

The background illustration depicts a whimsical city park scene. In the foreground, a man and a woman are having a picnic on a red blanket. The woman, with long red hair and wearing a purple dress, is on the left, holding a wine glass. The man, with short blonde hair and wearing a plaid shirt, is on the right, also holding a wine glass. Between them is a plate of watermelon and cucumbers, a bunch of grapes, and a small bottle. A large woven picnic basket sits to the right. The background features stylized buildings, including a tall, thin one with a cross, and a tree with white blossoms. The overall style is colorful and hand-drawn.

# THE URBAN PICNIC

BEING AN IDIOSYNCRATIC  
AND LYRICALLY RECOLLECTED  
ACCOUNT OF MENUS, RECIPES,  
HISTORY, TRIVIA, AND  
ADMONITIONS ON THE SUBJECT  
OF ALFRESCO DINING IN CITIES  
BOTH LARGE AND SMALL

BY John Burns & Elisabeth Caton

# THE URBAN PICNIC





# THE URBAN PICNIC

BY JOHN BURNS  
& ELISABETH CATON



ARSENAL PULP PRESS  
VANCOUVER

The Urban Picnic: Being an Idiosyncratic and Lyrically Recollected Account of Menus, Recipes, History, Trivia, and Admonitions on the Subject of Alfresco Dining in Cities Both Large and Small  
Copyright © 2004 by John Burns & Elisabeth Caton  
Illustrations copyright © by Jennifer Lyon

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or used in any form by any means – graphic, electronic or mechanical – without the prior written permission of the publisher, except by a reviewer, who may use brief excerpts in a review, or in the case of photocopying in Canada, a license from Access Copyright.

ARSENAL PULP PRESS  
200 – 341 Water Street  
Vancouver, B.C.  
Canada V6B 1B8  
arsenalpulp.com

The publisher gratefully acknowledges the support of the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program for its publishing activities.

Design by Electra Design Group  
Production assistance by Judy Yeung  
Cover illustration by Jennifer Lyon  
Cover design by Solo

Printed and bound in Canada

The authors and publisher assert that the information contained in this book is true and complete to the best of their knowledge. All recommendations are made without guarantee on the part of the authors and Arsenal Pulp Press. The authors and publisher disclaim any liability in connection with the use of this information. For more information, contact the publisher.

Efforts have been made to locate copyright holders of source material wherever possible. The publisher welcomes hearing from any copyright holders of material used in this book who have not been contacted.

National Library of Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Burns, John, 1968-

The urban picnic : being an idiosyncratic and lyrically recollected account of menus, recipes, history, trivia, and admonitions on the subject of alfresco dining in cities both large and small / written by John Burns and Elisabeth Caton ; illustrations by Jennifer Lyon.

ISBN 1-55152-155-5

I. Cookery. 2. Picnicking. 3. Menus. I. Caton, Elisabeth II. Title.

TX823.B87 2004 641.5 C2004-900679-7



# CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	6
Introduction	9
Slow Food Manifesto	13
History	14
Food Safety	40
Picnic Tips	42
A Note on Ingredients and Quantities	45
Menus	47
Recipes	88
Starters & Sides	95
Soups	133
Salads	142
Salad Dressings	186
Sandwiches	202
Mains	212
Barbecue	246
Breads & Muffins	262
Desserts	271
Drinks	323
Endnotes	335
Bibliography	336
Copyright	339
Index	341

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*T'aint no bloomin' picnic in those parts, I can tell you.*

– Wee Willie Winkie

**Openers:** The notion of an urban picnic book, and the drive to bring it and us together, come thanks to the bright minds at Arsenal Pulp Press: Brian Lam, Blaine Kylo, Kiran Gill Judge, Trish Kelly, and Robert Ballantyne. To them go all thanks but no blame.

**Mains:** Food is the product of community. To the contributing chefs – Nadine Abensur, Audrey Alsterberg and Wanda Urbanowicz, James Barber, Wanda Beaver, John Bishop, Mark Bittman, Bob Blumer, Regan Daley, Trish Deseine, Rob Feenie and Marnie Coldham, Joyce Goldstein, Krishna Jamal, Bill Jones, Nigella Lawson, Anne Lindsay, Barbara-jo McIntosh, James McNair, Umberto Menghi, Adrienne O'Callaghan, James Peterson, and the late David Veljacic – a big thank-you. To conspirators and mentors Jamie Broadhurst, Lorna Jackson, John Lekich, Barbara-jo McIntosh (again!), Angela Murrills, Beverley Sinclair and the editorial staff of the *Georgia Straight*, and Sarah Thring: a grateful tip o' the toque. To *The Urban Picnic's* other contributors – Christina Burrridge, Jurgen Gothe, and Jennifer Lyon – *slàinte!* And to Elisabeth Caton, mother-in-law, mentor, friend: love and thanks.

**Sweets:** Anything of value I've done here owes its soul to Catherine Kirkness, and to our children: Rowan Burns-Kirkness and Skye Burns-Kirkness. – JB

My first thanks must be to my beloved husband, Bob, who supported and encouraged me in all I ever undertook during our lives together, who was my most enthusiastic recipe tester and dining companion, who was so proud of me and John for writing this book and would have delighted in seeing it in print.

Thanks to my parents and sisters for sharing with me their gift for cooking, their love of good food, and a treasure trove of family recipes scribbled on bits of paper, and in an old notebook; my daughter Catherine, who first inspired me to try some vegetarian cooking and whose love of simple old favorites keeps me in touch with the essentials; my son-in-law and co-author John, ever patient and encouraging, who first suggested I write about food, and has been a helpful editor ever since. He convinced me we could create a book, and he made it happen; my grandchildren, Roger, Walter, and Harold in Ontario, and step-grandson Addison in Calgary, who are all Grandma-cookie connoisseurs, and Rowan and Skye in Vancouver, who share meals with me often, as well as cookies. (Rowan came up with the idea for Kid Kebabs, and they were a hit at our family picnic last summer.)

There are other people, too, who inspire me to cook and I can't thank them all here, but special thanks to my friend Joyce, whose mouth-watering descriptions of her vegetarian cooking as we stroll the seawall always make me rush home with more good ideas to try out.

I want to thank all the friends who assisted us by giving us family recipes, recently or in the long past, or helping us test new ones. Your input was invaluable: Jane and Simon, Mark and Victoria, Angela, James, Martin, Ann, Esmeralda, Patti, Zoe, Ian, CaraLynn, Sarah, Charlotte, Lucy, and Tia.

Barbara-jo McIntosh, your wisdom, knowledge, and generosity have saved our bacon more than a few times, and we thank you. – EC

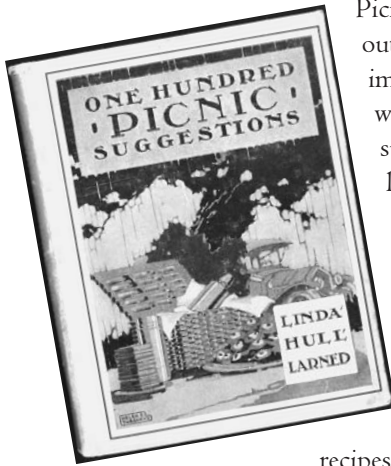




# INTRODUCTION

*We reserve a whole type of eating experience for “out of doors,” where for once we eat seated on the ground. We are very self-conscious about picnics, and the freedom we grant ourselves to lounge about on a blanket eating cold food with our hands. We travel long distances and put up with a thousand risks and inconveniences to reach this state.*

– Margaret Visser, *The Rituals of Dinner*



Picnic. It's one of those evocative words. Go ahead, say it out loud. No one's watching. Picnic. There. An invocation, images rising up like clouds of mosquitoes: car blankets and wicker hampers, soft linen and Merchant Ivory films, buzzing summer meadows and springtime sylvan romance. That's a lot for six little letters to carry, especially with that perky nursery rhythm.

This book is not about those picnics. If you're entertaining fantasies about day trips and farmers' fields, browse on down the shelf. The forays these pages describe could happen by taxi as easily as SUV. (Or bicycle; we're big on bicycles.) And don't trek down to the outdoor outfitter's for a new Thermos with this collection of

recipes and anecdotes for inspiration. You'll more likely be using takeout cups anyway. Forget *Howards End*. Think Howard Stern.

The idea of *The Urban Picnic* is to close the gap between country leisure and city chaos; to inject the possibility of those lazy rural afternoons into modern urban lives. After all, we could use a little balance. We insist on such all-or-nothing lifestyles: wage slaves spend forty-nine weeks at work, five days a week, year in year out. For too many of us, it's at the office before nine, lunch at the desk, stay till dinner, maybe bring a folder home at night. Families struggle to time-manage Junior's chock-a-block schedule, pencilling in play dates around Suzuki violin. All of us – singles, couples, families; workaholics and trust-funders alike – seem to have less time. Somewhere in the last thirty years, the whole notion of leisure disappeared (well, maybe not for the trust-funders), along with hobbies and Sunday drives. Remember those? We're lucky if we can squeeze in Tae Bo and the *New Yorker* each week.

A picnic is the Englishman's grand gesture, his final defiance flung in the face of fate. No climate in the world is less propitious to picnics than the climate of England, yet with a recklessness which is almost sublime, the English rush out of doors to eat a meal on every possible and impossible occasion.

– Georgina Battiscombe,  
*English Picnics* (1951)

Is this how it has to be? Who decided? The architects of the Industrial Revolution, that's who. The modern work week spelled the end of the natural cycles of labor and rest, which had for millennia been tied to the seasons. Social historian E. P. Thompson writes at length on this attitudinal shift in English history, and goes so far as to say that the rhythms of work that accompany the tasks that integrate into a rural lifestyle — farming, milking, burning turf fires — are, in a sense, “more humanly comprehensible than timed labor.” Ironically, picnics came to symbolize the benefits of industrialization: paid holidays, proliferating technologies, the advent of leisure. Now, don't get me wrong; I'm not feeling misty-eyed for the joys of the 19th century. I *like* having three high-end gelaterias within six blocks of my condo. I *like* home delivery. I'm fine not having to burn turf. But we no longer live in an industrial age, so let's not act as though we did.

The technical era, this so-called information age of ours, does have its benefits. If we use our imaginations and commit ourselves to pleasure, we can start to engineer new models, to evolve beyond the Victorian law-clerk salaryman. If we work, we can telecommute from home, dressed in our PJs but networked into office and voicemail and the online beyond. And maybe we slip in a little time looking out the window or playing the piano. Hey, who's watching? Thanks to all our gizmos and gewgaws, we're portable now, too; we can carry our work with us, email with PalmPilots, spreadsheet on laptops, conference call by cellphone. No longer are we bound to our desks, our factories, our stores.

Or our class. Next time you're contemplating a tapenade along the river and someone gives you that “Shouldn't you be somewhere? What are you, a tourist?” look, give up a little smile and a shrug. Maybe you got out of the dot-com boom in time. Maybe this is just what you do.

For those of us still toiling among the fax machines and other detritus of this crazy, privileged, short-term-only-thanks, postindustrial society, there's still hope. Perhaps it's our tools and our creativity that can help us find balance and unfold a moment of leisure, even if it's only for the time it takes to eat a meal under that tree that grows in Brooklyn. These are some pretty



**LACONIC, BUT EXPRESSIVE.**

**SCENE: NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE FIVE POINTS**

*First Ruffian.* “WHERE TO NOW, SNOOTY?”

*Second Ditto.* “PICNIC.”

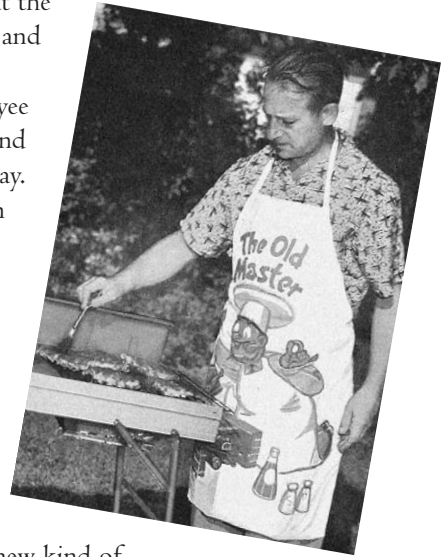
*First Ditto.* “WOTTERTYER GOT IN YER LUNCH WALLET?”

*Second Ditto.* “SLUNG SHOT.”

massive forces at play, but for each of us, change starts with a single decision, even with a single meal rethought. As the song says: “Put down the knitting, the book, and the broom. Time for a holiday.”

The picnic philosophy is one of flexibility, of leisure, of *carpe diem*. The sun is shining. Pack up, head out, give in. Heed the Slow Food manifesto: “savor suitable doses of guaranteed sensual pleasure.” (For more on Slow Food, see page 13.)

And for goodness sake, enjoy. Picnics are process, or should be. This book is not about guilting you into flights of culinary fancy or keeping up with the Hamper Nazis. Recently, *Le Monde* and *The Economist* have been featuring articles about the urban picnic with headlines like “The rise of the picnic” and “Picnics are chic.” What these trend stories stress is the informality of the new picnic. *Le Monde* quotes an employee of a Paris auditing firm: “We often share our baguettes and our booze with other groups. We feel as if we’re on holiday. Paris, a city where people hardly speak to each other, then begins to take on a very different feel.” (This could also have something to do with champagne king Veuve Clicquot’s new sports-capped takeout bottles of bubbly. That sound you hear is James Beard spinning in his grave.) As a publicist for Alain Ducasse, one of France’s leading chefs, explained to *The Economist*, it comes down to balance: “The big question in our lives is how to be at the same time a hedonist and in a hurry.”



This book is here to help, to offer inspiration and practical tools to help you take to the streets with a new kind of picnic in mind. And none of it’s difficult. Many of the recipes are dead simple. Pick up whatever’s local and fresh one evening, prep it that night, and in the morning you’re nine-tenths of the way to gourmet eating alfresco. Hedonism in a hurry.

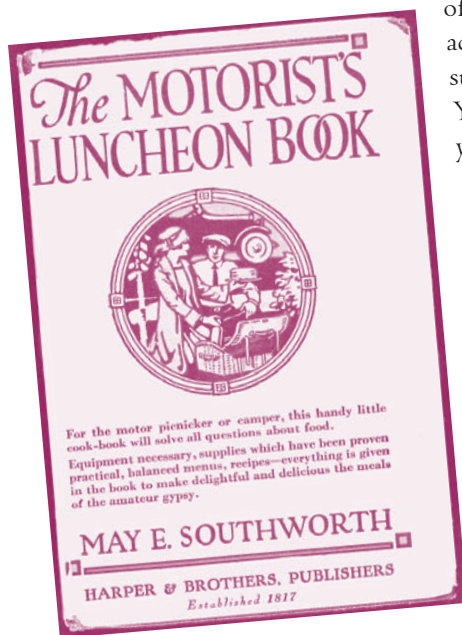
As you saunter through *The Urban Picnic*, you’ll see that the book is a picnic itself, making room on the blanket for history, quotations, advertisements, song lyrics, and related trivia. (I wish I could lay claim to this as an original thought, but there’s nothing new under the sun. In 1825, Harlette Wilson wrote in her *Memoirs Written by Herself*: “I sate down to consider the plan of a book, in the style of the Spectator, a kind of pic nic, where every wiseacre might contribute his mite of knowledge.”)

It’s a picnic in another way as well. In its earliest sense, PICNIC suggested something we’d now recognize as a potluck; everyone contributed a dish, or paid to have a dish represent them. The whole requirement to head outdoors only arose later. So *The Urban Picnic* has opened its doors to a galley of guests, a wealth of wiseacres.

Skill without imagination is craftsmanship and gives us many useful objects such as wickerwork picnic baskets. Imagination without skill gives us modern art.

– Tom Stoppard, *Artist Descending a Staircase* (1972)

Chief among them is Elisabeth Caton, my mother-in-law and an outstanding cook in her own right. You'll find some 140 of her recipes, which we've put together into categories – sandwiches, mains, desserts, and so on – and also arranged into menus to help point (or at least suggest) the way. Sprinkled among her recipes, and featured in the menus, you'll find contributions from well-known cookbook authors and chefs from across North America and elsewhere. (You'll find a list



of these stalwart friends of the picnic listed in the acknowledgments.) Remember that the menus are suggestions only; food is not like IKEA furniture parts. Your meal will not fall flatter than a three-legged chair if you improvise or substitute.

Along the way, you'll also notice that in the menus there are contributions from two more writers, experts in their fields – and hey, Hedonist in a Hurry could sit happily on both their business cards. Christina Burridge, executive director of the B.C. Seafood Alliance and a long-time food writer, suggests wine pairings for each menu. (Please check state or provincial laws covering the issue of alcohol in the great outdoors. If you get fingered by the law, I don't want you squandering your one phone call ringing me up to complain. I'll probably be down at the beach with Regan Daley's strawberry-banana layer cake anyway.) Jurgen Gothe, devotee of fine dining and drinking, is Canada's most widely heard broadcaster

thanks to *DiscDrive*, the national weekday drive-home public-radio show; he collaborates with music to buoy the spirits. Illustrations by Jennifer Lyon keep the words from overrunning the page and remind us that grace and fun are the reasons we're here. These are all – food, menus, wines, music – starting points only, signposts to a richer, picnicier way of living.

Creativity is the key. The fare can be as simple as sushi to go or as complex as the Hipnic menu listed on page 72. Locations can vary wildly. Maybe you're just ducking around the corner with Umberto Menghi's Breast of Duck Rapido. Or maybe you're roaming with Joyce Goldstein's Roman Meat Loaf to one of those natural hideaways that exist in every city. Maybe you have picturesque shorelines or riverbanks where you live, or maybe only pocket parks and rooftop gardens. They all count. Ask around. Pretend you're a movie scout and carry a notebook at all times. With your urban picnic filters in place, the city begins to seem a greener, friendlier place.

And if your cellphone rings and it's work or the bank or your Tae Bo coach: don't answer. You're a new kind of busy. They'll leave a message. You can get back to them after a little something to eat. And maybe a nap.

– JB, Vancouver 2004

## SLOW FOOD MANIFESTO

*The Slow Food movement, which began in Paris in 1989, celebrates and promotes local, authentic cooking. Its resistance to the increasingly pervasive reach of multinational, corporate-driven, bland fast food has attracted over 75,000 members in forty-eight countries. The Internet can lead you to the closest chapter (called convivium) to your hometown. See [slowfood.com](http://slowfood.com). Below is the organization's cri de coeur, which could be summed up as Tune In, Turn On, Eat Up.*

Our century, which began and has developed under the insignia of industrial civilization, first invented the machine and then took it as its life model.

We are enslaved by speed and have all succumbed to the same insidious virus: Fast Life, which disrupts our habits, pervades the privacy of our homes, and forces us to eat Fast Foods.

To be worthy of the name, *Homo Sapiens* should rid himself of speed before it reduces him to a species in danger of extinction.

A firm defense of quiet material pleasure is the only way to oppose the universal folly of Fast Life.

May suitable doses of guaranteed sensual pleasure and slow, long-lasting enjoyment preserve us from the contagion of the multitude who mistake frenzy for efficiency.

Our defense should begin at the table with Slow Food. Let us rediscover the flavors and savors of regional cooking and banish the degrading effects of Fast Food.

In the name of productivity, Fast Life has changed our way of being and threatens our environment and our landscapes. So Slow Food is now the only truly progressive answer.

That is what real culture is all about: developing taste rather than demeaning it. And what better way to set about this than an international exchange of experiences, knowledge, projects?

Slow Food guarantees a better future. Slow Food is an idea that needs plenty of qualified supporters who can help turn this (slow) motion into an international movement, with the little snail as its symbol.

— *Endorsed and approved in 1989 by delegates from twenty countries*



# HISTORY

*Yes, by all means let us take a picnic basket so that we can be independent of restaurants.*

– Aldous Huxley, 1955



It wasn't until I had children of my own and became intimately familiar with the Magic School Bus that I actually started to understand electricity. I hadn't needed to before. When I plugged in the cord, good things happened. When I plugged in my tongue, bad things happened. I had it down. "Electron transfer." Pshaw. The lights went on, the lights went off – almost like electricity could carry on without me! The same is (depressingly) still true of countless other objects, processes, philosophies, taxonomies, entire nations, other galaxies. . . . When I stop and consider all the things I don't know, all the things that manage themselves without my understanding or my involvement, well, it's overwhelming.

We humans are a self-absorbed species. It's all about us. Take carburetors. (Please.) The only thing I know about them is how to spell them. And even there I'm only ninety percent sure. But their *purpose* I get: I put the key in the ignition, the car goes – somewhere in there, the carburetor is doing its bit. Until it needs fixing.

Then I get out the Yellow Pages and look up Carburetors – Broken.

Picnics are the same. (Yes, I'm getting to picnics.) With or without our understanding, they just keep on keeping on. How long have North Americans been picnicking? Europeans? Asians? Where does the word come from? Does it count as a picnic if it's not in the woods? Not on a blanket? Not packed in wicker?

Ignorant of their history, I've nonetheless managed to go on groaning-baskets excursions my whole life. Even though I had no idea of the etymology, the history, the cultural variations, the social ramifications, I was still able to throw together some food and do that thing we call picnicking. As a child, I may not have appreciated their cultural inheritance and their potential legacy, but intuitively I got their *purpose*, their "Calgon, take me away!" alternative to chairs and tables, indoor lights, and use your napkin, their snubbing their nose at the workaday routines and rules of the dining room. The way they function like keys, opening a doorway to freedom.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

But now that I'm an adult with my own library card, I have this curiosity: how far can we push this notion of picnics? Where *did* they come from? Where are they going? If I have a picnic and no ants come, did it really happen?

The word PICNIC dates at least as far back as 1692 and Gilles Ménage's *Dictionnaire Etymologique, ou Origines de la Langue Française*. By the mid-18th century, it had found its way into the official lexicon: it appears in the 1740 edition of the almighty *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*. (In French, if a word has not been recognized by the Académie Française and is not entered into its dictionary, it's fair to say it doesn't exist.) It would be another fifty years before it entered common English, but the word is nonetheless believed to be an Anglicization (sometimes via Germany and/or Sweden) of the French verb PIQUER, meaning "to prick" or "to puncture." The NIQUE is often considered a meaningless alliterative suffix.

Seems neat and tidy. But packages can harbor surprises you discover only as you unpack them. It turns out that not everyone agrees. The *Oxford English Dictionary* – the closest the English-speaking world has to a linguistic rulebook – weighs in on the controversy thusly:

The chronology of the word in French and English, with the fact that our earliest instances refer to the Continent, and are sometimes in the French form PIQUE-NIQUE, show that the word came from French (although some French scholars, in ignorance of these facts, have in view of the obscurity of its derivation, conjectured that the French word was from Eng.). Hatzfeld-Darmesteter merely say "Origin unknown: the Eng. PICNIC appears to be borrowed from French." Scheler mentions several conjectures, among others that of Boniface (18 ... ) "repas où chacun *pique* au plat pour sa *nique* (NIQUE taken in the sense of 'small coin')." Others think it merely a riming combination formed on one of its elements.

It's all a bit huffy, in a cold-blooded academic way. (Remind me sometime to tell you why I never went on for my PhD.) French scholars "in ignorance of these facts" – at least, according to the English, who may have seen too many Monty Python skits – take a different tack. The following is my translation from the *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française*:

The fact is that the spelling PIQUE-NIQUE, with its hyphen, is wrong [*vicieuse*], because the meaning is



The artist ... one day ... falls through a hole in the brambles, and from that moment he is following the dark rapids of an underground river which may sometimes flow so near to the surface that the laughing picnic parties are heard above.

– Cyril Connolly, quoted by Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, *New York Times* (March 15, 1984)

not *piquer la nique* (the word being English). It would be better to get rid of the hyphen, and write PIQUENIQUE or, better still, PIKENIKE. English etymology: PICK NICK, PIQUE-NIQUE, from “to pick,” and NICK, meaning instant, moment. This etymology replaces all etymologies that have been made about PIQUE-NIQUE.

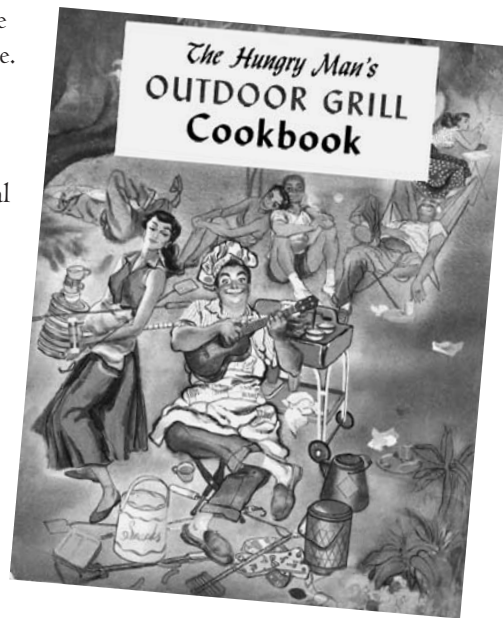
Hang on a nick. Or a nike. Is it a small coin or a moment seized? (Let’s not even get into the fact that NIQUER can also mean an intimate act involving two people who. . . . Well, suffice to say it’s considered rude to say “Nique ta mère.”) No wonder your average food book glosses over with an “etymology unknown.”

Anyway, how can we be squabbling about the origins of a word so overflowing with connotations of idyllic splendor? It all seems like a lot of nickpicking when you hold it up against egg-salad sandwiches and the rustling of the birch leaves.

## A PICNIC POTLUCK

In *The Rituals of Dinner*, Canadian social historian Margaret Visser writes about what picnics have come to mean in western society, ducking out (sensibly) on the question of etymology (“aside from the probable connotation of ‘picking’”). Across the centuries, she argues, the picnic has changed its specifics but has still managed to retain certain meanings, meanings that are with us today. She’s worth quoting at length:

People often think that “there is nothing like the out of doors” for lending one an appetite. Fresh air and natural beauty, adventure, no cooking, and no tables and chairs – a good picnic is a thrilling reversal of normal rules. Not very long ago, picnics were rather formal affairs to our way of thinking, with tables, chairs, and even servants. But everything is relative: what was formal then made a trestle-table in the open countryside seem exhilaratingly abandoned. The general feeling of relief from normal constraints might even lead to the kind of liberty depicted in Manet’s painting *Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe*, a faint and distant echo of the shocking behavior of ancient Greek Bacchanals, who escaped the constraints of city living by going wild in the woods.



Before we go wild ourselves, let's follow the picnic across the centuries.

In English, the earliest recorded use of the word comes in a letter from Lord Chesterfield to his son, Philip Stanhope, who was in Germany at the time. Beginning when his son was five, the hyperproductive Chesterfield had written, almost daily, to his son on questions of deportment and manners. (These days, he'd be the kind of person who forwards inspirational group emails. Every single day.) On October 29, 1748, Lord Chesterfield wrote: "I like the description of your *pic-nic*." In this early meaning, the word denoted a party, often fashionable, to which all guests brought a contribution; nowadays, we'd call this a potluck. (Chesterfield continued to write his son until Philip's death in 1768, at which point he switched to his godson, also called Philip, until Chesterfield himself died in 1773.)



Fifty years later, the word had landed definitively in England. Over the decades, its meaning had broadened to take in not just the *what* of the meal, but also the *how* and the *who* and the *where*. In 1802, the *Times* described a picnic this way: "A Pic-Nic Supper consists of a variety of dishes. The Subscribers to the entertainment have a bill of fare presented to them, with a number against each dish. The lot which he draws obliges him to furnish the dish marked against it, which he either takes with him in his carriage, or sends by a servant." Although it has the whiff of a hockey pool about it, the class implications of this description are nonetheless clear; equally evocative is a report from *The Annual Register* of the same year: "This season has been marked by a new species of entertainment, common to the fashionable world, called a Pic Nic supper. Of the derivation of the word, or who was the inventor, we profess ourselves ignorant." And elsewhere: "The rich have their sports, their balls, their parties of pleasure, and their *pic nics*."

This notion of potlucks and parties spread to encompass the entertainments that often accompanied the meals. By the beginning of the 1800s, a Picnic Society had sprung up in London to organize evenings in which every member – every wealthy member of the intelligentsia, that is – was both player and audience. From *The Spirit of the Public Journals* (1802): "One famous Pic-Nic indeed ... came forward and said, they were 'a harmless and inoffensive society of persons of fashion.' ... Nor was the public amazement lessened, when they were informed, that Pic-Nics were men who acted plays and wrote plays for their own amusement." Their *own* amusement is the key here; the *Times* goes on in a separate article to complain about the incomprehensibility of these entertainments: "We are induced to contend against any thing so contemptible as the pick-nickery and nick-nackery – the pert affectation, and subaltern vanity of rehearsing to an audience that cannot understand, in a language one cannot pronounce." (Debate raged to such a degree that a W. Cutspear felt

It is not only our fate but our business to lose innocence, and once we have lost that it is futile to attempt a picnic in Eden.

– Elizabeth Bowen  
(1899–1973), British novelist, story writer, essayist, and memoirist; born in Ireland. As quoted in *Elizabeth Bowen*, by Victoria Glendinning (1979).

moved to write that year *Dramatic Rights; Or, Private Theatricals and Picnic Suppers Justified by Fair Argument.*)

Members met in the Pantheon on Oxford Street (a theatre, then bazaar, then demolished by Marks & Spencer in 1937). Interest in the society waned as the founders and the century wound down, but picnics had by this time outgrown their original purpose and their social class. In both England and North America, they continued to rise in popularity throughout the 1800s, and were increasingly enjoyed outdoors, particularly as the railway spread across the United Kingdom and the United States. (Oddly, a catering company in Mayfair, London, claims the Picnic Society “has been reborn and organizes outings to places like Henley, Ascot, Glynbourne [sic] and to many other privately run prestigious events where picnics are required.” If you’d like to know more, visit [www.paxuk.com](http://www.paxuk.com).)

The modern, alfresco meaning is pinned down in *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1868): “open air party, in which a meal, to which each guest contributes a portion of the viands, is the essential characteristic.” Lest this all seem too innocent and rustic, know that the moral perils of just sitting around were noted even at the time. In the July 1848 edition of *The Ladies’ Repository: A Monthly Periodical Devoted to Literature, Arts, and Religion*, “Florence” wrote the following warning to the lax, cross-dressing, singing-and-storytelling slackers of the day:

## SPOFFORD PICNIC EXCURSION

— VIA —



STR. CITY OF HAVERHILL, CAPT. JOHN OSGOOD.

TO OLD OCEAN, BLACK ROCKS,  
SALISBURY & PLUM ISLAND BEACHES.

**Thursday, Aug. 30** <sup>th.</sup> 1888.

Leave Haverhill 10 A. M. Return in season for Trains E. & W.

Remember this is the SPOFFORD Excursion and is via this beautiful route, acknowledged by everybody to excel in every particular. Cheapest and easiest, 44 miles on the beautiful Merrimac River.

Seven hundred thousand people in the past eight years and not a single accident of any kind. (A great record.)

The scenery cannot be equalled in this country, passing through Groveland, East Haverhill, West Newbury, Merrimac, Merrimacport, Amesbury, Salisbury, Newburyport, through five Bridges, under the Historical Chain Bridge, (built in 1801 by Lord Timothy Dexter,) one end of which rests on the picturesque Deer Island, in full view of the residence of our cousin, the late Hon. R. S. Spofford.

The many attractions at the Beaches makes this one of the most enjoyable excursions in the country. Don't fail to take it in, steamer is large enough for 1,000 persons.

Refreshment Saloon on the steamer. Tickets will be for sale at the Picnic Wednesday, and at wharf in Haverhill, Thursday morning. Positively Limited.

**ROUND TRIP, 50 CTS. CHILDREN, 25**

DANIEL HOOKE, Gen. Pass. Agt.

HOOKE'S ELECTRIC PHOTOGRAPH HOUSE.



# PICNICS & PARTIES

---

By Florence – July 1848

---

My discrimination is rather dull, and this, in connection with other points in my character, not worthy of recital, is the reason why I never understood the propriety of attending picnics and social parties. My cousin Caroline, at my elbow, who has been to school some, and has studied geography, says the country is a great place for fun, and that she not only goes out occasionally, but whenever it is possible to obtain company, or whenever an invitation is sent her to take a stroll through the woods, over the hills, and far away. She thinks, moreover, that there is not only no harm in a picnic, but that it tends most wonderfully to the development of the social principle and the improvement of the heart.

Unfortunately for my weak mind, I never could, and cannot now, appreciate the force of her logic. Here the picture is: some twenty-five, or thirty, or forty young persons, of both sexes, conclude that they must spend a day in the woods. Ordinary affairs are pitched aside, and, with appropriate paraphernalia, they leave for the wished-for place. Mischief and merriment are the first things demanding attention. Repartees and brainless jokes pass round to kill time, and make the hours run merrily. Now this, and now that,

indiscretion is committed. Some gentleman puts off his hat, and hoods his head with some lady's veil or sun-bonnet, and some lady, with equal wisdom, throws off her bonnet, and puts on some gentleman's hat. Another pilfers a neighbor's kerchief, and throws it up in the branches of a tree; a third tells the wonderful story of some such character as Robin Hood, or William Gulliver, and a fourth sings the affectingly edifying song of "Miss Lucy Neal." So the day wears off, and at night the question puts itself, "What profit to me has been this day's work?" And, seriously, may I not reiterate, where has been the profit? How much better is any one for all the follies he or she has committed through the day? What more heavenly feelings have been inspired? What better state of heart is produced, and what better prayer can any one offer up to her Father in heaven? Answers to these questions may be evaded, and conscience may be hushed to quiet, but there is an hour coming, when conscience will start from her long, deep sleep, and when every trifle and every misspent moment of life will fall like a dagger upon the heart, and cause its victim to writhe in an agony to which no power on earth or in heaven will bring mitigation.



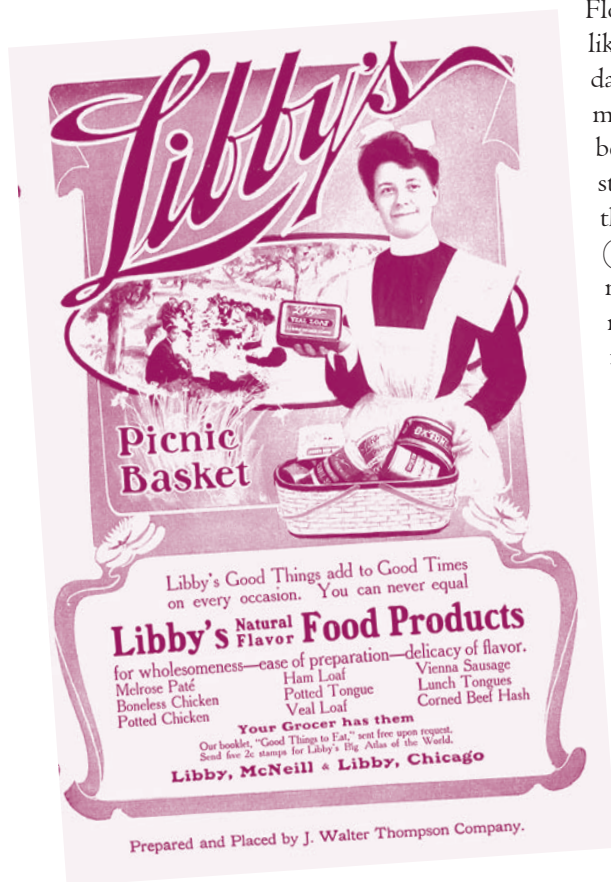
## STRAWBERRIES IN THE GARDEN

In England, anyway, this notion of an outdoor feast was nothing new. As far back as the Middle Ages, outdoor feasts and banquets accompanied hunts. As *The Good Huswives Jewell* (c. 1596) narrates, a hunting breakfast, eaten alfresco, was no mere croissant and a coffee; you'd be protein-loading with "colde loynes of Veale, cold Capon, Beefe and Goose, With Pigeon Pyes, and Mutton Colde." It would be over three centuries before the first Frigidaire appears in a private kitchen. Many leftovers are hurriedly consumed.

In the late 16th century, it became customary to roast meat at the end of the hunt, furnishing a second round of picnicking. Among the royalty, Elizabeth I included, a predilection for outdoors banqueting arose, in pavilions or marquees decorated "with all manners of flowers." These were the salad days — so to speak — for big eaters. As super-foodie M.F.K. Fisher wrote in her first book, *Serve It Forth* (1937), the English hunger would never again be so healthy. With her trademark asperity and wit, Fisher conjured up an Elizabethan age that had already turned its back on Rabelaisian excess and taken its first mincing steps toward our own sorry Age of Calista

Flockhart. Already, the ladies breakfasted like babies, thinking they could start the day decently on a pot of ale and but one meager pound of bacon. The Queen, God be thanked, paid no attention to the new-style finicking, and made her first meal of the day light but sustaining: butter, bread (brown, to stay in the stomach longer and more wholesomely than white), a stew of mutton, a joint of beef, one of veal, some rabbits in a pie, chickens, and fruits, with beef and wine to wash all down in really hygienic fashion.

After some waggish tsk-tsking, Fisher concluded: "We cannot but be thankful ... as we sit down to our balanced lunches of orange juice and salad, free perhaps from the gout and dropsy that stood like evil fiends behind every dining-bench in old England. But are we so thankful that we are free also from fine furious Elizabethan life?"



Vaulting ahead to the Georgian age, we find picnics well-established for all social classes, and it is here that modern eyes can find the appearance of picnics as we might imagine them: sumptuous, sun-dappled affairs calling for cold chickens and warm linens. As James Beard writes in his *James Beard's Treasury of Outdoor Cooking* (1960): "At the turn of the [20th] century, the landed gentry thought nothing of sending servants on ahead to the picnic site to establish an outdoor drawing room. By the time the picnickers arrived, rugs had been spread, tables set, flowers arranged in vases, the gramophone was playing, and the food was ready. And what food! Caviar, foie gras, quenelles, larks, grouse, pheasant, several salads, red and white wines, molded desserts, coffee, cognac, and champagne were the least the well-to-do picnicker could expect." These Victorians and Edwardians, forcing their indoors onto the natural world all around, would have in mind the characters of Jane Austen's *Emma* (1815), who variously struggle to wed, or to prevent the wedding, of each other. Notice the opposition of home and heath in this exchange between Mrs Elton, quoted here first, and Mr Knightley:

"It is to be a morning scheme, you know, Knightley; quite a simple thing. I shall wear a large bonnet, and bring one of my little baskets hanging on my arm. Here, – probably this basket with pink ribbon. Nothing can be more simple, you see. And Jane will have such another. There is to be no form or parade – a sort of gipsy party. We are to walk about your gardens, and gather the strawberries ourselves, and sit under trees; – and whatever else you may like to provide, it is to be all out of doors – a table spread in the shade, you know. Every thing as natural and simple as possible. Is not that your idea?"

"Not quite. My idea of the simple and the natural will be to have the table spread in the dining-room. The nature and the simplicity of gentlemen and ladies, with their servants and furniture, I think is best observed by meals within doors. When you are tired of eating strawberries in the garden, there shall be cold meat in the house."

An article in *Appleton's Journal of Literature, Science, and Art* (1869) considers the same city/country dichotomy, with happier results:

The great charm of this social device is undoubtedly the freedom it affords. It is to eat, to chat, to lie, to sit, to talk, to walk, with some thing of the unconstraint of primitive life. We find a fascination in carrying back our civilization to the wilderness. To eat cold chicken, and drink iced claret under trees, amid the grass and the flowers; to have the sunlight dancing down through the branches, and sparkling in our wine, while we inhale a bouquet from the aromatic forest, and beflowered earth, more fragrant and delicious than

Seating themselves on the greensward, they eat while the corks fly and there is talk, laughter and merriment, and perfect freedom, for the universe is their drawing room and the sun their lamp. Besides, they have appetite, Nature's special gift, which lends to such a meal a vivacity unknown indoors, however beautiful the surroundings.

– Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

that of the ripest Falernian; to gather from the fresh and exhilarating air zest and appetite; to enjoy all these things in delightful company (there must be both youth and beauty, in the latter, to give the picnic the proper seasoning) affords a charm that is subtly enjoyable, and which defies our clumsy analysis. The eagerness with which we enter upon picnics, the keenness with Which we relish them, are proofs of the supremacy of out-of-doors. Nature is still dear to us, notwithstanding all the veneering of civilization; and it is pleasant to reflect how, at this moment, on the sides of innumerable hills, on mountain tops, in wooded valleys, by many a lake and rivulet, on little wooded islands, in the far-off prairies, in southern savannas, are countless picnic parties, all of which, let us hope, are finding full realization of the true ideal of a picnic.

At home or abroad, though, certain considerations were weighed with great seriousness. Ladies were considered nervous anywhere near clifftops, ants, or unshaded ground. After the extensive menu (from lobster tails to trifle and tea), guests entertained the group with music, and took part in games such as croquet, tag, and blind man's bluff – the Picnic Society having bestowed this one legacy, at least. Natural history being all the rage, scientific sorties might follow, the better to trap and preserve tattered nature for future scrutiny. Needless to say, men and women would observe the frantic array of etiquette in their wanderings.

Learning and courting aside, it was the food that distinguished the 19th-century picnic. In *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management: A Guide to Cookery in All Branches* (first published 1861), the diva of type-A entertaining enthused that "Provided care has been taken in choosing congenial guests, and that in a mixed party one sex does not preponderate, a well arranged picnic is one of the pleasantest forms of entertainment." In terms of victuals, she warned, "It is advisable to estimate quantities extravagantly, for nothing is more annoying than to find everything exhausted and guests hungry." And, let's remember, there were the servants for the washing-up. For a picnic lunch for twenty, Mrs Beeton advised:

4 lobsters	10 pounds Wing rib of beef
4 roast chickens	1 small ham
2 chaudfroid of chicken	1 veal and ham pie
salad and dressing	2 fruit tarts
cream	2 dozen Balmoral tartlets
2 creams	2 jellies
4 loaves of bread	2 pounds of biscuits
1½ pounds of cheese	½ pound of butter
1 dozen pears	1 dozen bananas
1 dozen apples	

A century ago, she estimated that would cost £3, 19 shillings, and 8 pence (\$19.40 at the time; about \$382 now), plus “wines, mineral waters, lemon juice; plates, dishes, knives, forks, spoons, glasses, tablecloths, servietts, glass cloths, corkscrews, champagne-opener, castor sugar, oil, vinegar, mustard, pepper, cayenne, salt and pickles.” And a chafing dish. And accessories.

It was at this time that the word PICNIC came to suggest a relaxed meal, and, by extension, any easy thing. In “The Drums of the Fore and Aft” (1888), Rudyard Kipling’s Wee Willie Winkie says, “T’aint no bloomin’ picnic in those parts, I can tell you.” It’s a tribute to the much-admired Victorian capacity for denial that anyone of that age could come up with such a metaphor; clearly it wasn’t the housekeepers and cooks who were consulted. But then, remember Margaret Visser: “Everything is relative: what was formal then made a trestle-table in the open countryside seem exhilaratingly abandoned.” Even if that trestle-top was groaning with the rich, excessive fare of which the Victorians were so very, very fond.

## THE CONDUCT OF THE PARTY

At the dawn of the 19th century, a picnic may have been a holiday from responsibility and civilization, the sort of (watered-down) Woodstock letting-down of hair that lets all the lovers go wild in Shakespeare comedies. But whether in cities or woods, there were still strong social laws in play, laws that could be bent, but not broken.

The dauntingly titled *Social Etiquette or, Manners and Customs of Polite Society: Contemporary Rules and Etiquette for All Occasions* (1896), by the formidable Maud C. Cooke, makes it clear there are limits to just how lax behavior should become: “Picnics and excursions,” the Canadian rulebook warns, “are delightful summer entertainments. But it is essential that whoever goes on a picnic should possess the power to find ‘sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, and good in everything;’ know how to dress, know where to go, and above all, know what to carry to eat.”

It continues: “A very great variety of food should be avoided, also soft puddings and creamy mixtures of any sort, which persistently ‘leak out.’” What should be packed instead then, according to Cooke? “Plain, substantial food, simple and well-cooked, should ever be chosen, with a few sweet and simple dainties to top off with.” And who does this packing? “This can be divided up among the party by the one who is most executive, with the ladies to furnish the substantials and the gentlemen the beverages. The men assume the expenses of the boats or other conveyances.”

For the ideal picnic there has to be water, and from that point of view, France is wonderful picnic country, so rich in magnificent rivers, waterfalls, reservoirs, that it is rare not to be able to find some delicious spot where you can sit by the water, watch dragonflies and listen to the birds or to the beguiling sound of a fast-flowing stream. As you drink wine from a tumbler, sprinkle your bread with olive oil and salt, and eat it with ripe tomatoes or rough country sausage you feel better off than in even the most perfect restaurant.

— Elizabeth David, *An Omelette and a Glass of Wine*

My favorite advice: "A rubber coat or mackintosh is also a necessity, for no matter how warm the day, there is a risk of sitting out in the woods on the bare ground." Oh, so *that's* where babies come from.

"There are several important items which must not be forgotten, and among them are hand-towels and soap, combs, hand-mirror, thread, needle and thimble, a corkscrew and a can opener." Makes sense.

More peculiar – to modern sensibilities, anyway – is the advice concerning chaperones. Clearly, all this fresh air and sunshine can only lead to one thing, hence:

It might seem needless to say that there should always be a chaperon on picnic parties if it were not that even in this day there appears, in some places, to be a lack of proper understanding on this subject. Dwellers in large cities see matters in a clearer light, and a young man who is thoroughly versed in points of etiquette will not think of inviting a young lady to accompany him to the theater without also requesting her mother or a married friend to join them. . . . When a number of young people get off together, they are apt, without the least intention of impropriety, to let their spirits carry them away and lead them into absurdities they would never commit in a graver moment. . . . Most young men and women will feel a security and sense of comfort from having some one along to take the responsibility of the conduct of the party that they could never know were there no chaperon present.

Bear in mind the latest fashion for a young lady picnicker: "Light-weight wool goods, or heavy cotton or linen material that will wash and not tear easily, is most suitable for these occasions. Linen or cotton duck is very serviceable."

What planet the author of *Social Etiquette* inhabited at this time is perhaps questionable, for the rest of the continent was exploding with the turn of the century. America was still recovering from its civil war, at which, perhaps, America's last truly innocent picnic was held. On July 21, 1861, a sunny Sunday near the town of Manassas, Virginia, 13,000 federal troops advanced on rebel defenders, driving them across the river that lent the first significant engagement of the war its name: the First Battle of Bull Run. As J. Matthew Gallman's *The Civil War Chronicle* (2000) details:

## For SUNDAY PICNICS or WEEKENDS



# SCHEDULES SHOWN HERE ARE DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

## TO WINNIPESAUKEE AND THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

### WINNIPESAUKEE

SUNDAYS ONLY... June 22 to Aug. 31 Inc.

ALSO BUNG LAROR DAY, SEPT. 1

#### Read Down

8:00 A. M.	Ex. Boston
9:30	Lowell
10:15	Manchester
11:00	Ex. Concord
11:45	Tilton
12:30	LACONA
1:15	WEEKS
1:45	Marbleton
2:30	Ashland
3:15	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.

#### Read Up

9:00 P. M.	Ex. Portland
9:30	Ex. Portland
10:15	Ex. Portland
11:00	Ex. Portland
11:45	Ex. Portland
12:30	Ex. Portland
1:15	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland

### MOUNTAINEER

ALL SEATS RESERVED!

Every Day June 30 to Oct. 31 Inc.

#### Read Down

9:00 A. M.	Ex. Boston
10:15	Lowell
11:00	Manchester
11:45	Ex. Concord
12:30	Tilton
1:15	LACONA
1:45	WEEKS
2:30	Marbleton
3:15	Ashland
4:00	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
4:45	Lowell
5:30	Manchester
6:15	Ex. Concord
7:00	Tilton
7:45	LACONA
8:30	WEEKS
9:15	Marbleton
10:00	Ashland
10:45	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
11:30	Lowell
12:15	Manchester
1:00	Ex. Concord
1:45	Tilton
2:30	LACONA
3:15	WEEKS
4:00	Marbleton
4:45	Ashland
5:30	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
6:15	Lowell
7:00	Manchester
7:45	Ex. Concord
8:30	Tilton
9:15	LACONA
10:00	WEEKS
10:45	Marbleton
11:30	Ashland
12:15	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
1:00	Lowell
1:45	Manchester
2:30	Ex. Concord
3:15	Tilton
4:00	LACONA
4:45	WEEKS
5:30	Marbleton
6:15	Ashland
7:00	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
7:45	Lowell
8:30	Manchester
9:15	Ex. Concord
10:00	Tilton
10:45	LACONA
11:30	WEEKS
12:15	Marbleton
1:00	Ashland
1:45	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
2:30	Lowell
3:15	Manchester
4:00	Ex. Concord
4:45	Tilton
5:30	LACONA
6:15	WEEKS
7:00	Marbleton
7:45	Ashland
8:30	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
9:15	Lowell
10:00	Manchester
10:45	Ex. Concord
11:30	Tilton
12:15	LACONA
1:00	WEEKS
1:45	Marbleton
2:30	Ashland
3:15	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
4:00	Lowell
4:45	Manchester
5:30	Ex. Concord
6:15	Tilton
7:00	LACONA
7:45	WEEKS
8:30	Marbleton
9:15	Ashland
10:00	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
10:45	Lowell
11:30	Manchester
12:15	Ex. Concord
1:00	Tilton
1:45	LACONA
2:30	WEEKS
3:15	Marbleton
4:00	Ashland
4:45	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
5:30	Lowell
6:15	Manchester
7:00	Ex. Concord
7:45	Tilton
8:30	LACONA
9:15	WEEKS
10:00	Marbleton
10:45	Ashland
11:30	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
12:15	Lowell
1:00	Manchester
1:45	Ex. Concord
2:30	Tilton
3:15	LACONA
4:00	WEEKS
4:45	Marbleton
5:30	Ashland
6:15	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
7:00	Lowell
7:45	Manchester
8:30	Ex. Concord
9:15	Tilton
10:00	LACONA
10:45	WEEKS
11:30	Marbleton
12:15	Ashland
1:00	Ex. FLEMINGTON L.P.
1:45	Lowell
2:30	Manchester
3:15	Ex. Concord
4:00	Tilton

#### Read Up

9:00 P. M.	Ex. Portland
9:30	Ex. Portland
10:15	Ex. Portland
11:00	Ex. Portland
11:45	Ex. Portland
12:30	Ex. Portland
1:15	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30	Ex. Portland
9:15	Ex. Portland
10:00	Ex. Portland
10:45	Ex. Portland
11:30	Ex. Portland
12:15	Ex. Portland
1:00	Ex. Portland
1:45	Ex. Portland
2:30	Ex. Portland
3:15	Ex. Portland
4:00	Ex. Portland
4:45	Ex. Portland
5:30	Ex. Portland
6:15	Ex. Portland
7:00	Ex. Portland
7:45	Ex. Portland
8:30</	



What began as an orderly Union retreat soon turned into a full scale riot, with terrified, inexperienced troops running headlong into bewildered civilians (including many congressmen) who had ridden out for the day from Washington. A panicked swarm of wagons, artillery pieces, horses, and men quickly choked the few fords and bridges leading back to the Union camp of Centerville, but the Confederates were simply too exhausted and inexperienced to mount much of a pursuit.

Nearly 5,000 soldiers died that day, not exactly the spectacle the Northern Brahmins had anticipated when they set out that dawn, with packed lunches, to watch the disgrace of Johnny Reb. Again from *Chronicle*:

Many of the civilian spectators at Bull Run had considered the impending battle something of an entertainment and therefore brought along picnic baskets to appease their appetites as the fighting unfolded. The flight of the Union troops, however, unpleasantly interrupted their lunches.

According to eyewitness accounts quoted in Richard Wheeler's *A Rising Thunder* (1964), these affluent alfrescans travelled in "carriages and [other] vehicles drawn up as if they were attending a small country race. . . . In one was a lady with an opera-glass." And later: "Hacks containing unlucky spectators of the late affray were smashed like glass, and the occupants were lost sight of in the debris."

As the 19th century lumbered to its conclusion, massive internal migration was adding to the influx of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe to bring huge numbers of people into cities already swollen with the poor, who were – sound familiar? – struggling to keep body and soul together. In 1900, sixty percent of Americans lived in rural areas; by 1920, the split was even. (Today, that number is below twenty-five percent.) For the veterans of the Civil War and immigrants alike, contemporary etiquette "and rules for all occasions" were increasingly beside the point. In cities, workers were little more than prisoners, with long days in factories or at home with piecework; they were no longer able to enjoy the outdoors as they and their ancestors had. It was in this period that the socialist New York Central Labor Union organized a parade and picnic to raise funds for a labor newspaper. In September 1882, more than 10,000 workers attended; within twenty-five years, Labor Day was recognized in all the states but one.

Picnics continued, but their sylvan innocence was smirched. The satirical American magazine *Punchinello* frequently expressed a viperous disdain for everything that the remaining chaperoned, wool-wearing, bourgeois, culturally pretentious Pollyannas stood for.

Once if I remember well,  
my life was a feast  
where all hearts opened  
and all wines flowed

– Arthur Rimbaud, 1873



# ADVICE TO PICNIC PARTIES

---

Punchinello – August 20, 1870

---

In this culminating period of the summer season, it is natural that the civic mind should turn itself to the Contemplation of sweet rural things, including shady groves, lunch-baskets, wild flowers, sandwiches, bird songs, and bottled lager-bier.

The skies are at their bluest, now; the woods and fields are at their greenest; flowers are blooming their yellowest, and purplest, and scarlettest. All Nature is smiling, in fact, with one large, comprehensive smile, exactly like a first-class Prang chromo with a fresh coat of varnish upon it.

Things being thus, what can be more charming than a rural excursion to some tangled thicket, the very brambles, and poison-ivy, and possible copperhead snakes of which are points of unspeakable value to a picnic party, because they are sensational, and one cannot have them in the city without rushing into fabulous extra expense. It is good, then, that neighbors should club together for the festive purposes of the picnic, and a few words of advice regarding the arrangement of such parties may be seasonable.

If your excursion includes a steamboat trip, always select a boat that is likely to be crowded to its utmost capacity, more especially one of which a majority of the passengers are babies in arms. There will probably be some roughs on board, who will be certain to get up a row, in which case you can make the babies in arms very effective as “buffers” for warding off blows, while the crowd will save you from being knocked down.

Should there be a bar on board the steamer, it will be the duty of the gentlemen of the party to keep serving the ladies with cool beverages from it at brief intervals during the trip. This will promote cheerfulness, and, at the same time, save for picnic duty proper the contents of the stone jars that are slumbering sweetly among the pork-pies and apple-dumplings by which the lunch-baskets are occupied.

Never take more than one knife and fork with you to a picnic, no matter how large the party may be. The probability is that you may be attacked by a gang of rowdies, and it is no part of your business to furnish them with weapons.



Avoid taking up your ground near a swamp or stagnant water of any kind. This is not so much on account of mosquitoes as because of the small saurian reptiles that abound in such places. If your party is a large one, there will certainly be one lady in it, at least, who has had a lizard in her stomach for several years, and the struggles of the confined reptile to join its congeners in the swamp might induce convulsions, and so mar the hilarity of the party.

To provide against an attack by the city brigands who are always prowling in the vicinity of picnic parties, it will be judicious to attend to the following rules:

Select all the fat women of the party, and seat them in a ring outside the rest of the picnickers, and with their faces toward the centre of the circle. In the event of a discharge of missiles this will be found a very effective cordon — quite as effective, in fact, as the feather beds used in the making up of barricades.

Let the babies of the party be so distributed that each, or as many as possible of the gentlemen present, can have one at hand to snatch up and use for a fender should an attack at close quarters be made.

If any dark, designful strangers should intrude themselves upon the party, unbidden, the gentlemen present should by no means exhibit the slightest disposition to resent the intrusion, or to show fight, as the strangers are sure to be professional thieves, and, as such, ready to commit murder, if necessary. Treat the strangers with every consideration possible under the circumstances. Should there be no champagne, apologize for the absence of it, and offer the next best vintage you happen to have. Of course, having lunched, the strangers will be eager to acquire possession of all valuables belonging to the party. The gentlemen, therefore, will make a point of promptly handing over to them their own watches and jewelry, as well as those of their lady friends.

Having arrived home, (we assume the possibility of this,) refrain carefully, from communicating with the police on the subject of the events of the day. The publicity that would follow would render you an object of derision, and no possible good could result to you from disclosure of the facts. But you should at once make up your mind never to participate in another picnic.

Despite the sarcasm, even the sharp-penned urbanites had a store of patience for the weary picnicker. An unsigned story in the *Brooklyn Eagle* from July 23, 1875, has the grace to record that:

The writer didn't feel at all ugly last evening when a fat lady with a fat boy baby sat down on him and his new clothes in a [street] car, and the only reason that he didn't was simply because this body was coming home from a picnic, and she had danced and drank lager beer and was quite happy, and she had beside such a winning way about her when she turned, and in apologetic tones, said: "You pegs my pardon, sir." And of course the writer did accept her backhanded excuse for mistaking him for a cushion.

There's something about that lager beer.

Which brings us to the temperance movement, and the depravity of alcohol. Eight years later, the *Brooklyn Eagle* ran a page two story headlined "DANGEROUS. The Evils That Spring From Moonlight Picnics. A Growing Source of Crime – Children Ruined and Homes Destroyed – Scathing Condemnation of the Practice by Officials and the Catholic Clergy." In a lengthy jeremiad, the unsigned story decries again and again the evil outcome of these night-time annual get-togethers of societies with (granted, suspicious) names such as the Growlers, the Select Five, Merry Few, Dock Rats, the Finest, County Longfords, Violets, the Langtrys, and the Jolly Boys.

# BROOKLYN EAGLE

July 19, 1883

## DANGEROUS

On any fine night crowds of young girls can be seen on Third avenue making their way toward these parks. The habitues of these places when a club picnic is being held are generally of a peculiar class. They have their foreheads covered with hair, or what is familiarly called

banging, and their mouths are filled with chewing gum, and are continually going. These girls are called "spielers." Of course, they are not admitted to church or lodge picnics, and the only time they seem to come out is when some club is to hold its annual festival or excursion. The reporter a few evenings ago paid a visit to a picnic which was held at one of these parks, and



there witnessed scenes which all true temperance advocates would be shocked at. Seated under the trees and behind large tables were young girls drinking beer with men twice their ages. When a dance was announced they would go on the platform and make themselves conspicuous by dancing in a very loud and unladylike manner.

... After the reporter had explained his mission Mr Wilkin [superintendent of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children] said: "These moonlight picnics have a bad influence on young girls. They tend to swell the criminal class not only among the girls, but among the boys. More girls have been ruined at these picnics than respectable people realize. One day last week a worthy man called at this office and told me that his daughter, barely 14 years of age, was in the habit of attending these picnics with a companion, and would not come home until late hours of the night, or early in the morning. Fearing that she would get beyond his control he had her committed to the House of the Good Shepherd. Last week we also sent another girl to that institution who was in the habit of attending picnics of the same class."

... "There is no other source of crime which has a tendency to ruin girls like moonlight picnics. I have been in this society for seven years and have given this subject my closest attention. It is generally the case that young girls go with companions who are somewhat depraved,

having been constant attendants at these affairs, and the ruin of the former is soon accomplished.... The consequence is that they become lower and lower every time they attend these affairs. When we receive complaints here we generally find that the stray sheep has been a constant attendant at moonlight picnics."

... "When these cases of mothers complaining of their daughters come before us we find out first if they have been in the habit of visiting the resorts alluded to, and, if such is the case, we have them sent away at once, because that is the only remedy for their salvation. The parents are to blame in most of these cases. It is generally with these girls from soda water to beer and then to a depraved life."

... "Young girls are now being ruined by the wholesale, and you can rest assured that moonlight picnics constitute a prolific source in creating depraved women and bold and brazen faced young men. There are very few young girls who are not injured by attending these picnics, and after visiting them they become so low that they are sent to prison and jails as habitual drunkards and disorderly characters."

... The Rev. Father Fransioli was next visited, and was found at his pastoral residence in Warren street. In answer to several questions he said: "I denounced from the pulpit of St Peter's Church moonlight picnics and promenades eight years ago, when they had just started. I have always considered them the most dangerous and immoral amusement ever devised."

## STAR-SPANGLED BANQUETS

Next to the invention of the Thermos, the automobile has been the greatest friend to the picnic, and, for that reason, two men can rightly claim to be godfathers to the picnic: Henry Ford and Alfred Sloan. In 1912, a Ford car took just over twelve hours on an assembly line; two years later, that number had been reduced to one and a half. To retain employees and increase their productivity, Ford also shortened working hours, cutting days from nine hours to eight and weeks from six days to five. Along the way, with the success of the Ford automobile, he reduced the price of the average Ford car so that by 1925, a car cost only \$290 (approximately \$3,000 today).

Over at General Motors, president Alfred Sloan pioneered the dark magic of automobile marketing, introducing the yearly model change and the notion of vertical niche: the era of a model for every level of earner – Chevrolet, Buick, or Cadillac – had arrived. Keen!

These titans had a powerful effect on the American consumer and the American landscape. In 1919, there were 6.7 million cars on American roads; ten years later, that number had quadrupled, nearly one for every household in the U.S. or one car for every five Americans (compared to one car for every thirty-seven English and one car for every forty French). That sixty percent bought on credit would spell a major speed bump come the end of the decade and the advent of the Great Depression.

In those same ten years, American roads and highway systems doubled. By 1929, there were 852,000 miles of roads, compared to just 369,000 in 1920. And where were those Americans going on all their roads? Mostly out of the city and into the country, for weekend excursions, evening drives, and afternoon picnics. Where *weren't* they going? To Sunday service, or anywhere else where watchful chaperones could have their say.

A 1923 article in the trade magazine *Playground* characterizes the effect of the automobile this way:

The farmers' picnic is returning to its oldtime glory. There was a day when 25,000 gathered at Sylvan Beach for the Hop Growers' picnic, and many of them were hop growers. The Old and Original at Long Branch drew its 10,000 and the Six-Town at Davis grove nearly as many. Farmers came in buggies from miles around to make a day of it; and as many came by train where there was a railroad communication. . . . Then came the Chautauqua and the automobile. The Chautauqua brought the farmer to the village for several days, where he got wholesome entertainment for a small sum, with Bryan occasionally added for a little more. The automobile made it easy for the

### Park it!

One of the great pleasures in life is a Picnic in the Park. Now **Waldo's** is going to make it possible for you to enjoy the delightful spring weather and have a Picnic in the Park within just a few feet from our doors. **Waldo's** special Picnic in the Park luncheons will be carefully selected and prepared to satisfy both gourmet and healthfood tastes. Plan to take your (check one):

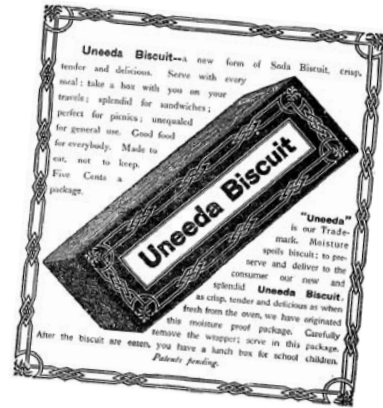
Boss \_\_\_\_\_ Self \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ Husband \_\_\_\_\_ Wife \_\_\_\_\_ Lover \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
to a Picnic in the Park on **Waldo's** picnic day Thursdays - or the day of your choice! Our specially prepared picnic luncheons will have..... along with great food, a king-size napkin, salt, pepper, toothpick, wet wipe and mint. **Perhaps the best thing of all is the price: \$1.00, tax inc.** To make certain, there's a picnic luncheon for you, why not call **Waldo's** and tell them to reserve as many as you might need. All parks are complete with ground, trees, grass (perhaps birds, smog-free air, (keep your fingers crossed), and no ants. **Waldo's** picnic parks are in these locations - Equitable Plaza - On the Plaza Level above us & outside our front doors Beverly Hills - Right behind our building Century City - On the Plaza, right outside our door.

**Waldo's**  
EQUITABLE PLAZA - 3435 WILSHIRE BLVD. - (213) 368-6405  
CENTURY CITY - 2010 CENTURY PARK EAST - (213) 553-3643 / BEVERLY HILLS - 9400 WILSHIRE - (213) 379-5311



city man to go picnicking with his family at this own convenience and it gave the farmer an easy exit to the movie. The picnic with a name and a reputation dwindled in attendance, against the competition of these new forms of entertainment.

Alongside these technological shifts, the great bloom of capitalism was on the rise in North America. Refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and toasters sprouted like mushrooms after a spring rain. By 1930, two-thirds of all American households had electricity, much of it running the “labor-saving” devices that increasingly held women to new standards of cleanliness. Advertisers became savvy, hiring psychologists such as John B. Watson (founder of behaviorism) and Edward Bernays (nephew of Sigmund Freud) to design campaigns. America’s first million-dollar campaign? The National Biscuit Company’s Uneeda Biscuit, in the waterproof box (“take a box with you on your travels; splendid for sandwiches; perfect for picnics”).



By the 1920s, the New Woman was voting, taking a job outside the home, and getting behind the wheel of the family car. Domestic inventions — electric washing machines, irons, vacuum cleaners; electric ranges, refrigerators, and toasters — were changing dietary habits, as was a trend toward simpler and lighter food. The turn-of-the-century Ruebens-like beauty was skinning down to the war-time flapper, and low-cal food was following suit. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, “Surveys showed that, by the mid-1920’s, the time spent by women in meal preparation and cleanup had fallen from forty-four hours per week to under thirty hours.”

Women were *happening*.

One New Woman, Emily Post, made a career out of walking the tightrope between convention and modernity. To today’s ears, she sounds fusty, humorous even, but hers was the dominant voice for an emerging middle class — triumphant after the War to End All Wars, cushioned by a generation of labor laws — eager to fit in. Her thoughts on picnics are too delicious to ignore.

- People who picnic along the public highway leaving a clutter of greasy paper and swill (not a pretty name, but neither is it a pretty object!) for other people to walk or drive past, and to make a breeding place for flies, and furnish nourishment

I do not like to eat al fresco.  
No sane person does, I feel.  
When it is nice enough for  
people to eat outside, it is also  
nice enough for mosquitoes,  
horse and deer flies, as well as  
wasps and yellowjackets. I don’t  
much like sand in my food and  
thus while I will endure a beach  
picnic I never look forward to  
them. My idea of bliss is a  
screened-in porch from which  
you can watch the sun go down,  
or come up. You can sit in  
temperate shade and not fry your  
brains while you eat. You are  
protected from flying critters,  
sandstorms and rain and you can  
still enjoy a nice cool breeze.

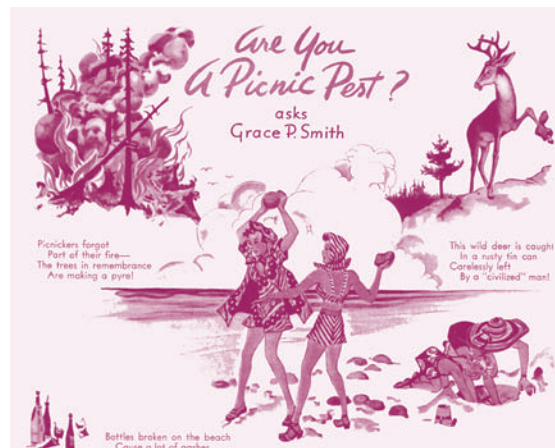
— Laurie Colwin, *Home Cooking*



for rats, choose a disgusting way to repay the land-owner for the liberty they took in temporarily occupying his property.

- Some people have the gift of hospitality; others whose intentions are just as kind and whose houses are perfection in luxury of appointments, seem to petrify every approach. Such people appearing at a picnic color the entire scene with the blue light of their austerity. Such people are usually not masters, but slaves, of etiquette. Their chief concern is whether this is correct, or whether that is properly done, or is this person or that such an one as they care to know? They seem, like Hermione (Don Marquis's heroine), to be anxiously asking themselves, "Have I failed to-day, or have I not?"
- There is no more excuse for rude or careless or selfish behavior at a picnic than at a ball.
- A hostess should never speak of annoyances of any kind – no matter what happens! Unless she is actually unable to stand up, she should not mention physical ills any more than mental ones.... If the cook leaves, then a picnic must be made of the situation as though a picnic were the most delightful thing that could happen.
- Courtesy demands that you, when you are a guest, shall show neither annoyance nor disappointment – no matter what happens. Before you can hope to become even a passable guest, let alone a perfect one, you must learn as it were not to notice if hot soup is poured down your back. If you neither understand nor care for dogs or children, and both insist on climbing all over you, you must seemingly like it; just as you must be amiable and polite to your fellow guests, even though they be of all the people on earth the most detestable to you. You must with the very best dissimulation at your command, appear to find the food delicious though they offer you all of the viands that are especially distasteful to your palate, or antagonistic to your digestion. You must disguise your hatred of red ants and scrambled food, if everyone else is bent on a picnic.... If a plan is made to picnic, she likes picnics above everything and proves her liking by enthusiastically making the sandwiches or the salad dressing or whatever she thinks she makes best.
- Needless to say a bad loser is about as welcome at a card table as rain at a picnic.

– Emily Post, *Etiquette* (1922)





In July 1936, *Parents' Magazine* ran a breathless piece called "Picnicking With a Baby" for just the sort of woman who would be an American version of Mrs Beeton's most loyal readers. She would undoubtedly have received a copy of *Joy of Cooking*, first published in 1931, and would take to heart Gladys H. Murray's article, which began: "If you really love picnics but think that this year you must stay home 'on account of the baby' take my advice and take the baby on a picnic. If he's a chip off the old block he will enjoy it, too, and a day in the open will be good for him. Really, it isn't as much trouble as you would suppose."

Technology continued to drive the evolution of the picnic, as the private automobile followed its manifest destiny, opening the countryside to marauding tribes of what would come to be called nuclear families. By 1940, on the eve of America's entry into the Second World War, those families were already beginning to turn inward, circling the wagons against the hotheads in Europe.

"Men on Picnics," Lydia Hewes's delightfully wry *Good Housekeeping* article (August 1940), begins: "'A picnic,' said one man, 'is dozens of olives, no bottle opener, a few sandwiches completely surrounded by ants – immediately followed by an attack of poison ivy or hay fever.' I believe this is the historic male attitude toward outdoor eating.... This would indicate there is very little left of the vigorous pioneer spirit." Hewes pokes good-natured fun at the male stick-in-the-mud ("what are you gonna do?" she seems to be saying), listing the various impediments to fun alfresco: "There is the person who insists on wading in the brook. She always manages to fall in with her clothes on. There is the one who has come all dressed up, as for a garden party, and who sits in a nest of wet tomato sandwiches. She spends the rest of the time worrying about whether the spots will come out. And there is the bore who isn't afraid of bugs; he'll drop one in your lap and get a hearty laugh out of it.... And the eternally feminine soul who is afraid of the curious cow in the bushes."

I knew that a picnic worth doing at all was worth doing with a hell of a lot of care, and this belief has remained with me ever since. Even when I have carside picnics in Europe and in America, there are good glasses along, good forks and knives, and if possible, china plates. I would rather smuggle a few dirty plates into my hotel to wash, wherever I happen to be, than eat food on paper plates.

– James Beard, *Delights and Prejudices*

For all her mockery, Hewes sounds a note of concern that would prove prophetic:

In latter years, I have noted that the highway-and-byway style of picnicking has waned in favor of the back-yard variety. This is due partly to the great increase in good roads, which are now so overpopulated that it is almost impossible to find any spot, let alone a better one, offering seclusion. Also to the fact that along the roadside today are such marvelous temples, dedicated to the hot dog and hamburger, that a picnic is no longer the only answer to a traveler's prayer.

Above all, there has been the growth in the popularity of outdoor cookery, the result of which has been a nationwide wave of outdoor fireplaces. Hardly a country or suburban home now that doesn't boast of one, whether it is merely a portable stove or one of those elaborate stone or brick structures.... Wherever it is, it is as definite a part of the American scene as the playroom or the trailer.

And see how familiar this sounds, ringing across sixty-odd years:

The next advantage of back-yard cookery is that it gives the man of the house a chance to flaunt his culinary ability. Most men actually fancy themselves much better cooks than women. "Name at least one famous woman chef," they taunt you, and of course you can't. There is no doubt about its being a fine sight to see a man standing before the fire, with an important Oscar-of-the-Waldorf air, turning the steaks, while the rest of the company try to keep the smoke out of their eyes, slap mosquitoes, and say admiringly, "There's nobody can cook a steak like John!" His wife, if she is tactful, sits in the background and lets people rave, while she wonders what John would have done if she hadn't provided him with not only the steaks, but all the properties that go toward the culmination of this impressive business.

By 1946, *House Beautiful* announced, "There's a New Era in Picnicking." Splayed across a double-page spread were eight photos of the miracles of modern technology: "Off the market during the war years, Thermos jugs are reappearing in stores." And Ther-Mo-Paks. And Therm-a-Jugs. And Porta-Barbecues. And: "Picnics needn't be makeshifts any more. There's equipment to keep hot foods hot, cold foods cold; and it's all designed for easy carrying, whether you travel by car or canoe, or just stay at home."

The era of the space-age gadgets had begun.

1900	Hershey's chocolate bar	
1900–10	George Washington Carver finds new uses for peanuts, sweet potatoes, and soybeans	
1901	A&P incorporates with 200 stores (in 1912, expands with cash and carry format)	
1903	Dole canned pineapple	
1903	Kellogg adds sugar to corn flakes, boosting popularity	
1903	Pepsi Cola	
1904	Quaker markets first puffed cereal	
1906	Pure Food and Drug Act prohibits food adulteration and misbranding	
1906	Meat Inspection Act requires Federal inspection of slaughterhouses	
1910	Double-crimped can reduces costs for processors	
1910	Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour	
1911	First vitamin, vitamin B1, discovered	
1912	Oreos	
1912	Hellman's mayonnaise	
1914	USDA establishes National Extension Service, which employs home economists	
1914–18	First World War	
1916	USDA prints its first food guide: "Food for Young Children"	
1916	Piggly Wiggly opens first self-service food store	
1917	Food Administration under Herbert Hoover conserves food for war effort	
1920	Charles Birdseye deep-freezes food	
1921	White Castle chain of hamburger shops opens	
1923	Welch's grape jelly	Tea to the English is really a picnic indoors. – Alice Walker, <i>The Color Purple</i>
1925	First home mechanical refrigerator, Frigidaire, sold	