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July & August

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....because summer should be fun and carefree!

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Visit the web at www.susannye.com

Contact Susan Nye at

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603/526 7319

Every summer I receive a well traveled email from at least one friend about men and barbecuing. This joke rapidly circulates as the weather warms and grills are dusted off and put into use. In a nut shell, the story recounts the division of labor that exists between men and women when making a summer cook-out a success. Women invite the guests, plan the menu, do the shopping, fix the appetizers, make the barbecue sauce, potato salad and coleslaw, bake the brownies, set the table and arrange the flowers. Just as the crowd's hunger peaks, men grab the perfectly marinated meat, tongs and long handled forks. They take a leisurely stroll over to the grill and cook. Based on their last minute effort at the grill, men are only too delighted to accept the applause and the credit for the success of the wonderful meal and party. Now I know there are lots of men out there who cook; so if this doesn't sound familiar, thank your lucky stars.



A few days ago I was watching the Today Show. It's part of my wake-up-and-check-in-with-the-outside-world routine. It's vacation time, time for summer celebrations and the show ran a story about girls and grilling. The cooking guru offered 10 tips for neophyte grillers. Tip number 6 was interesting; "Don't let the boys squeeze you out — you can do this and it's super-fun."

So here are my thoughts ladies: fun shmun. Let those boys squeeze you out. Don't hesitate; life is too short to refuse help. I'm all for sharing the load. For many years I have been pleased to accept the offers of manly men to grill chicken, steaks and humble hot dogs and hamburgers. And when none offer, I have had no trouble drafting one or two. Why do you think they call it manning the grill?



When I was growing up, cooking inside was women's work and the barbecue was a male-only domain. Not much has changed.

Whether it is myth or reality, there is a commonly held belief that all men love to grill. The theory is that men are attracted to grilling because fire is involved and fire equals danger. Any task where there is even a remote chance that a large tree or the garage could burn down; well that is a task just begging for a manly man. As far as I'm concerned, it's a good story and I'm sticking to it. Let the men get all smoky, I'm busy enough getting everything else on the table.

Over the years most if not all of my male friends and family have graciously jumped in to help and taken a turn or two at the grill. I

have yet to loose a single tree or garage.

Knowing that there is strength in numbers, I generally look for a few volunteers to cook. There may be a few short moments of hesitation, but before you know it, most if not all of the men have drifted over to the grill to assist. It gives them a good chance to swap stories and lies, talk sports and do a little male bonding. Grilling is a great ice-breaker. Whether you have a new in-law or your party includes a shy friend, hand them a pair of tongs, a few beers and a steak. They will fit in just fine with the rest of your grill masters and before you know it everyone will be best buddies.

Oh, and just a word of warning; if you use a gas grill never assume that your manly helpers will think to turn it off when they have finished cooking. Enjoy a summer full of cook-outs with family, friends and manly men,

Bon appétit!

Susan



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Grilled Salmon with Warm Sesame-Ginger Vinaigrette

Grilled salmon is an easy summer dinner. Make it a little special with an Asian-inspired vinaigrette. Enjoy!

Serves 6

2 - 2½ pounds salmon fillet
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
Olive oil
Warm Sesame-Ginger Vinaigrette (recipe follows)
Sesame seeds for garnish

1. Preheat grill to medium high.
2. Drizzle a little olive oil over the salmon and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
3. Grill the salmon skin side down for 10-12 minutes or until the fish reaches desired doneness. Do not overcook.
4. Spoon the vinaigrette over the fish, garnish with sesame seeds and serve.

Warm Sesame-Ginger Vinaigrette

1 tablespoon canola oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 inch piece of fresh ginger, finely grated or minced
4 scallions, thinly sliced
¼ teaspoon Thai chili flakes, or to taste
1 teaspoon honey
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
¼ cup dry white wine
1 tablespoon sesame oil

1. Sauté garlic, ginger, scallions and chili flakes in oil over medium heat for 2-3 minutes. Add honey, soy sauce, vinegar and wine; cook 1-2 minutes
2. Remove from heat and whisk in sesame oil.