



The Labor Day Weekend is upon us and that means summer 2006 is drawing to a close! It certainly seemed to slip by quickly! Labor Day was first observed in September of 1882 as an observance honoring working people. It became a national holiday in 1894. Most people spend it with family and friends relaxing and often attend a parade and picnic or cook-out. You can do the traditional steak or burgers but how about something a bit more creative and also very healthy? Here are some possible recipes to consider.

Perhaps start with a wonderful Grilled Tandoori Chicken using a yogurt based marinade <http://www.foodfit.com/recipes/recipe.asp?rid=740> or Grilled Chicken Breasts with Spicy Peach Glaze. Roasted Potatoes with Garlic and Herbs are always a treat <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/healthy-recipes/NU00429> And squeeze in some veggies and fiber with Warm Coleslaw with Honey Dressing! <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/healthy-recipes/NU00354> or a Black Bean, Fresh Corn and Red Pepper Salad <http://www.foodfit.com/recipes/recipe.asp?rid=1410>. For satisfying that sweet tooth and also racking up a fruit serving, go for juicy and sweet watermelon or a fruit-based dessert using whole grains such as Peach Crumble <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/healthy-recipes/NU00419>

More labor Day menu ideas at <http://allrecipes.com/advice/coll/entertain/features/laborday.asp>

Food Safety is always a concern with gatherings and outdoor eating. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

For those planning a picnic or cooking out, remember to keep hot food hot and cold food cold, and wash hands frequently with soap and warm water before handling food. Use alcohol-based preparations if soap and water not readily available. In addition:

- Refrigerate or keep cool cooked foods that are not served promptly.
- Cook meat and poultry thoroughly. For hamburgers, be sure to cook until the center of the meat reaches 155 degrees Fahrenheit or until the juices run clear.
- Throw away food items, like potato salad, if it has been sitting out for more than two hours.
- Separate raw meat and poultry from other foods.
- Serve leftovers very cold (directly from the refrigerator) or very hot (heated to 165 degrees F or higher).

If you develop symptoms, such as vomiting or diarrhea, you could have a food-borne illness. Symptoms can appear anywhere from 30 minutes to two weeks after eating contaminated food. Most often, however, people get sick within four to 48 hours.

Labor Day can also be a time for extra activity and exercise! I really like what Wikipedia has to say about outdoor activities “Outdoor activities are practiced for the purposes of enjoying scenery and nature, relieving stress, finding peace in nature, enjoying life and relaxing.” Find something you enjoy and being active won’t seem like dreaded exercise but will be an activity you look forward to doing! This weekend leave the gym behind and make some time to get outdoors! Stretch yourself to try a new activity—perhaps a long bike ride, canoeing or kayaking (I tried that for the first time this summer and loved it!), hiking in a scenic spot such as nearby Ledges or a another state park. If you really want an adventure, check out the Iowa Outdoor Limited web page

<http://www.iowaoutdoorunlimited.com/content/> Here is a list of Iowa recreation areas to explore this weekend or on an upcoming fall weekend.

<http://www.recreation.gov/advancedsearch.cfm?states=IA> Fall is a great time to be outdoors with cooler temps and the changing landscape and foliage. For any outdoor activities, keep safety in the forefront of your mind!

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/public/press04/9.1.04b.htm>

With the coming of the fall or autumn season we see a new bounty of foods including apples, squash, pumpkin, cranberries, and soups of all kinds. Also with fall comes busy times with school activities, volunteer commitments and sports events (Go Cyclones!!) A good practice is to keep things on hand for quick meals or “pantry meals” using ingredients available in your kitchen. This can reduce the trips through the fast food drive through and help control the budget with fewer meals eaten out. Over the next few weeks, I will try to provide some recipes and resources for such meals. Keep in mind that a healthy meal does not have to be extravagant or gourmet in nature. It doesn’t have to require extensive preparation—healthy meals can be very simple food! The key is using healthy ingredients in the preparation!

Check out these ideas:

<http://allrecipes.com/advice/coll/all/articles/309P1.asp?adp=/backtoschool>
<http://allrecipes.com/advice/coll/all/articles/310P1.asp?adp=/backtoschool>
http://magazines.ivillage.com/goodhousekeeping/recipes/quick/articles/0,,284495_546548,00.html
<http://busycooks.about.com/cs/twentyorless/a/30minutemeals.htm>

Please note: With some of these recipes you will have to make healthy substitutions using ingredients with lower fat and sodium content.

If you really want some quick meals, check out the attached “Dinners on the Double” recipes!

I hope you all enjoy the last long weekend as we head into the fall season!

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