

Cherries!

Quick-pickling the fruit adds depth of flavor to this speedy hors d'oeuvre. Recipe on page 91.

Peak Performance

The healthiest, tastiest way to eat:
Enjoy farm-stand favorites at their prime, then kiss them good-bye until next summer.

By Cheryl Sternman Rule

With these four summer beauties—tomatoes, peaches, corn, and cherries—the wait for the warmth is worth it. When they're brought in from afar off-season, quality suffers.

Corn, for example, can quickly lose sweetness as it spends time in transit and its sugars convert to starch. Tomatoes may be picked too early or gassed with ethylene to withstand handling.

Cherries reach their max sugar levels during their last few days on the tree but are often harvested before that time if they have a long way to travel.

And a truly ripe peach is fleeting—and perishable!—according to fruit expert Andy Mariani of Andy's Orchard in Morgan Hill, California. They're bred to look perfectly colored regardless, he says, so your only sure bet is to go local in the summertime.

The season is short, so cherish its gifts. These fast and easy recipes highlight the unmistakable taste of fresh, sun-grown goodness.

Tomatoes!

A bit sweet, a bit savory, this juicy salad is 100 percent quenching on a warm night.

TOMATO-MELON SALAD

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

Per serving: 50 cal, 0 g fat, 12 g carbs, 5 mg sodium, 2 g fiber, 2 g protein

In a salad bowl, combine 2 cups halved cherry tomatoes, 2 cups seeded cucumber half-moons, 2 cups watermelon balls, and ¼ cup thinly sliced red onion. Toss with 2 teaspoons thick, aged balsamic vinegar. Let stand 5 minutes, then sprinkle with leaves from 1 sprig tarragon and cracked black pepper to taste.



**LETTUCE CUPS
WITH CHICKEN AND
PEACH SALSA**

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

*Per serving: 100 cal, 3 g fat (0.5 g sat),
7 g carbs, 75 mg sodium, 1 g fiber,
12 g protein*

In a bowl, whisk 2 tablespoons lime juice, 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, and ½ teaspoon smoked paprika. Season with sea salt and black pepper. Add 3 thinly sliced peaches, ½ cup thinly sliced red onion, 1 tablespoon minced jalapeño, and 2 cups cooked shredded chicken. Toss well. Divide among 8 leaves of butter lettuce and garnish with fresh cilantro.

Peaches!

Fresh, light, and zingy, this dish offers a huge flavor punch with minimal calories.



Corn!

Grilling lends beautiful char marks and irresistible smokiness to this sweet, simple veggie.

GRILLED CORN AND EDAMAME SUCCOTASH

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

Per serving: 150 cal, 7 g fat (1 g sat), 18 g carbs, 60 mg sodium, 3 g fiber, 5 g protein

Prepare grill for cooking at 400°F to 450°F, or heat a grill pan. Set 6 stripped ears of corn; 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and halved; and ½ yellow onion, peeled, on a baking sheet. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, season with sea salt and black pepper, and rub to coat. Transfer to grill and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, turning several times, until dark grill marks appear. Cool. Meanwhile, boil 1 cup frozen, shelled edamame; let cool. In a serving bowl, whisk 1 tablespoon olive oil with 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar. Dice bell pepper and onion, and cut kernels from corn cobs. Transfer pepper, onion, and corn to the serving bowl. Add edamame and toss. Season with salt, pepper, and 3 thinly sliced basil leaves.



CHERRY AND GOAT-CHEESE CROSTINI

MAKES 24 PIECES

Per piece: 80 cal, 2.5 g fat (1 g sat), 13 g carbs, 135 mg sodium, 1 g fiber, 3 g protein

Set oven rack five inches from the broiler. In a bowl, toss 2 cups cherries (stemmed, pitted, and halved) with 1½ teaspoons red wine vinegar, ¼ teaspoon sea salt, and ¼ teaspoon sugar. Let stand 10 minutes. Meanwhile, brush 24 baguette slices (¾-inch thick, from a 12-ounce baguette) with 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil. Broil until just golden around the edges, about 90 seconds. Cool. Spread with ½ cup goat cheese. Spoon cherry mixture onto crostini, dividing equally. Garnish with 3 thinly sliced sage leaves.

More Delish Dishes to Try

Broiled Tomatoes with Pistachio-Olive Bread Crumbs

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

Per serving: 270 cal, 21 g fat (2 g sat), 16 g carbs, 580 mg sodium, 3 g fiber, 5 g protein

Set oven rack five inches from the broiler and line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. In a food processor, combine 1 cup small, pimento-stuffed green olives, 1 cup unsalted pistachios, and ½ cup panko bread crumbs. Process until combined, 15 to 20 seconds. Slice three 8-ounce beefsteak tomatoes to ½-inch thickness and lay slices on the baking sheet. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, then pack olive mixture on top, dividing evenly. Broil until topping is browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.

Grilled Peaches with Greek Yogurt and Gingersnaps

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

Per serving: 190 cal, 5 g fat (1 g sat), 29 g carbs, 70 mg sodium, 2 g fiber, 7 g protein

Prepare grill for cooking at 400°F to 450°F, or heat a grill pan. Halve and pit 4 peaches. In a small bowl, whisk 1 tablespoon bourbon, 1 tablespoon brown sugar, and ½ teaspoon ground ginger. Whisk in 2 teaspoons vegetable oil. Lightly brush bourbon mixture onto cut sides of peaches. Grill peaches, cut sides down (be cautious; bourbon may flare), for 2 to 4 minutes, until dark grill marks appear. Top each half with ¼ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt and a crushed gingersnap cookie.

Mini Corn-Muffin Shortcakes with Plums and Vanilla Crème Fraîche

MAKES 12 PIECES

Per piece: 100 cal, 4.5 g fat (2.5 g sat), 14 g carbs, 55 mg sodium, 1 g fiber, 2 g protein

Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat 12 cups of a mini-muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray. In a medium bowl, whisk ¼ cup flour, ½ cup medium-grind cornmeal, a scant ½ teaspoon baking powder, and ¼ teaspoon baking soda. In a separate bowl, whisk 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled, with 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, 2½ tablespoons 2% fat Greek yogurt, and 1 egg. Scrape the wet ingredients into the dry and whisk to combine. Fold in ½ cup fresh corn kernels. Divide batter among muffin cups, bake for about 14 minutes, until golden, then cool. Slice off muffin tops, then place both tops and bottoms on a platter, cut sides up. In a small bowl, whisk 5 tablespoons crème fraîche with ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract. Dollop equal amounts onto all 24 muffin surfaces. Dice 1 large plum, sprinkle pieces over the bottoms only, then gently replace the tops at an angle and drizzle with ¼ cup agave nectar.

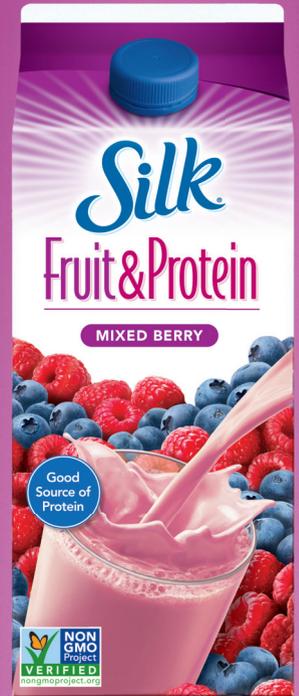
Cherry-Hazelnut Tabbouleh

MAKES 6 SERVINGS

Per serving: 210 cal, 12 g fat (1 g sat), 25 g carbs, 40 mg sodium, 6 g fiber, 5 g protein

Place ¾ cup quick-cooking bulgur in a large bowl. Cover with 1 cup boiling water and juice of 1 lemon. Let stand until liquid is completely absorbed. Stir in 2 cups fresh mint leaves, finely chopped; 2 cups pitted, halved fresh cherries; ½ cup hazelnuts, toasted and chopped; and 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil. Toss to coat. Season with sea salt and black pepper to taste. ■

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