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This year August brings us not one but two full moons. This bonus moon, popularly known as a Blue Moon, waxes and wanes every few years. While this windfall is welcome anytime, it is even more special in the final days of summer. What could be more romantic than watching a Blue Moon rise over the mountain? With cooler evenings, it sounds like a lovely excuse for a cuddle on the beach.

As if we needed an excuse for romance. With the September just days away, a little nostalgia for summer sweethearts-past may be

brewing. Away from the danger-filled social jungle (otherwise known as high school), summer was the perfect time for a first love. The pressure of cliques was easily ignored when you were away from the hallowed halls of high school. Cheerleaders were free to spend the summer with a nerd and bad boys could date a goodie-two-shoes like me.

With lots of free time and warm moonlit nights, a summer romance is extra special. Whether you were sweet sixteen (or just wishing you were) the romance probably faded within days (even hours) of leaving the Cape or lake. But somehow or other, sweet memories of those golden days and starry nights linger on.

Of course you could be among the few who married their summer sweetheart. It does happen. My parents didn't let their romance fade with the summer sun. I, on the other hand, did. Which is probably a good thing, I seem to remember hearing he ended up in jail somewhere. But that's another story.

What's the best way to celebrate the Blue Moon? Well, you could let out a long howl but I don't recommend it. Whether you were summer sweethearts or met on a cold winter day, the Blue Moon is the perfect opportunity to share a romantic evening with your true love. Consider it a Valentine gift in August. Here are a few ideas:

Share a picnic of special treats and watch the moonrise from your favorite beach or the backyard. Sip champagne and nibble caviar or wonderful pâté, cheeses and homemade bread. A sweet finish of fresh fruit, imported chocolates and more champagne sounds lovely. Heck, pizza and a six-pack works if the company is right.

Bring along your iPod or the boom box gathering dust in the back of the closet, hum if you have to, and dance.

Skinny dip ... and chase the cold away with a warm blanket and a snuggle.

Dance some more.

Snuggle some more.

Enjoy the final days of summer and bon appétit!



Susan

Chicken Liver Pâté

A delicious, homemade pâté will make your picnic special. (It is also great as an hors d'oeuvre at a cocktail party.) You can always buy some at your favorite gourmet shop but it is easy to make and simply delicious. Enjoy!



Makes about 1 cup

1 tablespoon butter
 1 small onion, chopped
 Dash hot pepper sauce
 1/2 pound chicken livers, trimmed, rinsed and patted dry
 1/4 cup chicken stock
 1/4 cup dry white wine
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 teaspoon minced fresh sage
 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
 1 tablespoon cognac
 1 tablespoon capers, drained
 2 teaspoons anchovy paste
 Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Heat the butter in a skillet over medium heat, add the onion and hot sauce and cook, stirring frequently until translucent, about 5 minutes. Raise the heat to medium-high, add the chicken livers, season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring a few times, until browned, about 5 minutes more. Add the garlic and cook, stirring frequently, for 1 minute more.

Add the stock, wine, sage and rosemary. Cook, stirring frequently, until about half of the liquid has cooked off, 2-3 minutes. Add the cognac, capers and anchovy paste. Stir well and cook for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and let the chicken livers cool in the pan for 10 minutes.

Put the chicken liver mixture in a food processor and process until almost smooth. Transfer the pâté to a serving bowl, cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Remove from the refrigerator about 30 minutes before serving. Serve with homemade bread, toasted if you like, or crackers.