

# PICNIC PROVIDERS

For when you want to ditch the dining room BY VANESSA SALVIA



MARCHÉ PROVISIONS PREPARED PICNIC MEAL

PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

**W**hat makes the perfect picnic? Aside from a memorable locale, isn't it all about the food? But just any food does not a perfect picnic make. Picnic food should be easy to transport and easy to eat, using fingers or minimal silverware. Nothing fussy is allowed, but elegant is excellent.

Where do you go to get these perfect foods? Here's a run-down.

## CEDAR CREEK CAFE AND BBQ

Oakridge is a natural stopping point if you're heading

from Eugene to any of the falls or lakes accessible from Highway 58. Make a pit stop at the Cedar Creek Cafe and BBQ, located right off the highway as you enter Oakridge.

The café smokes its own brisket, ribs, pork, tri-tip and turkey. It make its own breads, and gets some loaves from Marché Provisions in Eugene (read on for more about that spot for picnic fare). Grab containers of any of the barbecue sides — potato salad, baked beans, pasta salad, cole slaw — and any meat by the pound. Fill up your growler and don't turn down the Marion berry pie. There's also a coffee hut, and during the summer it's open 7 am to 9 at night.

## MARCHÉ PROVISIONS

Located in the ground floor of the 5th Street Public Market, Marché Provisions has no shortage of specialty foods to select, from wine to cheese to jams, and they're making picnics easier than ever by offering wooden crates holding a pre-selected picnic meal for four people for \$50.

"We'll put together cheese, olives, crackers, sliced meats, fresh fruits and chocolates," says Sam Rollins, specialty foods buyer at Marché. "Along with a half a bottle of wine to get the party started."

Rollins says Provisions will have a couple prepared crates on hand, or customers can call ahead and order one. The keepsake crates also hold reusable silverware, napkins and bamboo plates.

For customers who want to put their own basket together, Provisions can still do some of the work. Simply tell the staff that you're planning a picnic, and they'll cut wedges of cheese into bite-sized chunks and arrange in individual boxes. Stop by about 3:30 pm daily for fresh-from-the-oven breads.

"We can put together a picnic as simple or as elaborate as the customer would like," Rollins says. "It just takes us about 15 minutes to put it together and we love doing it."

## LONG'S MEAT MARKET

"Let's start with condiments!" says Loretta Frye, who owns Long's Meat Market with her husband, Robert Frye. Frye is excited to run down the many different flavors customers can choose from to add some zip to their meat and cheese tray, from gourmet chipotle mayonnaise to horseradish or honey mustard. "Oh, and the olives!" she says. "Many different varieties of olives and sweet peppers, all in jars."

Robert Frye had been a butcher at Long's for 31 years before he and Loretta purchased it last fall. The Fries created something for themselves they call the Picnic Pack, and now customers can get it too — slices of hard salami, *mortadella*, *soppressata* and *finocchiona* (a salami flavored with fennel) along with pepper jack and smoked Gouda cheese. Add large dill pickles, bread or crackers and packets of nuts, and you're all set.

Located in the Southtowne shopping center at 28th and Oak Street, Long's also has beer and cider, and that perfect picnic pairing — Bandit wine in a box with a screw-on top.

"We've got pretty much anything you would want for a picnic," she says.

## THE KIVA

The Kiva excels at bulk ingredients and sports a fantastic deli case. Get just the amount you want of dried fruits and nuts and trail mixes in bulk. Place an order for a sandwich, but if you're in a hurry, call ahead. Build your own six pack of beer or choose from a wide selection of kombucha.

A fixture at West 11th Avenue and Olive Street, the Kiva is small but carries produce as well as housewares, which means you can get a cucumber, a cloth napkin and a hand-poured beeswax candle all in the same stop.

## FARMERS MARKETS

Eugene and Springfield farmers markets aren't just for vegetables. The Lane County Farmers Market runs 9 am to 3 pm Saturdays, April 1 through Nov. 11, and Tuesdays from May 2 to Oct. 31 from 10 am to 3 pm at 8th Avenue and Oak Street. The Springfield Farmers Market, held at 5th & A Street, is open 3 to 7 pm every Friday through September. At both places, buy your berries, bread, cheese and honey directly from local farmers and producers. ■