

FOR THE LADIES...

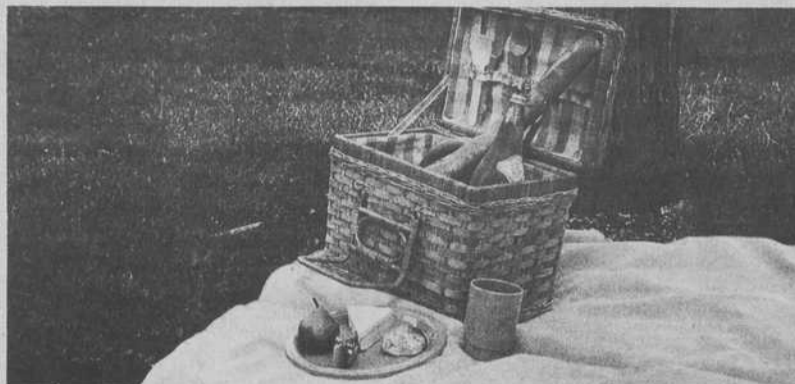
Packing the Perfect Picnic

by Liese Cochran
PM Editorial Services

From the first signs of summer through Labor Day and beyond, one of America's favorite pastimes is picnicking. Whether it's part of an outing for two or 200, a picnic can be a simple, perfect way to enjoy the outdoors during the warm weather.

No one is really quite sure just when and where the first picnic took place; however, most believe it derived from a European farmers' tradition of taking food into the fields to eat during work breaks. This "continental" picnic typically consisted of a loaf of bread, cheese and wine.

While Americans have embraced this custom heartily, they have introduced their own elements into picnic fare over the years. Early additions to the menu included cold meats, smoked fish, tomatoes and fruits for dessert. Today, every food imaginable has found a place in the picnic basket. So although the classic continental picnic is still a favorite, it is not unusual to find chilled lobster, pasta salad or paté sharing space on the picnic blanket with cold-cut sandwiches. And that, in fact, may be the secret to the picnic's popularity. A picnic is one of the few things in life that can be whatever you want it to be.



Picnics are the perfect way to enjoy warm weather.

Here are a few suggestions for simple but delicious additions to your next picnic basket.

Curried California Pasta Salad

4 cups rotelle or cavatelli pasta
1 package (16 oz.) Birds Eye Farm
Fresh Cauliflower, Baby Whole
Carrots and Snow Pea Pods

3/4 cup Kraft "Zesty" Italian
Dressing
1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons curry powder
1 cup halved cherry tomatoes
1 medium avocado, diced

Cook pasta as directed on package; drain. Rinse with cold water and drain. Run cold tap water over vegetables in a strainer to thaw completely; drain. Blend dressing and curry powder in a large bowl. Gently stir in all ingredients. Chill 2 hours. Store any leftover salad in refrigerator. Makes 6 servings.

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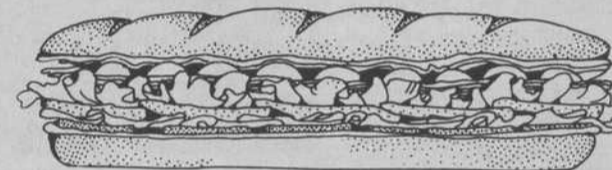
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Picnic Hero

2 cups Birds Eye Farm Fresh
Mixture, any combination
1/4 cup Kraft "Zesty" Italian
dressing
1 loaf (10 oz.) Italian bread
2 cups shredded lettuce
4 Oscar Mayer salami slices
4 Oscar Mayer ham slices
4 Kraft Deluxe Swiss cheese slices

Place vegetables in boiling water; cook about 2 minutes. Drain and toss with dressing. Cut loaf of bread lengthwise. Sprinkle dressing from vegetables on cut sides of the bread.



Arrange lettuce, meats, cheese and vegetables on bottom half of bread. Add top half and press firmly. Makes 4 servings.

Banana Cereal Bars

1-1/2 cups Post Grape-
Nuts cereal
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 cup Parkay margarine
2 medium bananas, mashed
1/2 cup nonfat dry milk
1/4 cup honey
1 egg, beaten

Combine cereal, flour, sugar and cinnamon. Cut in butter until mixture is crumbly. Pat half of the mixture into greased 8-inch square pan. Combine bananas, nonfat dry milk, honey and egg, and spread in pan over crumb mixture. Top with remaining crumb mixture. Bake at 350° for 30 to 35 minutes. Cool in pan, then cut into bars or squares. Remove from pan. Makes about 16 cookies. |l|

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