

Labor Day Recipes: End-of-Summer Festivities



With summer winding down, many will enjoy the final days of warm weather by spending some quality time outdoors this Labor Day holiday. For those planning a barbecue or picnic, you will want to be sure you treat your guest right with a few tasty treats.

According to the *Daily Meal*, not everyone needs to fire up the grill this Labor Day. Chef Big Shake of Shark Tank fame shares a Mediterranean-inspired recipe for those craving something new.

For a great side dish, Cohen recommends a fun alternative to the traditional salad.

Greek Quinoa Tomato Bowls.

3 tbsp. freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 tbsp. red wine vinegar

1/4 tbsp. dried oregano

1 tbsp. garlic paste

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 cup quinoa

2 cups red and yellow grape tomatoes,

1 cup pitted Kalamata olives

2 scallions thinly sliced
1 small red onion, diced
3 English cucumber,
diced
4 oz. feta cheese,
8 beefsteak tomatoes,

Combine lemon juice, vinegar, oregano, garlic and some salt and pepper in a small bowl. Add in the oil and let it sit while you prepare the salad.

Combine the quinoa, 2 cups of water, 1 teaspoon of salt and 1/4 teaspoon of pepper in a saucepan. Boil and cook for 15 minutes or until water is absorbed or quinoa is tender. Move to bowl and let it sit for five minutes.

Add tomatoes, olives, green onions, red onions, cucumbers, feta cheese, and dressing and toss to coat.

Place in refrigerator for at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours before serving. Fill tomatoes, arrange on platter and serve!

Eggplant Roll-Ups

For a fun appetizer, nutritionist personal trainer and exercise physiologist Franci Cohen has created a snack that's sure to please guests while they wait on their shrimp burger wraps.

2 medium long eggplants
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup ricotta cheese
1 cup pesto sauce
2 tbsp. lemon juice

Homemade Pesto (combine all in food processor):

2 cups packed fresh basil leaves
2 cloves garlic
1/3 cup pine nuts
2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
2 tbsp. lemon juice

Cut the eggplants lengthwise into 1/4-inch thick slices. Brush the eggplant slices with olive oil on both sides. Grill the eggplant slices in batches for 2 to 3 minutes on each side or until it is tender.

Let it set and cool.

In a bowl mix ricotta cheese, pesto and lemon. Then spread juice one the eggplant slice .

Roll up the eggplant slices, place on a plate seam-side down and serve.