresh and 10 seconds if frozen. Drain, run under cold water, and set aside. In a portable container or serving bowl combine the asparagus, peas, cucumber, onions and if serving immediately the avocado (if using). Reshake the

dressing and toss gently with the salad. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

Tony's wine recommendation:

New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, Sancerre or Pouilly-Fumé.

Wilderness Cakes

So you thought you'd go camping and have to eat grass and reconstituted oatmeal? Oh, not any more... From *The Leave-No-Crumbs Camping Cookbook* comes great food, including a whole section of desserts: brownies, a "Campsite Cake" template with divine variations such as Coconut, Cranberry or Raisin Brandy and, best of all to us, a chocolate cake the authors have named "The Most Dangerous Cake in the Wilderness." We agree, for it's all chocolate, and no matter if your "wilderness" is the back garden or city park, this is the cake to make!



Authors Greenspan and Kahn comment, "Don't get caught scarfing this cake by yourself. In the first place, you'll experience a sugar rush that'll have you ricocheting around the campsite like a steel ball in a Tokyo pachinko parlor. In the second place, if your mates catch you hogging their allotted portions, you'll experience something entirely different: death at an early age. This is all chocolate all the time. There's never a year we don't choose to live dangerously!"

Too right, fellas... munch on!

Serves 4 (Greenspan and Kahn: "Four, if you're working on democratic principles, more if you're a Communist, less if you're an armed tyrant.")

- 2–3 spoons* water, for melting the chocolate
- 2 spoons* clarified butter
- 2 spoons* sugar
- 2 eggs or equivalent powdered egg mix
- 1 spoon* brandy (or other flavouring)
- ½ spoon* salt

- ¼–½ Sierra* cup flour, plus more to dust the pot
 - ½ spoon* cooking oil, to grease the pot
 - Strawberry filling (recipe follows)
 - Chocolate frosting (recipe follows)
1. Make preparations for baking in coals or on a camping stove.
 2. Melt the chocolate , stirring with the water.
 3. Cream together the clarified butter and sugar in a small pot, using the back of a spoon.
 4. Stir in the eggs or egg powder and bandy and mix vigorously. Pour in the melted chocolate and continue mixing.
 5. Mix in the baking powder and salt, then the flour, 1 spoon at a time, till the batter runs off the spoon in a thick ribbon.
 6. Spread a thin layer of oil on the bottom and side and a small or medium-sized pot.
 7. Pour the batter into the prepared pot and bake till a knife blade emerges clean from the center, 15 to 25 minutes.
 8. Cool in the pot. Remove carefully, cutting around the edges if necessary, and cool thoroughly on a plate.
 9. Slice into two layers and spread the strawberry filling over the bottom layer. Cover with the top layer.
 10. Spread the chocolate frosting over the cake, starting at the top centre. Use the back of a spoon and apply all the frosting to the top and sides. Allow the frosting to cool. Then stand out of the way, or you're gonna get hurt!

Strawberry Filling

While the cake is baking, rehydrate 1 Sierra cup* strawberries, adding sugar to taste. Reduce to a smooth jam. When the cake is thoroughly cooled, slice it in half to create two layers. Spread the strawberry filling on the lower layer and cover with the top layer.

Chocolate Frosting

- 4 squares semisweet baking chocolate or equivalent sweet chocolate (up to 6 squares if you have them to spare)
 - 2–3 spoons* water
 - 1 spoon* clarified butter
 - 1 spoon* brandy (optional)
 - 2–3 Sierra cups* cold water to help thicken
1. Melt the chocolate in a pot or pot lid, using 2–3 spoons* water.

2. When the chocolate is almost completely melted, about 4 minutes, add the clarified butter. Stir consistently.
3. When the butter and chocolate are fully melted, add the brandy, if using.
4. As the frosting cools down, it will begin to thicken. To speed the process, float the pot lid in 2–3 Sierra cups* of cold water from the lake or stream. But keep your eyes open: The mixture may harden to the point where it can't be spread. If that happens, put it over heat briefly to soften.
5. When the frosting is thick but soft, spread it on cooled cake. It will harden as it cools further.

(Greenspan and Kahn comment, "Alternatively, you can eat the frosting before it ever reaches the cake. If you eat it all yourself, your partners will enjoy watching you infarct on the spot!")

**Definitions:*

Spoon:

A standard camping-kit spoon, about soup-spoon size, is a fraction less than a standard tablespoon measure.

Sierra cup:

This lightweight, stackable and heat-resistant metal cup is the camper's best friend. 9 ounces, slightly more than the standard 1-cup measure. No outdoorsman leaves home without one!

Tony's wine recommendation:

Tawny Port or Ruby or Cream Sherry.

We wish to thank Thomas Allen and Son Limited, Toronto, and Storey Publishing, North Adams, MA, for permission to publish material and photographs from *The Leave-No-Crumbs Camping Cookbook*, by Rick Greenspan and Hal Kahn. © 2004 Rick Greenspan and Hal Kahn.

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San Francisco CA for permission to publish material and photographs from *Picnics: Delicious Recipes for Outdoor Entertaining*, by Sara Deseran. Text © 2004 Chronicle Books LLC. Photographs © 2004 by Jonelle Weaver.

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Happily enjoyed by Helen Hatton and Ron Morris.

