



SUMMERTIME IS **GRILL TIME**

On the trail
of the
perfect
Summer dinner.

BY RENA PERKINS

Summertime in northern Vermont: often fleeting, but that makes it somehow sweeter. The snow has melted and the springtime mud season has passed, and everyone is ensconced in warm weather activities in the Green Mountains. And when the family gets back from a long day of hiking, swimming and hanging out in the outdoors, what better way to unwind than firing up the grill and feasting as the sun sets.

When you think grilling, certain locales come to mind: Memphis, Tennessee with its World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, or coastal Australia for “shrimp on the barbie.” But right here near Smugglers’ Notch can be found some of the freshest and tastiest grillables around. The key to finding the best things to throw on your grill is shopping locally at any of the farms, farm stands and retailers in Jeffersonville, Stowe, Johnson and beyond.

In the thrall of a lazy Summer here in northern Vermont, it’s easy to become inspired to put together the perfect Lamoille County grilled feast. As you set out to scour the countryside for ingredients, you’ll find that you don’t have to go very far to find world class meats, dairy products and veggies, nor will you have any problem getting the locals to talk about their favorite recipes and grilling secrets.



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Bruce Macmillan



For deliciously smoky corn on the cob, soak the ears in water for at least an hour so that you can throw them right on the grill still in their husks

grill time continued ...

Central to a great barbecue is the perfect burger, and central to the perfect burger is Boyden beef. Boyden beef is raised on-site at the Boyden Farm in Cambridge and can be found at numerous local restaurants, shops (including the Smugglers' Country Store), farm stands, and even the cafeterias at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington. In addition to their farming business, Mark and Lauri Boyden hold events at the sprawling, picturesque farm throughout the Summer featuring music and other festivities; this Summer they will host their first grill-off (Aug. 14th). Also on the premises is the Boyden Valley Winery, which produces a large variety of acclaimed wines made from grapes and fruit grown in Vermont.

There are numerous local cheeses to satisfy any taste or whim. Probably the best known of Vermont cheesemakers is Cabot. In addition to the widely available cheddars, Cabot produces a cloth bound cheddar that is aged in the cellars of Jasper Hill Farm in Greensboro. Jasper Hill also produces a line of cheeses including a blue cheese that has won rave reviews from such publications as *The New Yorker* and *The San Francisco Chronicle*, and shares its unique aging cellars with several other Vermont cheesemakers aside from Cabot. Any of these cheeses will be an excellent addition to your grilled meal, whether melted on a burger, perched atop a cracker before the meal, or paired with fresh fruit and berries between courses.

For unrivaled fresh, organic vegetables and berries, stop by the farm stand at Foote Brook Farm in Johnson. Owned and operated by Tony and Joie Lehouillier, Foote Brook ships produce to restaurants and stores all over the East Coast, but those of us lucky enough to be in the area get to sample their fresh veggies at our leisure. Foote Brook's vegetables are certified organic, and another great thing about Foote Brook is their selection. Along with the old standbys such as tomatoes, corn and salad greens, you'll find a huge variety of bell and hot peppers, different and unique types of squash, and maybe some things that you haven't even heard of (kohlrabi, anyone?). And if you're not sure how to prepare something that you'd like to bring home, the staff, many of whom have actually harvested the veggies themselves, can give you some pointers.

Funny how the perfect getaway brings you right back to what matters most... *you and your family together.*



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For dessert, fresh berries are a simple and refreshing choice. At Valley Dream Farm, right around the corner in Cambridge, you can pick your own strawberries or, if you are less ambitious, buy a couple of quarts at the farm stand. Blueberries also are available later in the Summer. Valley Dream Farm operates as a Community Supported Agriculture farm, or CSA, with local families buying a Summer's worth of veggies distributed by the week. The CSA is a fixture of Vermont summertime culture, and is a true win-win situation; farmers have guaranteed business throughout the Summer, and patrons get the freshest in-season vegetables along with the knowledge that they are supporting their community's economy. Small guests of Smugglers' Notch Resort enjoy the particular benefits of a CSA at *TREASURES* Child Care Center, where CSA produce is served for kids' meals. As with Foote Brook, Valley Dream is a family run farm and stand, staffed with people knowledgeable about produce.

No barbecue is complete without the right beverage, and Lamoille County has plenty to offer in that department. If your taste runs to microbrews, Rock Art Brewery in Morrisville produces several flavors to satisfy any beer aficionado. Their Whitetail Ale, a light, hoppy brew, and the Ridge Runner, a "mild barley wine," are their most widely recognized offerings, but they have seasonal and other specialty beers available at any given time. There is truly something for every taste.



Upon returning to your grill with your groceries, start to prepare your ingredients. For deliciously smoky corn on the cob, soak the ears in water for at least an hour so that you can throw them right on the grill still in their husks, making for a crunchy yet juicy piece of corn that needs no butter or salt.

Now, on to the burgers: for grilling tips, take a page from Chad Hanley who serves up some of the best food on the mountain right down the road from Smugglers' at the Brewski Restaurant. Chad is also well known as a grilling pro; he knows just how to get the best from your burger.

First, he says that in order to achieve a moist burger, mix a liquid, such as Worcestershire sauce or even beer, into the meat before forming it into patties. Then, sprinkle the burgers with salt and pepper before putting them on a hot grill to sear them and seal in the juices. Once they are seared, lower the heat; Hanley suggests having a hot side and a cool side on the grill, which can even be done with charcoal. Lastly, always remember that your burger will continue to cook after it's removed from the heat, so take that into consideration when you are trying to achieve that perfect medium-rare. For this reason, Hanley recommends that you don't cook your burger past medium-well; a burger that comes off the grill at medium-well will keep cooking to become well-done, but a burger that is cooked right up to well-done is going to end up dry and overdone.



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grill time continued ...

If you decide to get creative with your burgers, try this: mix a bit of Rock Art beer in with the beef, then make eight small patties. Make a depression in four of the patties, and press slabs of blue cheese and some crumbled bacon into each indentation. Cover these with the other four patties and form each into one patty, then grill to your preferred doneness. The end result is a deliciously moist burger with a molten bacon blue cheese center. Topped with fresh tomato and onion slices, it's a gourmet meal on a bun.

So, as you relax in post grilling bliss, reflect on the origins of your meal and revel in the knowledge that your feast has not only delighted you and your family, but has also contributed to the local economy and educated you about the vital Vermont community. And maybe Memphis does have a great reputation for barbeque, but now you know that it's got nothing on northern Vermont!

Rena Perkins has worked at Smuggs for many seasons as a member of the Ski Patrol, Snow Sport University, the Flower Crew, and the Hotline. She is a frequent contributor to Explore Smuggs.

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Fresh Veggie & Herb Salad

This recipe provided by Joie Lehouillier of Foote Brook Farm incorporates summer's tastiest herbs and vegetables, which can be purchased at Foote Brook's farm stand in Johnson. Joie says that the recipe can easily be adjusted with substitutions of different vegetables throughout the season.

Ingredients

- 6 ounces sugar snap peas, trimmed, cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 2 2/3 cups orzo pasta
- 1 1/4 cups cubed tomatoes (cherry tomatoes are great but use your favorite!)
- 3/4 cup cubed peeled cucumber
- 1/2 cup matchstick cut carrots
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh mint
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped lemon peel
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped Kalamata olives

Dressing

- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon of lemon zest.
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 cup olive oil

Preparation

For Salad:

Bring large pot of salted water to boil. Add sugar snap peas; cook 1 minute. Using slotted spoon, transfer peas to strainer. Rinse with cold water and drain. Add orzo to same pot. Boil until tender but still firm to bite, about 8 minutes. Drain and cool. Place orzo in large bowl. Mix in sugar snap peas, tomatoes, cucumber, green onions, parsley, mint, feta, olives and lemon peel. Season with salt and pepper.

For Dressing:

Combine lemon juice, lemon zest and garlic in medium bowl. Gradually whisk in olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Combine salad and dressing and refrigerate for an hour.

Enjoy!

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