



9 Tips for a Healthier BBQ Dinner by [Kim D'Eon, RHN](#)

Canada Day is fast approaching and what better way to celebrate than with a backyard BBQ party! Everybody loves to get out and get grilling on the barbeque in the summer months, so it's a total buzz-kill to know that high-heat grilling is actually linked to some pretty serious side effects like cancer.



formed when the fat drips down and creates smoke. That smoke rises up and hits your meat and so do those cancer-causing compounds.

But, what's summer without a BBQ? How

can we still get out and enjoy our grill and keep our health in check? Don't worry, I got you. There are various ways you can make your BBQing a little healthier this summer!

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Who's Excited for Fresh, Local Produce? by [Helen Blanchard, RHN](#)

I love this time of year when you see fresh produce popping up at your local farmers' markets and grocery stores. And it's even better if you planted a garden and are patiently waiting for the fruits (or should I say veggies) of your labour.

Bye-bye to those winter root veggies. Hello fresh greens, ripe strawberries, asparagus. And the list goes on. And isn't it great that the different veggies and fruit aren't all ready at the same time.

Come with me on a sunny summer Saturday morning as I hit not one, but two,

farmers' markets. As we head down the aisles, let me share some reasons (listen carefully for them) why I love supporting farmers' market in the summer (well, actually all year, but the summer is the best time).

Before we head inside, we stop and check out some of the vendors who are stationed outside. Look at those juicy peaches and the ripe tomatoes! Did I mention that **the produce is fresh?** Often, it's just picked the day before. Which would you prefer – a fresh-from-the-farm vine-ripened tomato or a tomato that **Continued on page 3...**

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Looking for more tips for healthy summer eating? See a Holistic Nutrition Professional.



Matt's BBQ Burger Adapted from [Taste of Nova Scotia](#)

Ingredients for the Burger

2 lb medium ground beef
(preferably organic and grass-fed)
½ cup diced red onion
½ cup diced red pepper
1 ½ tsp sea salt
1 tsp black pepper
1 tbsp Dijon mustard

Ingredients for the Pickled Onion

½ cup red wine vinegar
½ cup water
1 tbsp organic sugar
Sea salt and black pepper to taste
1 bay leaf
1 red onion, sliced

Place all burger ingredients into a bowl and mix well with your hands until all the mustard, onions, and peppers are mixed very well. Divide into 6 (or more) equal portions and make into patties.

Have the grill on high, BBQ patties for approximately 3 minutes on each side and then turn heat down to medium for another 4-5 minutes. If you grind the meat yourself, best results would be to cook to a medium consistency.

Pickled Onion

Place red wine vinegar, water, sugar, salt, pepper and bay leaf in a sauce pan and bring to a boil. Once boiling, pour over the sliced onion and let cool. This can be done a day in advance if you like. If you don't use them all, you can keep in the refrigerator in an airtight container for up to a week and use as a condiment for other dishes.

Choose your favorite bun type (wholegrain, sprouted wheat, or sourdough are good options, or you can just wrap in a lettuce leaf) and slightly grill them to get a nice toasting effect, Dress as you like it, topping it all off with the pickled onions.

Raw Pad Thai by [Melanie Robinson, CHNC](#)

For the base

1 large zucchini, spiralized
1/2 cucumber, spiralized
1 large carrot, julienned
2 roma tomatoes, diced

For the sauce

Juice of 1 fresh lime
1 tbsp fresh ginger (grated if you don't have a high-speed blender)
1 medium clove garlic

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...Raw Pad Thai continued from the bottom of the page

2 tbsp gluten-free tamari
1 medjool date, pitted
1 roma tomato, roughly chopped
1/4 cup nut butter (peanut or almond)
2 sundried tomato halves (soaked for 10 minutes if you don't have a high-speed blender)
1 tbsp coconut oil
1 tbsp water (to thin)

TO GARNISH

2-3 green onions, thinly sliced
1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1 lime, cut into quarters
Crushed cashews

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine all ingredients for the base in a large bowl and set aside.

Combine all ingredients for the sauce in your blender and blend on high until smooth.

Prepare garnishes.

Pour sauce over vegetables and stir until fully coated.

Adapted from *The SimplyRaw Kitchen* cookbook by Natasha Kyssa



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was transported in a truck and took several days to get to you? (We're lowering our food miles which means that we're decreasing our carbon footprint.) It's easier to vine ripen fruit when it only has to travel a short distance. And when fresh vegetables and fruit are picked at their peak, they will be **higher in vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients**. And they'll taste better.



We also chat with this farmer about his u-pick. His u-pick includes strawberries, peaches, and apples. I'm looking forward to picking some fruit and freezing it to use in my smoothies during the winter. Economical, and I still get to support local. And if you have an abundance of kale or spinach, why not consider freezing it to use in your smoothies.

As we enter the market, we hear some local musicians playing. There is **a friendly and fun atmosphere**. And if you're hungry, we can stop and get breakfast **made from local produce**.

We pick up some veggies and free-range eggs (and return my empty cartons) and chicken. We also get some fresh herbs. I love the smell of fresh dill. And I need kale so that I can make kale chips. I know a holistic nutritional consultant who started her business by selling kale chips at this market. Now her business has grown, and she offers a variety of foods at her own café. I'm sure she's glad that people supported her.

We jump in the car and head to the second farmers' market. I know—it's not necessary to go to both, but why not? We chat about the local farmers. If we don't **support** the local farmers, **what will happen to them? How will they survive?**

First, we stop and chat with a farmer. This is a great way to get to **know the people who grow your food**. This farmer carries an **amazing array of produce**. Who knew there could be so many types of radishes? He explains to us about the different varieties of greens he has available today. Some of them I've never seen before. He shares **how to prepare them** and which ones are better cooked than raw. The farmers are often a **wealth of information**. You'll often find **heritage varieties** at this table as well as at others. What's a heritage variety? They are grown from seeds that have been passed down and maintained for generations as opposed to modern hybrids. It's better for gut health to enjoy a wider diversity of foods. Purple carrots anyone? And some heritage varieties of tomatoes are absolutely delicious.

This farmer also uses a minimal amount of plastic. Bring your own produce bags. **He's concerned about the environment**. Even though his farm isn't organic, he is **very conscientious about his farming practices** as are several other farmers. Now that we have everything we need for a salad, let's get some locally-made apple cider vinegar (beneficial for the gut)

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to use in our dressing.

Next, we head to where they're offering samples of kimchi, which is so good for your gut health. As usual, I'm thinking that I should make this myself. But today I'm happy to support this new entrepreneur. We also see sauerkraut and kombucha, another fermented food and a drink that contain the many beneficial bacteria that our gut needs to continue to stay balanced and healthy.

*And let's make sure that we stop and purchase some real sourdough bread—also good for the gut. **No highly processed food** at these vendors.*

Let's head home and make a delicious salad. I'll prepare the veggies so they're ready to use for the next few days. It's been a great morning.

P.S. Don't those strawberries look delicious! Sure, they're an excellent source of folate, fibre, and Vitamin C, and they're high in antioxidants. But really, they're just so tasty.





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good place to start. Plus, fruit like peaches and pineapples make for great grilling. And that's just the tip of the iceberg! Speaking of iceberg, leafy greens are fantastic on the grill: romaine, radicchio or spinach are all great (just don't bother with actual iceberg lettuce cause it's basically just water).



Choose better quality meat: If you are going to eat meat, choose organic, free-range, grass fed meats from a local farm that you trust. I know that can be hard sometimes, but there are now lots of online options for delivery and farmer's markets are a great place to source too. Animals raised on the foods that their bodies are designed to eat have less unhealthy fats, more Omega 3s and antioxidants (like vitamin E).

Go lean and unprocessed: Choose leaner meats for the grill so that less fats drip down causing that carcinogenic smoke (PAHs). Also, leaner meats like fish and poultry have less of those particular amino acids that transform into carcinogens. Oh, and steer clear of processed meats. Definitely not a good option for the grill (or for human consumption in general).

Don't burn baby burn: Don't overcook things. Well done equals unwell! Don't char your meat!

Don't eat the black bits: If you DO accidentally char your meat, cut the black bits off because they are hotspots for carcinogenic chemicals. While we're at it, clean your grill before cooking so you don't get remnants of that charred junk on your food.

Let veggies take centre stage: If you're eating meat, make the veggies the star of the plate! The antioxidants in fruits and veggies may help to offset some of the harmful effects of HCAs and PAHs (especially brassica's like broccoli, kale and cauliflower etc.) which have been shown to reduce the cancer-causing mutated amines).

Marinate: Especially in antioxidant-rich foods and spices: think lemon, garlic, rosemary, thyme, onions etc. There's usually always a reason cultures have been preparing foods a particular way for centuries. This is one of them. The antioxidants can help offset the carcinogenic compounds. And yes, even beer and wine will work!

Use coconut oil instead of olive oil: Coconut oil is more stable at higher heats. Just don't use too much because the oil will drip down causing flare-ups and more smoke.

Cook longer and on lower heat: If you have time, cook meat at a lower temp for longer.

Editor's Note: Read [this article](#) from the Natural Medicine Journal for further tips on reducing HCA formation by adding other foods.

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