

Cooking with the Club

by our own
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Pigskin Time Means Open the Tailgate and *Down the Hatch!*

■ **Let the games begin! And I'm not talking about the Olympics. I'm talking about the upcoming college and professional football seasons.**

The football players have spent months lifting weights, spending long, grueling hours at training camps, and developing bodies and minds. They do this to face what is to come from ferociously fan-filled stadiums, horrendous weather conditions and the agony of defeat. Fans watch their favorite games at home, and those who tailgate in nearby stadium parking lots do so just to grab the sounds of competition roaring out of the brims of stadiums.

Much like the football players, millions of fans spent their months lifting weights so that they could easily transport oversized ribeye steaks and marinated chicken breasts from the refrigerators to the grills. Fans have spent many grueling hours lifting those barbecue forks and tongs – developing their bodies and minds. They do this to face what is to come: tailgate food!

But before you adorn yourself with your chef uniform, there are a few things that you need to know before you head outside with your delectable football foods. Do these few things and everyone will have a grand day of football gazing and grazing. Don't and you and all who follow you to the grill will have endured something no football player could prepare to defeat. The melodic thuds of the Stanford marching band you say? No, it's the painful experiences of food-borne illnesses.

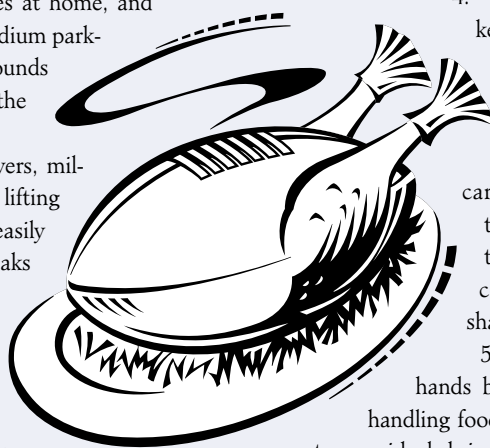
The only way to beat it is to make sure it doesn't happen from the start. Preparation is key. Here are a few tips how:

1. The microorganisms that cause food poisoning thrive at temperatures between 40

degrees and 140 degrees F. Don't leave prepared foods in that danger zone more than two hours. When the outdoor temperature rises above 90 degrees F, the time limit is one hour. Discard any leftovers.

2. Wait until just before leaving home to pack chilled foods in an insulated cooler, and make sure you have plenty of ice or ice packs to surround them.

3. Take two coolers — one for drinks, the other for perishable foods. That way, warm air won't reach the perishables each time someone reaches for a beverage.



4. In hot weather, keep the cooler in the air-conditioned passenger compartment of the car, not in the trunk. At the tailgate, set the cooler in the shade.

5. Wash your hands before and after handling food. Soap and hot water are ideal; bring along a jug of water, a bar of soap, and paper towels, in case none are available at the tailgate site. Disposable moist towelettes are an easy-to-carry alternative.

6. Wrap uncooked chicken and meats in separate tightly sealed bags or containers, and put them in the bottom of the cooler. Cook them within one hour of leaving home.

7. When grilling, use a meat thermometer to be sure meats and poultry reach a safe temperature. Cook chicken breasts to 170 degrees F; other poultry to 180 degrees F; beef, lamb, and veal steaks and roasts to 145 degrees F for medium-rare and 160 degrees F for well done.

Here are some of my favorite tailgate recipes. Enjoy, and may the best tailgate feast win!

Hook'em Horns Black Olive Dip

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large can pitted black olives
- 2 large tomatoes, chopped
- 3-4 green onions, chopped
- 3-4 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped
- 3 T. olive oil
- 1 1/2 T. vinegar
- 1 clove garlic or 1 t. garlic salt or powder
- Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Chop green onions and tomatoes by hand. Chop olives, jalapeno and garlic in food processor. Mix together. Let stand 3-4 hours before serving. Drain juice. Serve with tostada chips.



Titan's Bourbon Chicken

INGREDIENTS

- 1-1/2 lbs. chicken breast halves, boneless and skinless
- 2 T. olive oil
- 2 T. Dijon mustard
- 1/4 C. bourbon whiskey
- 2 T. red wine vinegar
- 2 T. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 T. soy sauce
- 1/4 C. brown sugar
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Sea salt
- Black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Combine olive oil and next 8 ingredients. Add chicken, cover and refrigerate for minimum of 2 hours, and preferably overnight. Remove chicken from marinade. Discard marinade. Place chicken on grill over medium heat. Grill uncovered for 15-20 minutes, turning once.



Cheese Head Halftime Dip

INGREDIENTS

- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 8-oz. package light cream cheese
- 3 oz. (1 1/2 cups) sun-dried tomatoes, rehydrated (cover with boiling water for 2 minutes and drain)
- 3 teaspoons pesto, prepared or homemade
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Crackers

DIRECTIONS

Chop garlic in the food processor. Add cream cheese, tomatoes, pesto and Parmesan. Process until well combined. Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle with additional Parmesan if desired. Serve with assorted crackers.

Makes 10 servings.



Fighting Irish Spinach Dip

INGREDIENTS

- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 1 container (16 ounces) sour cream
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 package (1.4 ounces) vegetable soup recipe mix
- 1 can (8 ounces) water chestnuts, drained and chopped (optional)
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 2 cups shredded Swiss cheese
- 1 round loaf bread, rye or plain

DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, stir together spinach, sour cream, mayonnaise, soup mix, water chestnuts (if using), green onions and cheese. Mix well. Cover and chill 2 hours.

Before serving, cut top of bread, removing bread from center to form bowl for dip. Reserve crusty lid from bread. Spoon dip into hollowed bread and use lid to cover.

