

The York University Staff Association Health & Wellness News & Views

Can we please just have a little dance party celebrating the fact that summer is in full swing! And it's a hot one! (no complaining here). That means pool parties, beach days, pick up road hockey games and many impromptu outdoor hangs. Still dancing right? In that same breath you might hear me curse the mosquitoes and the sweating, well burning yourself on literally every surface in your car and the sweating, weeds taking over my "greenish" lawn and... the... sweating... In all seriousness, this time of year might be my favourite? From backyard BBQ's and relaxing underneath the shade tree, to my season long submersion into my beloved veggie garden, to days spent lounging on my inflatable flamingo... I could ramble on forever, (haha I promise I won't) I just LOVE Summer. With a Summer this HOT (still not complaining) the last thing you want to do is spend time in the kitchen. You also crave quick light foods to get you through the heat instead of large, heavy meals. Enter the quick Summer snack! These fast easy recipes are perfect for the lazy days of summer. I put together some of my favourite family approved snacks that are perfect for steamy Summer days. Best of all, they're way easier to whip together than chasing down the ice cream truck. Hope you enjoy!

Homemade Tomato Salsa Recipe



Ingredients

4 roma tomatoes, diced
1/2 cup diced onions - I used a sweet Vidalia onion
3 Serrano Chilies, or Red Chilies, seeded and finely chopped
1/4 cup freshly chopped cilantro (I usually double that)
1/2 tablespoon freshly minced garlic (I usually double that also)
The juice of 1/2 a lime
1 teaspoon kosher salt

Instructions

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Taste as you go and adjust the flavors as need.
I recommend refrigerating before using to allow the flavors to mingle and intensify.
Enjoy!

Mini Caprese Salad Skewers



Ingredients

One basket of grape tomatoes
One 12 ounce package of fresh mozzarella or small Bocconcini balls
One large bunch of fresh basil
Fleur de sel or Kosher salt (the fleur de sel adds a nice crunch)
Freshly ground pepper)
Finishing with quality extra virgin olive oil

Instructions

If not using Bocconcini - cut some of the cheese into 1/2 inch squares.
Cut stems off some of the basil and cut the spine out of the leaves.
Working one skewer at a time, cut a tomato in half, tear off and fold a piece of basil and place it against the cut side of the tomato, place a piece of cheese on top of the basil to sandwich between the cheese and the tomato.
Skewer with a toothpick and set aside on a serving dish.
Continue until you run out of tomatoes.
Lightly drizzle the skewers with olive oil, sprinkle the skewers with the salt and freshly ground pepper.
These can be prepared a few hours in advance and refrigerated, or they can be served immediately.
So easy. So tasty.

True to its name, watermelon is over 90% water. Freezing watermelon brings out the sweetness of the fruit, and the cool temperature reminds you to slow down while eating.

Frozen Watermelon



Ingredients:

Half of a seedless watermelon
Popsicle sticks

Instructions

Cut watermelon into half moon slices about 3/4 inch thick. Trim off the rind, poke off any pale seeds that are showing and then cut the slice into 3-4 triangles. Lay one triangle of watermelon on a cookie sheet. Slide a popsicle stick in at least halfway (I slide mine into the curved edge where the rind used to be but it doesn't really matter where you stick it as long as it goes at least halfway in and is completely surrounded by watermelon). Repeat with remaining watermelon until you have as many popsicles as you'd like (note that they can't be touching while they freeze or they become hard to break apart. So only make as many as you have space for on cookie sheets in your freezer). Freeze on the cookie sheet for 3-4 hours, until frozen through. Eat or wrap watermelon popsicles individually in plastic wrap and return them to the freezer where they'll keep for 5-7 days.

You know summer's the perfect time to switch to flip-flops, but did you know it's also the right time to eat more fruit. ? Being outdoors more often—and sweating—ups your risk for health problems such as dehydration, skin sensitivities, and vitamin and mineral deficiencies. Summers coolest, juiciest and healthiest foods are fruit. You can use them in salads, desserts smoothies, and even salsa. (Add some juicy mango to the homemade salsa) Not only is fruit refreshing, fruit is good for the stomach, propel weight loss and help prevent many common health problems such as cancer, high blood pressure, heart disease and the common cold and flu. Need I say more?

Fruit Kabobs



This is a fun party snack & pretty self explanatory. Simply cut up your favorite fruits and stack them on a kabob stick. Easy and impressive!

Summer Fruit Bruschetta



Ingredients

1 loaf French bread, cut into thin slices
10 strawberries, diced into small pieces
3 peaches, diced into small pieces
2 tablespoons raspberry white balsamic vinegar (or regular balsamic vinegar)
1 cup fresh basil leaves, cut into small pieces
1 log cranberry goat cheese

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350F, or place on a BBQ pan & get outside! Place French bread on a baking sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes until fully toasted. In a medium sized bowl, combine strawberries, peaches, and balsamic. Spread Cranberry Goat cheese onto each slice of French bread. With a slotted spoon, place fruit mixture on each piece of French bread.

Oh so yummy!

This easy, cheesy appetizer will add a burst of color, and a whole lot of healthy, deliciousness to your day!

Healthy Hummus Stuffed Peppers



Ingredients

Your favorite homemade or store bought hummus
sweet mini peppers, or go big with bell peppers!
minced red onion
sliced grape tomatoes
fresh parsley
crumbled feta cheese Feeling Feisty? top with a drizzle of
your favourite olive oil and/or balsamic.

Instructions

Slice the top off of each pepper and discard.
Next slice each pepper lengthwise.
Top with hummus and all your toppings.
And scarf 'em down!

In the summer months, the last thing you want is to stir a pot over a hot stove or tuck into a steaming bowl of soup. While this has been one of the warmest summers in quite some time and I feel like I've spent most of this summer as a "sweaty hot mess". (still not complaining) It's okay though, when you have an arsenal of healthy light recipes to get you through it.



Happy Summer!

August 2016