

Kick Off With Kebabs Camerota's Cupboard May 2014

Memorial Day is upon us, the traditional start of the summer season. Here are 3 recipes for kebabs to kick off the holiday weekend.

Spicy Chicken Thigh Kebabs

(Adapted from Mark Bittman's *How to Cook Everything*)

4 servings

This recipe will work well with any medium-dark meat, not only chicken thighs, but cubed turkey thighs and even sturdy fish such as swordfish or salmon. Serve with a green salad and/or your favorite fresh in season vegetables. It would go well with the vegetable kebabs in the recipe below.

1 to 1½ pounds boneless chicken thighs, rinsed and patted dry with paper towels

Minced zest and juice of 1 lime

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon reduced sodium soy sauce

2 tablespoons minced garlic

2 tablespoons minced cilantro leaves, plus more for garnish

1/3 teaspoon cayenne or to taste

2 tablespoons natural peanut butter

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

- Cut the chicken thighs into 1- to 1½ inch cubes. Mix together with all other ingredients and marinate (optional) in a large dish or bowl for at least 1 hour, refrigerated.
- Start a charcoal or wood fire or preheat a gas grill or broiler. The fire should be moderately hot. Remove the chicken from the marinade and boil the marinade for 1 minute. Thread the meat onto skewers and grill or broil about 4 inches from the heat source. Baste with the sauce and turn every 2 or 3

minutes until browned all over and cooked through. Remove a piece and cut it in half to check. Cook for a total of 8 to 12 minutes. Garnish and serve.

Festive Vegetable Kebabs

(from The Nutrition Council of Greater Cincinnati's *More Nutritious Still Delicious*)

2 servings (2 skewers per serving)

Nutrition information per serving (2 skewers

unmarinated vegetables): 138 calories; 6gm protein; 30gm carbohydrate; 5gm dietary fiber; <1gm fat; 0mg saturated fat; 0mg cholesterol; 23mg sodium

This nutritious dish combines antioxidants in the colorful peppers and lycopene in the tomatoes.

2 small to medium summer squash or zucchini

1 large onion

1 large red bell pepper

1 large yellow bell pepper

1 package (8 ounces) fresh whole mushrooms

8 small new potatoes

24 cherry tomatoes

1 bottle (16 fluid ounces) low fat salad dressing (not a creamy variety) or your favorite marinade

8 wooden or metal skewers (each 12 inches long)

- Wash and clean all vegetables. Cut squash, onion and peppers into chunks.
- Place in microwave-safe dish; microwave on high 2 to 3 minutes, until vegetables are tender crisp.
- Immediately place microwaved vegetables in a colander; rinse in cold water to cool quickly. Set aside.

- Pierce potatoes a few times with a fork. Cook in microwave for 3 to 4 minutes until slightly tender, Set aside.
- Place all vegetables in a large bowl; marinate for 30 minutes if desired in a low fat, non creamy salad dressing. Or use your favorite marinade.
- Soak wooden skewers in water while vegetables are marinating.

To cook vegetables:

- Skewer vegetables alternating types and colors on soaked wooden skewers or metal skewers. Reserve marinade.
- Grill skewered vegetables for 6 to 10 minutes turning 2 to 3 times as needed.
- Use reserved marinade to baste vegetables during grilling for added flavor.

Cypriot Chicken Kebabs

(from AICR - American Institute for Cancer Research)

4 servings

Nutrition per serving: 200 calories; 8g total fat (<1g sat. fat); 10g carbohydrate; 21g protein; 3g dietary fiber; 105mg sodium

The final recipe is a variation on the theme above which pairs fresh spring and summer produce like zucchini, red bell peppers and cherry tomatoes that are full of nutrition and flavor. It combines a simple marinade with an eastern Mediterranean mint dressing. Serve with a simple garden salad.

Kebabs

12 ounces chicken breast, boneless, skinless, cut into 12 even pieces

1 zucchini, cut into 8 slices

1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 8 pieces

8 cherry tomatoes

Marinade

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

1 teaspoon Dijon or spicy brown mustard

½ teaspoon dried oregano

2 cloves garlic minced

2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Dressing

12 fresh mint leaves

1 cup frozen peas, cooked

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

1 clove garlic, minced

¼ teaspoon cumin

Juice of one lemon

- Whisk together marinade ingredients and set aside 1 tablespoon for basting later. In shallow dish, cover chicken with marinade until well coated. Cover and marinate in refrigerator for at least 2 hours.
- Using 4 kebab skewers, arrange 3 pieces of chicken and 2 pieces each of zucchini, pepper and tomatoes per skewer. For easier grilling, start and end each skewer with chicken.
- Coat grill lightly with oil to prevent sticking. Place skewers on medium-hot grill. Turn frequently and brush with reserved marinade. Cook for 18-25 minutes or until juices run clean. Cooking time will depend on size of chicken pieces and temperature.
- In the meantime, for dressing, place ingredients in food processor or blender. Puree and set aside.
- After removing kebabs from grill, let stand 5 minutes. Serve with dressing on side.