



From: Special Fork
Contact: Sandy Hu, 415.626.1765
Sandy.hu@specialfork.com

Special Fork and Smartphones – Recipe for Vacation Cooking Specialfork.com Provides Easy Recipes to Make at your Summer Cottage or Condo

08.04.2011– SAN FRANCISCO, August 4, 2011 - With summer vacation winding down, many families are taking that last warm-weather break, renting cottages and condos at their favorite vacation sites. Most rentals are equipped with full-size kitchens or kitchenettes, and families willing to do a little cooking can save the budget for other fun activities.

But who wants to cook while on vacation? Or lug cookbooks in a suitcase? It's easy when the "cookbook" is your smartphone.

And it's effortless when you can decide what's for dinner while lying on the beach, browsing recipes at Special Fork (www.specialfork.com), which will also make a shopping list on your phone.

When you get hungry, just stop at a grocery store to pick up the recipe ingredients on your way home from the beach.

All recipes on this free mobile recipe website take no more than 30 minutes of active prep time; cooking time may be extra. And Special Fork works on ALL smartphones - iPhone, Blackberry or Android-based phones, as well as the iPad.

If you search "beef" or "chicken," Special Fork will deliver a summary page of relevant recipes for quick review, with cook and prep times, level of cooking difficulty, and any special equipment required (like a food processor) so you can easily skip recipes that take too long to cook, that aren't for your skill level, or call for equipment your beach cottage doesn't have.

For lay-about summer reading, Special Fork posts a daily food blog Monday through Friday. The site also features how-to videos, and selection and storage information for meats, produce and grocery items.

So enjoy your vacation and save money in the process by "eating in" a few nights. Everything you need is just a smartphone away.

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Here are some easy vacation recipes from Special Fork bloggers.

Watermelon, Cucumber & Feta Salad

A simpler salad doesn't exist. Make it just before serving so the cucumbers are snappy and the feta and fresh mint show off fresh flavor.

Prep: 20 min; Cook: 0 min; Difficulty: 1; Equipment: none

- 1 English cucumber
- 1 seedless watermelon, heavy for its size, cut into bite-size wedges or squares
- 8 ounces crumbled feta cheese
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice, more or less to taste

Cut off both ends of the cucumber and then cut it in half lengthwise. Place each half, flat-side down, on the cutting board and slice into thin half-moons.

In a salad bowl, toss the cucumber with the watermelon, feta, chopped mint, olive oil, balsamic vinegar and lemon or lime juice. Serve immediately.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Dry Husk Grilled Corn

This is a good way to make foolproof grilled corn.

Prep: 3 min; Cook: 12 min; Difficulty: 1; Equipment: grill

- 4 ears corn, with husks

Prepare the charcoal grill, or heat a gas grill to medium or to medium-high heat. Working from the outside in, peel husks back to the base, without removing completely. Brush out the silk strands and discard. Re-wrap corn in its husks.

Place the corn on the grill, cover and cook, turning every few minutes, until the outer husks are quite charred and kernels are tender and browning in spots, 10 to 12 minutes.

Once the corn is off the grill and cool enough to handle, pull back the husks. Gather the husks in your fist, then pick one of the longer husks and wrap it around the other at the base of the cob.

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Tuck the end back through the loop once or twice to secure.

Makes 4 servings.

Three Serving Suggestions for Grilled Corn:

1) Stir a splash of adobo sauce (from a can of chipotle chiles en abobo) or a good pinch of chile powder into a few tablespoons of mayonnaise. Slather grilled corn with a thin layer of spicy mayo, roll it in finely grated cotija cheese and serve with lime wedges.

2) Melt butter and season with salt. Pour into a shallow dish, like a 9- x13-inch baking dish and roll grilled corn in butter to coat.

3) Evenly coat grilled corn with a thin layer of tomato jam. Sprinkle with chopped fresh basil and finely shredded Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese.

Italian Heroes

Freshly made heroes are so much better than the store-bought kind. Vary the sandwich by changing up the cold meats.

Prep: 5 min; Cook: 3 min; Difficulty: 1; Equipment: none

4 hero rolls or 1 large soft baguette
8 tablespoons butter, softened
1 head romaine lettuce, shredded
4 pepperoncini peppers, chopped
2 tomatoes, sliced
½ small red onion, sliced
Italian dressing to taste
4 ounces provolone cheese
4 ounces ham
4 ounces salame
4 ounces hot coppa (cured meat)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cut the rolls in half lengthwise and spread a generous amount of butter on the cut sides. Toast in the oven until the butter is melted and the bread is golden. While the bread is toasting, make the salad by tossing together the lettuce, peppers, tomatoes and onion in a medium bowl with the Italian dressing. Layer the provolone, ham, salame, and hot coppa on the toasted roll bottoms, dividing equally. Mound the salad on top of the meat and cover with the top half of the rolls. Serves 4.

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Mom's Potato Salad

This is a classic potato salad, perfect for picnics and barbecues.

Prep: 20 min; Cook: 15 min; Refrigerate: 4 hr; Difficulty: 1

1½ pounds small Dutch potatoes, yellow or boiling
Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
¼ to 1/3 cup cider or tarragon vinegar
3 super-fresh and green small celery ribs, finely chopped
1 small shallot finely chopped
2 to 3 hard-boiled eggs, finely chopped
½ cup mayonnaise
¼ cup fresh chopped chives

Put potatoes in a saucepan with 2 inches of cold water to cover and bring to a boil. Add 1 teaspoon salt and simmer potatoes until fork tender but not falling apart, 12 to 15 minutes depending on size of potatoes.

Rinse potatoes under cold water in a colander until cool enough to handle but still quite warm. Add ¼ cup vinegar to a serving bowl. Cut potatoes into 1/4-inch-thick slices, adding and tossing them into the bowl with the vinegar as sliced.

Gently stir in remaining ingredients with salt and pepper and additional vinegar to taste. Chill, covered, until ready to serve. Salad will keep in the fridge for about 3 days.

Serves 4 to 6 (It would be a crime not to have leftovers because the flavor only gets better as it sits in the fridge.)

Variations: Add fresh tarragon or scallions in place of the chives. Omit the eggs. Add sour cream to replace half the mayonnaise for more tang.

Fresh Apricot Piña Colada

Make this refreshing, frothy drink one or two servings at a time. It's good without the liquor, too,
Prep: 3 min; Cook: 0; Difficulty: 1; Equipment: blender

2 fresh California apricots, halved and pitted, plus additional half for garnish
2 tablespoons frozen pineapple juice concentrate, unthawed
3 tablespoons simple syrup (see note below)
3 tablespoons canned coconut milk

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2 tablespoons light rum (optional)

4 to 8 ice cubes

Mint sprig

Plastic straw

In a blender jar, combine 2 apricots, halved; pineapple juice; simple syrup; coconut milk and rum. Whirl until blended. Taste and add more simple syrup to sweeten, if needed. Add ice cubes and whirl until smooth and slushy. If drink seems thin, add a few more ice cubes and blend again. Pour into a stemmed glass.

To garnish, make a slit halfway into the remaining apricot half and slip the apricot onto the rim of the glass. Add the mint sprig and straw. Serve immediately.

Makes 1 drink (about 1 cup).

Note: To make simple syrup, mix equal parts sugar and water and boil gently for a few minutes, stirring, just until sugar is dissolved. Leftovers can be stored in a glass jar in the refrigerator up to 1 month.

Note: Ice cubes from an automatic ice maker tend to be smaller, so you may need the larger quantity of ice cubes, while ice cubes from a manual ice tray tend to be bigger and may require just half the number.