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Tasty Outdoor Treats

Tantalize Appetites

by Jane Haselton

PICNICS mean fun and food. For more fun, serve food that is different. To solve the problem of no kitchen, serve tasty dishes, which need only the qualifications of a good Girl Scout or two.

Biscuit mixes, now back on the grocer's shelves, are easy to prepare for any picnic. A strip of dough rolled around a wiener on a stick, then roasted over a fire, makes a Pig in a Blanket. If you lack wieners, wind the strip of dough around the stick, pinch both ends down hard to keep the coil intact, and bake slowly over hot coals. You should choose willow, maple or sweet gum for the stick in order to get the best woody flavor with no bitterness.

Don't worry about taking a mixing bowl to prepare the dough. Instead, cut or tear the front off the biscuit mix package. Your dry ingredients, ready blended in a square mixing bowl, are waiting for the careful addition of liquid.

Hot coils of baked dough are called "Twisties." They're delicious with cheese stuffed down the hollow and melted slowly, or with jam or honey.

Pancake mix is one of the quick-and-easies that adds to a picnic. A prepared mix is close to foolproof, but baking the pancakes takes a careful hand. Use little fat, and turn the cakes only once—with a flip, if you can.

Grilled cheese sandwiches taste better when fried in butter. To save on the fat, spread it on the outer sides of the sandwich instead of putting so much in the skillet and adding more constantly.

Stuffed Wieners

A wiener treat can be prepared by making a lengthwise slit in the sausage, filling the slit with cheese and wrapping the meat in a strip of bacon. Put your imagination to work when you're using wieners—the slit can be filled with chopped onion, a pickle strip or spread with mustard.

Another tempting meat dish is Kabobs. To prepare these, cube a slice of meat in pieces an inch or two square. Lamb or tender beef are the luxury meats here, but sections of the versatile wiener can be used. Thread the cubes on a stick with sections of quartered onions, quartered tomatoes, pineapple or anything you can think of to add variety. Successful combinations include mushrooms, pickles, ripe olives, bacon squares, green pepper and even apricot halves. Grill the Kabob slowly over hot coals and be certain the meat is thoroughly cooked. The easiest way to serve a Kabob is to push the hot mixture onto a split finger roll.

If you have all day and are bursting to try something new, the modified Hawaiian cook-out is made for you. Variations of this are the chicken-in-a-hole and bean-hole picnics. The preparation is the hardest work: A hole about 3 feet deep must be dug and lined with bricks. Then build a fire in the hole and let it die down to coals, heating the bricks thoroughly. Wrap

cleaned chicken in cabbage leaves, prepared vegetables in parchment paper and leave corn in the husk. Strip back the husk far enough to clean the tip of the corn and remove most of the silk. Place the food in the hole, cover with a wet gunny sack, then shovel on dirt. Some experts build another fire on top of the pile. It will take several hours—probably all afternoon—to complete the cooking.

Potatoes are delicious roasted in a tin can in the ashes of the fire. Try fried canned potato balls or canned shoestring potatoes instead of the usual potato chips.

Roasted Apples

For dessert serve salted peanuts and roasted apples, or plain apples and roasted peanuts. Roasting apples takes time, but picnickers who have finished the rest of the meal will probably have patience enough to cook the fruit.

A picnic dessert called Angels on Horseback is made with marshmallows, thin squares of sweet or bitter-sweet chocolate and graham crackers. The marshmallows are toasted and placed with a square of chocolate between two crackers. The hot marshmallow melts the chocolate.

Planning a picnic can assume the size of a full hobby. An elaborate picnic is fun and need not be too expensive for college budgets. Purchasing butter at nearly a dollar a pound can be avoided by using mayonnaise as a spread. Pickle relish can be substituted for the more expensive whole pickles, and graham crackers for packaged cookies.

Most important of all, see that everyone at the picnic gets his share of work and plenty of food.

