

Make the most of grill season by grilling most of the meal

By MELISSA D'ARABIAN
Associated Press

Summertime grilling is in full swing. And my feeling is that if you are going to crank up the grill anyway, you might as well leverage it and make as much of the meal on there as possible.

Don't stop at grilling meat. How about grilling up a bunch of veggies for a warmed chopped salad? Just rub some oil on the vegetables before grilling, remove them just before they are tender, chop them and toss with a little lemon juice, fresh herbs and salt and pepper.

You also can make great appetizers on the grill. I'm partial to the smoky flavor of this charred eggplant and garlic dip. You stick the eggplant on the grill whole and let the skin char up completely. Then you remove the skin and use the tender flesh that has been infused with the flavor of



Chargrilled garlicky eggplant dip.

AP Photo/Matthew Mead

the grill.

Combine that with sweet roasted garlic (which you also do on the grill), and you have a new backyard barbecue favorite. And with eggplant being so low in calories (about 30 calories a cup), you'll want this dip in your summer repertoire regularly. Serve it with

cut up veggies for an updated crudite everyone will love.

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CHAR-GRILLED GARLICKY EGGPLANT DIP

Start to Finish: 45 minutes
Servings: 6

- 1 head garlic
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - Kosher salt
 - 2 large eggplants (about 2 pounds)
 - 1/2 cup tahini
 - Juice and zest of 1 lemon
 - 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
 - 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
 - Ground black pepper
 - Celery sticks, bell pepper strips, carrot sticks, cucumber rounds, or crackers, to serve

Heat half of the grill to medium-high and other half to low.

Set the head of garlic on its side and carefully slice off the top 1/2 inch to expose the tops of the cloves. Set the head on a sheet of foil, then drizzle it with the oil. Sprinkle generously with salt, then loosely wrap the foil around the head of garlic.

Pierce the eggplants all over with a fork, then place them on the hottest side of the grill. Place the foil-wrapped garlic on the cooler side of the grill. Cover the grill and cook the eggplant for 20 minutes, rotating every 4 to 5 minutes until all sides are completely charred. Remove the eggplant from the grill, but continue to cook the garlic until the cloves are soft, about another 15 minutes for a total of 30 to 35 minutes.

Once the eggplant has cooled enough to handle, cut each in half and scoop out the flesh. Place flesh in a colander to drain over the sink for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, remove the garlic from the grill and, when it is cool enough to handle, squeeze the softened cloves out of the skin and into a food processor. Add the drained eggplant flesh and pulse until chunky smooth. Add the tahini, lemon zest and juice, cilantro and parsley. Pulse 4 to 5 times just to mix well, then season with salt and pepper. Serve with celery sticks, bell pepper strips, carrot sticks, cucumber rounds or crackers.

Nutrition information per serving: 190 calories; 120 calories from fat (63 percent of total calories); 13 g fat (12 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 0 mg cholesterol; 170 mg sodium; 16 g carbohydrate; 5 g fiber; 5 g sugar; 5 g protein.

Planning, packing: Grand Canyon hiking trip tips

By ANNA JOHNSON
Associated Press

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK — Nearly 5 million people visit Grand Canyon National Park each year, but many do not get far below its limestone rim. Even fewer head to the bottom.

Why? The simple answer is: It's hard.

The hike down to the banks of the chalky green Colorado River, and especially back up, is challenging, even grueling. Even if you've trained on stair climbers and hills with a 30-pound (13.6-kilo-gram) backpack, hiking the Grand Canyon will test your endurance and your ability to remain hydrated.

But the sweat and sore muscles are worth the experience as you gaze at the red-hued rock formations from the South Kaibab trail, cross the steel bridge over the fast-moving river and dip your hat in the cool waters of the Bright Angel Creek.

Here are some tips for making the most of your Grand Canyon hiking and camping experience.

Plan ahead

Trying to hike from the rim to the river (or farther) in one day is possible, but extremely difficult. Even in spring and fall, the blazing Arizona sun can quickly turn dangerous, even deadly. Signs around the park and on corridor trails warn visitors not to hike too far down in a day for a reason.

Planning ahead will allow you to reserve a spot at the Bright Angel Campground or the rustic Phantom Ranch lodge at the bottom. For the campground, you should aim to get a backcountry camping permit several months in advance and plan to make reservations for Phantom Ranch even farther in advance.

Training for less pain

Getting a permit and setting dates for the hike also will help with mapping out a training schedule so you can spend more time enjoying the hike instead of suffering through it.



AP Photo/Anna Johnson

Hikers stop to look at the views near the Grand Canyon National Park's South Kaibab trail on March 16. Many hikers choose to take the South Kaibab trail to the bottom of the canyon and then stay overnight at either Bright Angel Campground or Phantom Ranch before hiking back out.

If You Go...

GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK: Permits are required for overnight camping trips but not for day hikes. Details: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/backcountry-permit.html>.

If you have access to hiking trails, particularly in hilly locations, start walking there as soon as possible. On average, hiking down South Kaibab and up Bright Angel (the most common route) takes four to six hours down and five to eight hours back up. And if you're camping at the bottom, you will need to carry all of your equipment with you, so do some training while wearing a 20- to 30-pound backpack.

Other good options are stair-

climbing machines.

Take your time, hydrate

Though your adrenaline will be pumping as you descend the switchbacks of the South Kaibab trail, stop every so often to soak it in and take some photos. The views on this trail are magnificent, but the excitement of getting to the bottom can propel you too quickly.

On the way back up, remember slow and steady is the way to go. Though you'll be tired, remember to pause not only to get your camera out but to eat and drink. And don't dismiss the first couple miles of the Bright Angel trail, which is fairly level along the Colorado River. This part has its own rugged beauty but can be overlooked in the eagerness to get to the top.

Both South Kaibab and Bright Angel have natural stopping

points, including some where the parks service has installed bathrooms, and on Bright Angel, potable water (there is no water on South Kaibab). Take breaks about once an hour, eat salty foods like nuts and jerky and drink water and electrolyte drinks. Another rest tip: Elevate your feet each time you take a break to give them a rest and reduce inflammation.

Only what you need

You must pack essentials like enough food and water, along with a wide-brimmed hat, but don't overload your backpack.

You can weigh your pack at the national park's Backcountry Information Center on the South Rim before you head off. Aim for about 20 to 30 pounds.

Water will likely be the heaviest thing you carry. Aim to bring all the water you need for the hike down — South Kaibab doesn't have any water and your next water stop will be at the Bright Angel Campground. On the way up, there is a shady resting area at Indian Gardens, which also has water year-round. If you do the hike in the warmer months, there's water every 1.5 miles beginning at Indian Gardens on your way up. But, it also will be incredibly hot — 90 plus degrees F — in the late spring, summer and early fall, so consider doing this type of hike in the cooler months.

Unwind and have fun

Chat with fellow hikers at rest stops, soak your tired feet in the crisp Bright Angel Creek after setting up camp, and unwind at the canteen at Phantom Ranch after dark while writing postcards (the cards travel by mule to the top), playing cards and drinking a beer (the canteen sells beer, wine, other beverages and snacks). Though strenuous, the Grand Canyon experience has plenty of opportunities to relax and most importantly, have fun.

Airline group suggests smaller carry-on bags to free up bins

NEW YORK (AP) — Millions of fliers might soon want to buy new carry-on suitcases.

Global airlines announced Tuesday a new guideline that recommends shrinking carry-on bags, in an effort to free up space in packed overhead bins.

The guideline, which is not binding, means that many existing bags currently in compliance with airline rules would not be given preferential treatment in the boarding process. While details of how the guideline will be implemented are murky, and could vary from airline to airline, it raises the possibility that many fliers would be forced to check their favorite carry-on bag.

Fliers might either need to buy smaller suitcases or pay a fee to check their bags, typically \$25 each way.

The recommendation by the International Air Transport Association suggests an "optimal" carry-on size at 21.5 inches tall by 13.5 inches wide by 7.5 inches deep. That's smaller than the current maximum size allowed by many airlines. For instance, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines and United Airlines all currently allow bags up to 22 inches by 14 inches by 9 inches — although gate agents don't always enforce those more-generous measurements.

Airlines around the globe have varying standards — different enough that a carry-on bag that is acceptable to one airline isn't allowed in the cabin of another. The airline trade group says the new guideline will not necessarily replace each airline's rules on bag size, but gives them a uniform measurement that "will help iron out inconsistencies."

Theoretically, if airlines follow this guideline "everyone should have a chance to store their carry-on bags on board aircraft of 120 seats or larger," the trade group said. Today, it's typical for the last 20 or so passengers to board to be forced to check their bags at the gate because the bins are already full.

Eight major international airlines will soon introduce the guideline into their operations. Chris Goater, a spokesman for the transport association, said they are: Air China, Avianca, Azul, Cathay Pacific, China Southern, Emirates, Lufthansa and Qatar.

"It's certainly not mandatory," Goater said.

No U.S. airlines have yet signed on, but Goater expects more carriers to quickly do so. The suggested size was just unveiled publicly Tuesday at a meeting of global airline CEOs in Miami.

Goater said the airlines are working with several large luggage manufacturers but none that are ready to be disclosed publicly. Bags with new labels, designating them as "Cabin OK," are expected to be in stores by the end of the year.



AP Photo/Anna Johnson

Hikers make their way along a ridgeline on the Grand Canyon National Park's South Kaibab trail on March 16. The South Kaibab trail can take about four to six hours to hike from the rim to the Colorado River and offers many dramatic views of the canyon along the way.