

# 13 fun and flavorful cookout recipes to make this Labor Day weekend

Say goodbye to summer with your favorite barbecue staples, seasonal sides and decadent desserts.

If you're not quite ready to say goodbye to summer, don't worry you're not alone. To help savor the tastes of the sunniest season, whip some of TODAY Food's favorite barbecue staples on Labor Day.

To help ease the menu-planning stress, here are 13 delicious recipes that are perfect for any backyard barbecue or small, [socially distanced gathering](#). From savory mains to delicious desserts, we've got you covered.

Want to create the perfect menu? Just pick one dish from mains, a dish from sides and one dessert — and [throw a few extra burgers on the grill](#), because why not? — and enjoy!

## Mains

### Cheesy Bacon-Wrapped Hot Dog

What's better than a hot dog wrapped in bacon? Probably nothing. This delightfully cheesy dish is also super easy to make. Use your favorite bacon for a smoky dog that will be a surefire hit with meat lovers.

### Green Chile Burger

Tomato and lettuce are so yesterday. Spice things up with this juicy burger topped with crumbled queso fresco, tangy pickled red onions and spicy green chile salsa.

### Grilled Butterflied Chicken with Oregano and Fennel Seeds

"I love grilling chicken under a brick," Glenn Harris, chef and co-owner of New York City restaurants Jane and The Smith, told TODAY Food. "(Grilling) cooks the meat perfectly evenly. You won't get some spots that are overcooked." Plus, the technique gets all of the skin extra crispy.

### Grilled Salmon and Zucchini Skewers

These healthy kebabs are an elegant addition to a cookout spread beyond hot dogs and hamburgers. Simply marinate the salmon in a combination of ginger, soy sauce, rice vinegar and sesame oil for 20 minutes. Then thread the pieces onto pre-soaked skewers and grill.

## **Brie Tomato Pasta**

For a simple summer pasta, actress Katherine Heigl tosses warm spaghetti with creamy brie cheese and freshly chopped tomatoes. Garlic and fresh basil infuse the dish with classic Italian aromas.

## **Sides**

### **Grilled Southeast Asian Street Corn**

Say bye-bye to plain old butter. A spicy coconut cream sauce, sweet and crispy shredded coconut flakes and fried scallions take grilled corn to delicious new heights.

### **Mac and Cheese Muffins**

Break out the muffin tin for these fun, unexpected and absolutely fabulous cheesy cupcakes. They're as easy to make as they are to eat. Plus, the fork-free dining experience is perfect for outdoor dining or beach parties.

### **Cobb Salad in a Crispy Bacon Cup**

Don't put away the muffin tin yet! Turn it upside down, then layer bacon slices on top of the cups and bake until the strips form delightfully crispy vessels for a fresh salad.

### **Vegan Creamy Avocado–Potato Salad**

Even people who love meat (and mayo!) will be obsessed with this delicious spin on the classic cookout side dish. Avocado blended with fresh dill, green onion and lemon juice creates a tangy, creamy dressing for the roasted potatoes and asparagus.

## **Desserts**

### **Campfire Bread Pudding**

Wondering what to do with all of those leftover hot dog buns? This is the answer! For an irresistible cookout dessert that will definitely yield some leftovers, just tear them up and coat them with a mixture of melted butter, eggs, sweetened condensed milk and vanilla extract.

### **Muffin Tin Fruit Pies**

"With these miniature versions of your favorite apple and peach pies, you can have all the juicy, fruity satisfaction of summer's bounty without the knowledge that, well, you know, you ate a whole pie," cookbook author Casey Barber said of her summery dessert.

### **Peach-Blueberry Skillet Cobbler**

Put that [cast-iron pan](#) to work with this irresistibly comforting dessert that combines two of summer's juiciest fruits. When you're ready to serve the cobbler, don't forget the [homemade vanilla ice cream](#).

### **Cherry Hand Pies**

We'll take pie any way we can get it but cutting the dough into hearts makes these delicious little treats even sweeter. Plus, they can be served warm or at room temperature.

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