

How to Celebrate the Fourth of July & Watermelon & Feta Salad

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It ought to be celebrated by pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations from one end of this continent to the other.

... John Adams, 2nd President of the United States

Hip hip hooray! It's Independence Day!

How will you spend it? Stretched out on the beach? Waving a flag along a parade route? Or wandering through an historic site? A few ambitious souls will probably read or reread the Declaration of Independence.

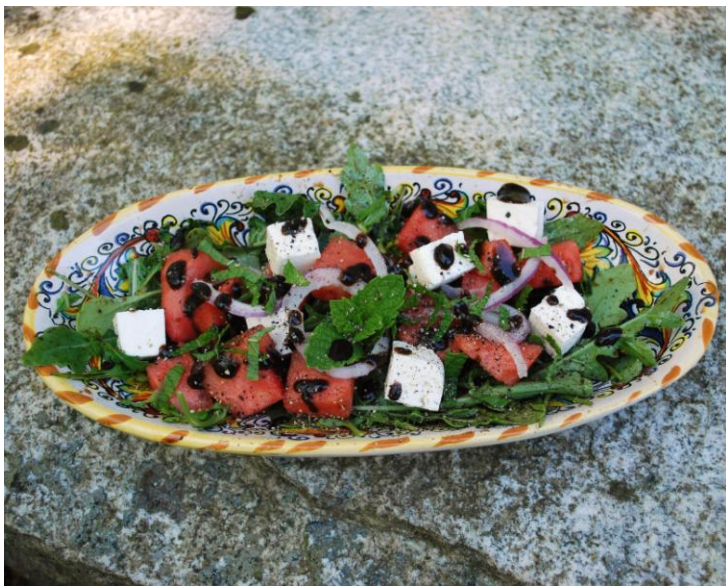
If you still haven't figured out what to do with yourself, well here are a few ideas:

1. While my favorite beach is just around the corner on Pleasant Lake, you could take a trip to the ocean. Take a long walk in the sand, feel the wind in your hair and body surf the waves. Before you head home, stop for a lobster roll or some fried clams.
2. If you don't want to lie around a beach all day, how about a small town Fourth? Any small town will probably do but Andover, New Hampshire really knows how to throw a party. The flea market is famous and there is a festive parade (beware of politicians – it's an election year). Don't forget the chicken barbeque and fireworks explode after dark.
3. Or you could head into Boston and walk the Freedom Trail, maybe share a little history with a child or grandchild. Chances are good, it's been years since you visited the Old State House, Faneuil Hall or the Bunker Hill monument.
4. If you are down in Boston, stay over for the Boston Pops Concert and Fireworks on the Esplanade. If you have never been, it is a lot of fun and the fireworks are spectacular.
5. Maybe it's been awhile since you gathered family and friends together. If that is the case, stay close to home and host a cookout. Make an afternoon and/or evening of it. Depending on the size of your yard, organize a game of soccer or softball, croquet or volleyball ... any or all! Keep it simple and traditional with hotdogs and hamburgers and lots of fresh salads. You can bake a happy birthday America cake or take it easy and serve thick slices of watermelon for dessert.
6. If you are hosting a cookout, I suppose you might consider a hotdog eating contest. Nathan's infamous contest began in 1916 at Coney Island in Brooklyn. The first contest may or may not have been devised to settle the score between a small group of immigrants. When each claimed to be the most patriotic, overindulgence of the all-American hotdog was deemed a reliable proof. Or so the legend goes.
7. Take a long bike ride and see how everyone else in the neighborhood and beyond is celebrating. Red, white and blue handlebar streamers are encouraged but not required.
8. Take in a game of America's favorite pastime. The Red Sox are on the west coast but the Fisher Cats are playing in Manchester.
9. Be happy you have the day off! Stay put, spend time with people you love and do close to absolutely nothing!



Have a wonderful holiday and bon appétit!

Watermelon & Feta Salad



The perfect salad for a red hot 4th of July! Enjoy!

Serves 8-10

1 small red onion, thinly sliced
 Balsamic vinegar
 Extra virgin olive oil
 About 8 ounces baby arugula
 Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
 About 8 cups 3/4-inch cubes seedless watermelon, cold
 About 8 ounces feta cheese, cut in 3/4 inch-cubes
 4 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

Soak the red onion in ice water for at least 30 minutes.

Put the arugula in a large bowl, using a ratio of 1:2 or 1:3, drizzle the arugula with enough vinegar and oil to lightly coat, season with salt and pepper and toss to combine. Transfer the arugula to a large platter.

Drain the onion and pat dry. Scatter the watermelon, onion and feta over the arugula, drizzle with balsamic glaze and sprinkle with mint and freshly ground pepper.

Balsamic Glaze

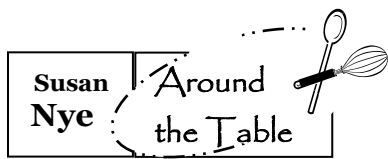
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
 3 tablespoons olive oil
 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
 1 teaspoon minced garlic
 Sea salt and freshly ground pepper

Bring the vinegar to a boil in small, heavy saucepan over medium heat and simmer until it is thick and reduced by half.

Transfer the vinegar to a bowl and cool to room temperature. Add the mustard and garlic and whisk to combine. Add the oil and whisk until smooth. Season with salt and pepper to taste and whisk to combine.

Cover and store any extra glaze in the refrigerator.





Another recipe from Susan Nye: Summer 20/Volume 302

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