

Summer Grilling Ideas

Written by Lydia Martin

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If traditional barbecue foods like hotdogs and hamburgers are no longer striking your fancy this summer, Arizona Foothills can help. We did some culinary sleuthing and came up with these delightful foods that, once grilled, are sure to tickle your taste buds and leave them craving more.



Healthy in the Heat

Grilling doesn't have to conflict with your diet. Halve or cut your favorite fruits and vegetables—eggplant, portabella mushrooms, peaches, nectarines—then grill them for a few minutes until lightly charred. Try pairing them with dressings like lemon vinaigrette or olive oil for a fresh treat with some kick. Tofu marinated in soy or barbecue sauce and placed on bamboo skewers can be another figure-friendly grilled treat.

Party Patties

Chef Daniel Patino, of Bourbon Steak at the Fairmont Scottsdale, suggests organizing a “Build Your Own Burger” bar, inspired by the Market Burgers found on Bourbon Steak’s menu. Patino recommends setting up multiple hibachi grills, each with a different flavored wood. Regardless of whether your patties are made of beef, turkey, lamb or tofu, flavored wood will create “different flavor profiles” for the burgers you create. Once the burgers are grilled, gather your guests together for some social burger building. You can include an array of traditional burger goods—pickles, cheese, butter lettuce, ketchup and mustard. But don’t be afraid to go a few steps further: Lay out some watercress, jalapeño peppers, feta cheese and aioli too. It’s a great way to enjoy a special, scrumptious spread and the company of friends.

Under the Influence

“Drunken Shrimp” is a personal favorite of Beau MacMillan, executive chef of Elements Restaurant at Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain in Scottsdale. Start off by wrapping about 15 shrimp in thin strips of bacon and alternating them on skewers with half-inch mango cubes. While the skewers chill in the refrigerator for an hour, sauté the shrimp’s shells and two shallots (thinly sliced) in olive oil until the shallots start to caramelize. Stir in four mashed garlic cloves, then pour in a bottle of Samuel Adams Sumer Ale and six ounces of brandy. After reducing the heat by a quarter, throw in two cups of chicken stock. Strain the broth. Reduce the heat by half; then, while continuing to reduce the heat, add butter, cilantro, Worcestershire sauce and lemon juice to taste. Finally, grill the shrimp and mango skewers on both sides, frequently brushing them with olive oil on rosemary sprigs. When the shrimp are no longer translucent, place the skewers on plates and ladle the hot Sam Adams broth over them. MacMillan tells us these bacon-wrapped prawns pair quite nicely with an endive salad and grilled crostini.

Don't Forget Dessert!

For the perfect ending to your cookout, break out the pineapple slices and ice cream. Coat one side of pineapple wedges with honey and sprinkle with cinnamon before grilling them until lightly caramelized. Flip them over and repeat the process. When the pineapple is warm and pleasantly soft, add it to a scoop or two of vanilla ice cream. Voilà—the taste of summer in a bowl!