



Sadly the recent weather has not exactly been barbecue friendly, but I'm remaining positive for more summer sun over the next few weeks. So in this month's newsletter we're looking at a few ways to help make a barbecue not only absolutely delicious but a bit healthier too.

Now it's just fingers crossed for the sun!

*With very best wishes,
Hannah and the Project Food team*

Focus on...how to have a healthier barbecue

Most of us really enjoy a barbecue when the weather is good - and some of us even when it's not so good! But we can often get stuck with the standard sausage and burger in bun options which are often high in salt and saturated fat with few other nutrients. By thinking of your BBQ food a little bit differently, you'll find it easier to make healthier choices.



Think about the meat you're going to be cooking

By using leaner cuts of meat you'll reduce the saturated fat in your meal. Chicken or fish are great healthy choices but if you really enjoy a sausage or burger, then have a look at the ingredients - generally the fewer there are, the better. And try to stick to eating just one sausage!

And just because you're using leaner meat/fish doesn't mean you need increase the oil-keep an eye on it when it's on the BBQ and turn regularly to avoid sticking.

Marinating your meat

This can really help to keep it moist and add lots of flavour. Shop bought marinades can be high in salt, and even sugar, so making your own will not only be healthier but also means that you can use the herbs and spices that you most enjoy. A simple marinade can be made with a crushed garlic clove, a good squeeze of lemon juice (add the zest too if you like), olive oil and some chopped fresh or dried herbs. Rub into the meat, cover and leave in the fridge for an hour or two for the flavours to develop. You can leave overnight if you have the time.



You can then adapt the marinade to your own tastes...try adding a teaspoon each of ground cumin and paprika for a Spanish feel. Or for an Asian flavour, swap the lemon for lime and add chopped (or dried) chilli and use chopped fresh coriander as your herb.

Up the veg!

There are lots of ways that you can do this at a BBQ – in fact it's the perfect way to enjoy lots of the delicious summer veg and salads that are available at the moment. Try chopping peppers, courgettes, red onion or aubergines into chunks and threading onto a skewer with a few pieces of your marinated chicken. The veg really caramelises on the BBQ which makes it extra delicious.



Make lots of salads

There are loads to choose from but, really, the world's your oyster! We've got loads of recipes at Project Food, so if you'd like some inspiration, get in touch. Including ingredients such as lentils, chickpeas and bulghur wheat makes the salads more substantial and therefore more filling meaning that you're less likely to go in for that third sausage! It also means that they contain more fibre.



A simple green salad is a great accompaniment to a BBQ, and by making your own dressing you'll reduce the sugar and salt which are often found in high quantities in shop bought dressings. One part acid to three parts oil is the general rule. A simple dressing can be made by mixing together one tablespoon of lemon juice and three of olive oil and adding some black pepper. You can also include a little mustard too to thicken and make it into a French style dressing.

Healthy food swaps

We've talked about making salads and choosing leaner cuts of meat and fish, but you can also make other food swaps in order to make your BBQ healthier. Try swapping a white roll for a wholemeal one, adding slices of tomato and lettuce to your burger too. And when you're making salads, choose wholegrains and lots of vegetables to increase your fibre intake. Instead of a white pasta or rice salad, try using lentils (in our salad recipe below—a favourite here at Project Food) or bulgur wheat. Roasted peppers, courgettes, aubergines and onions make a really colourful and filling salad, full of fibre and vitamins.



Our recipe this month is a delicious chicken and veg kebab with couscous—see enclosed sheet.