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Sunrise or Dusk On Spring Picnics Entertain Your Appetite

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Entertain Your Appetite

Mouth-watering picnic menus and pointers on picnic etiquette are reported by Susan Menne

WITH spring and sunny weather just around the proverbial corner, a young man's fancy most naturally turns to picnics. And despite the Iowa State myth of the "stick of chewing gum and you," appetites are at their best under the open sky.

Breathes there a man with pancreatic juices so dead, that to his date has not said, "Why don't you girls take care of the food?" And what can we girls do about it?

Remember way back when you were but a child, and the Fourth of July meant the biggest and most glorious picnic there could be—uncles, aunts, cousins, in-laws, sister's best beau and mother's oldest friends? Everyone packed a picnic basket with his own specialty, and you spread a big white cloth under the biggest, shadiest tree at the picnic spot. There were plates of crisp, cold fried chicken, mounds of assorted sandwiches, juicy dill pickles, a feather-light chocolate cake and cold lemonade in paper cups.

No more the crisp fried chicken or home-baked cakes, but Ames does not lack stores, and the merchants in these stores have been selling picnic food for a long time. Just a hint of where your appetite runs, and your shopping bag will soon burst with things that satisfy.

For something just a shade apart from the usual moonlight rendezvous, Iowa State coeds and their dates have tried sunrise picnics. With the proper spirit and a few hours sleep the night before, there's nothing that will compare.

It's never too difficult to beg, borrow or otherwise procure a few bicycles if the buddy's budget doesn't include a jeep. Just point your wheels due north at 6 a.m., find a dry and cozy spot in the North Woods and breakfast isn't far off.

From a heart-to-heart talk with a few seasoned day-break picnickers, the following menu might be concocted. Take along an orange apiece. When your destination is reached, the fire blazing and everyone's stomach is on a rampage, begin your breakfast with that delectable morsel of Vitamin C. Take care to leave the orange peel as whole as is humanly possible.

Then break an egg into each orange cup, place these neat jackets in the coals of the fire and sit back and relax. It won't be long before you'll be eating the most wonderful breakfast you've ever had. A few green sticks cut from any tree will serve as implements to hold a slice of bread while it slowly browns to a golden toastiness.

A frying pan on one of these excursions will more than pay for any extra trouble its transportation may have cost. A true camper has a craving for fried foods and somehow they taste so much better than when cooked at home.

Crisp strips of curling bacon, wholesome flapjacks which literally bounce from the skillet and smoking fried potatoes are the way to any man's heart.

Flapjacks are the easiest things in the world to cook for a breakfast picnic, but a few precautions will not go amiss. Don't use too much fat. The frying pan may be too thin and the fire too hot, but there is no such thing as too small an amount of fat. More important still, if your cake sticks, don't pour fat around it to loosen it, for the fat will be soaked up as by a sponge. In turning the cake, don't add fat to the pan merely because it looks dry. The flapjack may stick to the pan once in a while, but a little crispness is much better than a grease-soaked cake—just ask your stomach.

There'll always be those, however, who will remain adverse to rising with the sun, so afternoon and moonlight picnics will be decidedly in the majority. There's nothing more fascinating to any woman than to be turned loose in the grocery store and told to buy what she wants—when there's a man to foot the bill.

Try not to buy more than will be eaten, but still remember that there's no appetite like that inspired by the spring air. If it's hamburgers you want, one-half pound for every person and then a little for good measure will usually come out about right. Fill up your picnic basket with crisp potato chips, soft buns, pickles, olives, mustard and perhaps some sliced cheese to melt over the steaming hamburgers. A case of cokes, if there's any means of transportation, will hit the spot after a session of baseball.

Picnic grounds around Iowa State are unlimited. You may be feeding in the same pasture with a wild bull, but more than likely any spot you pick is safe. The North Woods, of course, has the fame and reputation of being the haven of picnickers. But if notoriety frightens you away, the third trestle, which is just where it sounds, when following the railroad tracks southwest, is just a little less populated on a May evening.