



FABULOUS FAN FARE

Healthy Tailgating Foods to Cheer For

by Judith Fertig

Eat, play, party... and repeat. We may call it tailgating, fangating, homegating, a watch party or simply eating with friends before a big game. According to the American Tailgaters Association, in St. Paul, Minnesota, an estimated 50 million Americans tailgate annually.

Whether we're on the road or at home, making the menu healthy is a winning strategy for hosts and guests. Here, two experts divulge their winning ways.

Says Debbie Moose, author of *Fan Fare: A Playbook of Great Recipes for Tailgating or Watching the Game at Home*, Ivy League schools like Princeton and Yale claim credit for pregame picnics that 19th-century sports fans

packed into their horse and buggy for local road trips. Moose lives in the tailgate trifecta of the North Carolina Triangle, home to Duke, North Carolina and Wake Forest universities. She enjoyed discovering that University of Washington sports fans from the Seattle area like to sail to their chosen picnic spots, while University of Hawaii folks grill fish on hibachis in Honolulu.

Moose naturally prefers healthy, Southern-style fare such as deviled eggs and marinated green bean salad, which can be served hot, cold or at room temperature. "At the game or at home, your guests will be moving around, so go for foods that can be eaten with one hand," she suggests.

She also plans her menu around color, universal appeal and variety because it's healthier than just serving a mound of barbecued chicken wings and a big bowl of potato chips. She likes recipes that can do double duty; her black bean summer salad with cherry tomatoes and corn can function as a colorful side dish or as a salsa for non-GMO blue corn chips. "Recipes that you can do ahead of time make things easier on game day; just pull them from the fridge and go," says Moose.

Daina Falk, of New York City, grew up around professional athletes because her father, David Falk, is a well-known sports agent. Excitement-generating sports are in her blood and inspired her to write *The Hungry Fan's Game Day Cookbook*. She knows that most of the tailgating in her area takes place for football and baseball games and NASCAR races. On *HungryFan.com*, Falk serves up tips for every fangating/homegating occasion, from the Kentucky Derby to the Super Bowl.

"Keep your menu interesting," says Falk. "I always like to feature a dish for each team. For instance, if you're hosting an Alabama versus Washington watch party, you could feature an Alabama barbecue dish with white sauce and oysters or other fresh seafood. Both dishes are characteristic of the local foods in the universities' respective hometowns." Falk recommends buying more local beer than needed to make sure not to run out. Game day guests can get hot and thirsty, indoors or out. Supply lots of filtered water in non-breakable containers.

For easy entertaining, Falk recommends biodegradable dishes and cups. "Whenever there are a lot of people in one room, especially when they're drinking, a glass will likely be broken," she says. "Save yourself cleanup and the risk of glass shards by committing to temporary cups and plates that are Earth-friendly and compostable."

Judith Fertig writes cookbooks and foodie fiction from Overland Park, KS (JudithFertig.com).

HEALTHY TAILGATING RECIPES



Black Bean Summer Salad

Yields: 8 side dishes or 4 light meals

This salad is easily doubled to feed a crowd.

- 2 cups fresh or frozen corn kernels
- 2 (15 oz) cans black beans, rinsed and well drained
- 5 or 6 green onions, white and green parts, chopped
- 1 large sweet banana pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1+ cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 6 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp lime juice
- 2+ Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp chili powder
- Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves

In a large bowl, toss together the corn, black beans, green onions, banana pepper and tomatoes.

In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lime juice, vinegar, chili powder, salt and pepper.

Pour the dressing over the vegetables and toss to coat them all. Then stir in the cilantro.

Refrigerate from 1 to 3 hours to let the flavors come together.

Note: If using frozen corn, drain it well and lightly sauté in a couple of teaspoons of olive oil before adding it to the salad. This removes moisture that may make the salad watery.

Courtesy of Debbie Moose, Southern Holidays: A Savor the South Cookbook.



Vegetarian-Friendly Barbecue Cauliflower Nuggets

Yields: 8 appetizer servings

Plant-based barbecue is a home run or touchdown.

- 1 head of cauliflower
- 1 cup all-purpose or gluten-free flour
- 1 Tbsp barbecue spice blend
- 1 cup nut milk of choice
- 1 cup tomato-based barbecue sauce

Accompaniment

Dipping sauce of choice

Preheat the oven to 450° F.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Rinse and separate cauliflower florets into small- to medium-sized pieces. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine the barbecue spice, flour and nut milk until smooth.

Dredge each piece of cauliflower in the batter before placing it on the baking sheet.

Bake for 18 minutes or until golden brown. Brush the cauliflower with barbecue sauce and return to the oven for an additional 5 minutes.

Remove the cauliflower from the baking sheet and plate alongside a dipping sauce of your choice.

Adapted from Daina Falk's HungryFan.com.



Michelada

Yields: 8 servings

Mix this cocktail in a pitcher and serve over ice. Part bloody Mary and part beer, the umami flavor comes from Maggi Seasoning, a bottled condiment available at better grocery stores.

Glass Rimmer:

- Lime wedges (plus more for serving)
- 2 Tbsp kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp chili powder

Michelada:

- 1 (32 oz) bottle of chilled Clamato (about 4 cups)
- 1 (32 oz) bottle or 3 (12 oz) bottles chilled Mexican lager
- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice
- 1 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp bottled hot sauce
- 1 tsp bottled Maggi Seasoning

For the glass rimmer, mix the kosher salt and chili powder on a small plate.

Rub rims of pint glasses with lime wedges and dip in salt mixture. Set aside.

Mix Clamato, lager, lime juice, Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce and Maggi Seasoning in a large pitcher. Fill glasses with ice, top off with Michelada mixture and garnish with added lime wedges.

Adapted from Judith Fertig's 500 Mexican Dishes.



Crowd-Pleasing Marinated Green Beans

Yields: 8 servings

This simple salad is easy to double or triple. Make it the day before the game and refrigerate.

- 1/2 large red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup herb-flavored white wine vinegar or regular white wine vinegar
- Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 lbs fresh green beans, ends trimmed, but left long

Bring a large pot of water to a boil.

Place the sliced onions in a colander over the sink.

In a small bowl, stir together the oil, vinegar, salt and pepper until combined. Stir in the garlic. Set aside.

When the water comes to a boil, add the green beans. Cover and cook for 5 to 10 minutes or just until the beans are bright green; do not overcook.

Pour the beans and hot water over the onions in the colander. Rinse under cold running water to cool down. Drain well for a few minutes.

Place the beans and onions in a large bowl or large resealable plastic bag. Pour the dressing in and mix with the vegetables.

Refrigerate four hours or overnight, stirring or shaking occasionally.

Let come to room temperature before serving.

Courtesy of Debbie Moose, Fan Fare: A Playbook of Great Recipes for Tailgating or Watching the Game at Home.



Chilled Red Bell Pepper Soup

Yields: 4 small servings

Quadruple this recipe to make soup for a larger gathering. Serve in small sipping cups – cold for games in hot weather or hot for games in cold weather.

- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed
- 1/2 cup low-fat Greek or dairy-free yogurt
- 1/4 yellow onion
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 small/mini-cucumber
- 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- 2 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 4 large garlic cloves
- 1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Garnish:

- Flat leaf (Italian) parsley (minced optional)
- Roasted and salted pumpkin seeds

Blend all main ingredients, except garnish, in a high-speed blender into purée.

Serve topped with the parsley and a sprinkle of pumpkin seeds.

Adapted from Daina Falk's HungryFan.com.