

## Five Creative Summer Grilling Ideas

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While we know and love the charred, umami flavors that come from grilling a steak, there are plenty of other ways to make the most of the flame. Step up your cookout game this season with our guide on all the ways to get creative with grilling!

### BREAD

What's the best thing since sliced bread? Grilled bread. Grilling brings out the warm, yeasty flavors of bread creating a delicate crunch on the outside and soft chewiness on the inside. And if you already have the grill going anyways, nothing could be simpler than throwing on a few slices while you're at it!

Simply slice up a loaf of your favorite bread (we suggest a nice rustic bread with a hard crust) into 1/2 inch slices. Brush each slice with extra virgin olive oil. You can rub them with a little bit of raw garlic for extra flavor. Grill the bread over medium heat, about 2 to 3 minutes on each side or until it



starts to turn golden and grill marks appear.

Grilled bread works wonderfully when making bruschetta. Top with finely chopped tomatoes, garlic, and extra virgin olive oil, or use your favorite savory spreads.

### STONE FRUIT

If you think grilling ends after the main meal, think again. Grilled fruit, especially peaches and other stone fruits like apricots and nectarines, makes for a decadent post-cookout dessert that can be served on its own or dressed up with gelato or fresh cheese. And it couldn't be easier!

To prepare, simply halve and pit each stone fruit (don't peel!). Season with a light sprinkling of sea salt to accent the flavor. Heat your grill to medium-low and place each peach half on the grill. Cover and cook the peaches until they have lightly charred and softened, about 4 to 5 minutes per side. Serve warm with a scoop of lemon sorbetto, fior di latte gelato, or fresh mozzarella. Drizzle with high-quality balsamic vinegar for added decadence just before serving.

### PEPPERS

Grilling peppers only makes them sweeter, creating a beautiful nice charred skin that peels off to reveal a soft interior. What's more, is that you can grill just about any pepper, giving us a multitude of pepper possibilities.

The process is simple. If you're working with large peppers, like bell peppers, simply core and remove the seeds each one and cut into halves or quarters. Smaller peppers can be grilled whole. Brush the skins with extra virgin olive oil. place each pepper, skin side down, on the grill over medium heat. Cook until soft and the skins start to char and blister, about 10 minutes.

Remove from the grill and let cool. You can remove the skins, sprinkle with sea salt, and serve immediately, or you can save the peppers for sandwiches, salads, pasta and more.

### SALAD

Large, crisp greens such as Romaine or chicory lettuces (think: escarole, endive, and radicchio) hold up well to grilling and can easily be transformed into a flavorful, salad. Plus, by lightly charring the leaves over a hot flame, their bitter flavors are subdued.

The key to grilling lettuces and leaves is to consider how tough they are and adjust your cooking time and heat accordingly. Half or quarter the greens, then toss them in extra virgin olive oil, sea salt, and pepper until well coated. Place on the grill over high heat and cook until slightly charred on the outside, and soft on the inside.

Serve with toasted nuts, cheeses, and your favorite dressing – or try our recipe for Grilled Chicory Salad!

### POLENTA

An Italian classic, grilled polenta makes for a tasty cookout side dish as well as vegetarian-friendly option. They're best served in thick squares or triangles either on their own or topped with other grilled veggies or sauces.

We recommend cooking the polenta on the stovetop ahead of time and letting it cool in a square or rectangular casserole dish in the fridge before you're ready to grill. Then, cut into squares or triangles, brush lightly with olive oil, and place on a hot grill. Turning once with tongs, until the grilled polenta is crisp and seared with grill marks, about 4 to 5 minutes per side.



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