



# From the Food Bank Kitchen

## Grilling Ideas

As the weather warms up, many people enjoy grilling foods outdoors, which can be a healthy and delicious way to eat without heating up the kitchen. Try these ideas for healthy and delicious grilling:

**Choose leaner proteins** — Start with fish, skinless chicken, and lean beef and pork cuts trimmed of visible fat. If your chicken has the skin on, try pulling it off before eating it. Prepare smaller portions so they cook faster and spend less time on the grill. Use low-fat marinades to limit the fat that drips on the coals. If you marinate your skinless chicken, or your whole pieces (even if you don't plan to eat the skin), it will tend to stay more moist.

**Grill fruits and vegetables**— Some great fruits and veggies to grill are cherry tomatoes, onions, peppers, zucchini or summer squash, yam or sweet potato, asparagus, mushrooms, eggplant, pineapple, and mango. Thread pieces of beef, pork, chicken, scallops, shrimp, or swordfish on a skewer; alternate with chunks of marinated veggies and fruits.

**Here are a few fruit and veggie grilling ideas:**

**EGGPLANT, SUMMER SQUASH, AND ZUCCHINI:** Slice lengthwise into ½ inch thick slices. Marinate in an Italian style dressing for about one half hour and place on the grill along with wide strips of onions and peppers.

**CORN ON THE COB:** Husk corn and remove silk. (Optional: soak the cobs in a pot of cold water for about 20 minutes to provide extra moisture). Brush kernels with olive oil. If desired add a little garlic, chopped onion, nutmeg, salt/pepper, or herbs such as basil or oregano. Tear off squares of foil and place ears diagonally in the center of each square. Roll the foil around each ear of corn and close it up by twisting the ends. Place on a medium-hot grill, rotating the corn every so often. Allow to continue cooking for about 15-20 minutes. Remove from the grill carefully, unwrap and enjoy!

### Turkey Burgers

Serves 4

1 lb ground turkey  
½ c bread crumbs  
½ of an onion, finely chopped  
1 Tbsp oil  
1 egg

1 Tbsp soy sauce  
½ tsp garlic powder  
½ tsp ground mustard  
½ tsp ground black pepper  
Optional: 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

**Directions:** Sauté onion in oil till soft, about 5 minutes. Combine with all ingredients and make into 4 patties. Place on grill. Flip after 10 minutes, then cook about 5 minutes more. Burgers should be well-done.

**Nutrition Facts:** Calories 230, Fat 11 gm, Saturated Fat 3 gm, Sodium 210 gm, Carbohydrate 9 gm, Protein 25 gm

### Southwest Pasta and Bean Salad

Serves 8

Adapted from [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)

Looking for a quick and easy side dish to bring to your next barbecue pot luck? Try this pasta and bean salad recipe.

2 c dry pasta (whole grain preferred)  
½ c vinaigrette or Italian style salad dressing  
1 (15 oz) can black beans (or any other bean)  
1 (15 oz) can kidney beans (or any other bean)  
1 (15 oz) can corn, drained (OR 2 c thawed frozen corn,  
OR 2 c fresh corn, cut off the cob)  
3 tomatoes, chopped

**Suggested spices:**  
1½ Tbsp cumin  
½ tsp onion powder  
½ tsp garlic powder  
¼ tsp salt  
¼ red pepper flakes (optional)  
½ Tbsp chili powder (optional)

**Directions:** Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain and rinse pasta in cold water. Place in a large mixing bowl and add salad dressing and salt; mix well. Combine beans in a colander; rinse with cold water, drain, then add to pasta. Add corn, tomatoes, cumin, chili powder, onion powder, garlic powder, red pepper flakes, and salt and pepper to taste; toss lightly. Chill salad in refrigerator until ready to serve.

**Nutrition Facts:** Calories 310, Fat 7 gm, Saturated Fat 1 gm, Sodium 300 mg, Carbohydrate 51 gm, Fiber 11 gm, Protein 12 gm

## Healthy Grilling Tips

Some people have heard about health risks to grilling. Recent research suggests that grilling meats can produce carcinogens (cancer causing substances) such as heterocyclic amines (HCAs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). These are formed when meats are cooked to well done or grilled at high temperatures. Recent studies found a higher risk of colorectal cancer among people who consumed the highest levels of HCAs. Levels of HCAs and PAHs are much lower in meats that are cooked at lower temperatures. Here are a few healthy suggestions to lower HCAs from Nutrition Action Healthletter:

- CLEAN the grill well by scrubbing with a brush before and after grilling food so no build-up accumulates on the grates.
- Choose LEAN meats and poultry, so less fat will drip onto the flames to lessen smoke and formation of HCAs. For beef lovers, the leanest cuts are: bottom and top round steak, eye round steak or roast, flank steak, and chuck eye.
- Grill FISH, VEGGIES, and FRUITS more often. Seafood has minimal HCAs if not charred black, and vegetables and veggie burgers do not contain any. Eating less beef is also kinder to the earth, lowering greenhouse gas emissions.
- MARINATE beef, poultry, pork and fish before grilling. Even 15 minutes of marinating cuts the risk significantly. Less tender cuts of beef like rounds are more economical, but will require longer marinating time. (SEE 2 RECIPES BELOW).
- Beware of BURNT. A bit of char is unavoidable, but avoid over-blackening your meats. Don't cook meat past a goal of 165°F for poultry, 160°F for ground red meats or meat mixtures, and 145°F for pork, red meat steaks or chops plus a 3 minute rest time before cutting open or serving. See the website [foodsafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov) for more information.
- PRE-COOK chicken and larger cuts of meat in the oven, or microwave for 2 minutes before finishing off on the grill.
- Add barbecue sauces toward the END of the grilling, so the sugar in the sauce doesn't lead to faster blackening of food.

## Marinating Guide

Marinades infuse food with flavor, break down tough muscle fibers, and seal moisture into your food, making meats more tender. As a general rule of thumb, you need about 1/2 cup of marinade per pound of meat, but having more marinade won't hurt. For best results, marinate meats and fish in a re-sealable plastic bag. This helps with clean up and also ensures that all sides of the meat are in contact with the marinade.

Marinades usually have three basic components: oils, acids, and seasonings. Sometimes marinades for red meats don't use oils, because the meat is fatty enough. Acids are things like vinegar or citrus juices. They help tenderize the meat, but require some caution, because very acidic marinades can make the food change color or texture. Lemon and lime juice are particularly strong, and meats marinated in those should less than two hours.

**TIMING GUIDE:** Marinate fish and seafood for 15-30 minutes; whole chicken breast with skin and bones 4-6 hours or overnight; boneless chicken breasts or thighs 2 hours to overnight; flank steak 2 hours to overnight; pork/beef/lamb chops and steaks 2-4 hours, and vegetables for 30 minutes to 1 hour.

For food safety, **DO NOT** baste your food during grilling with the liquid the meat was marinating in, because it can have harmful bacteria that can make you sick. If you'd like extra sauce for basting, set aside some of your marinade for this purpose **before** you add it to the meat. Make sure you marinate meats and fish in the fridge to be safe as well.

Try the marinades below, and then experiment to make your own!

## Marinade Recipes

### Basic Marinade

1 Tbsp oil  
½ c balsamic vinegar  
2 Tbsp Dijon mustard  
2 cloves chopped garlic  
2 Tbsp chopped fresh herbs like rosemary, thyme, or oregano (or 2 tsp dried)  
*Combine ingredients and pour over chicken, beef, or pork. Marinate in a zip-lock bag in the fridge.*

### Ginger Soy Marinade

1 Tbsp oil  
½ c apple cider vinegar  
1 c low-sodium soy sauce  
2 Tbsp fresh grated ginger  
2 Tbsp brown sugar  
*Combine ingredients and pour over pork, salmon or tuna steak. Marinate in a zip-lock bag in the fridge.*