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Greenlight Long Island Magazine provides information about where to 'GO' on Long Island for residents, businesspersons, merchants, colle Combining the format of a magazine with that of a weblog, it is a guide to the culture, people, places and history of the Long Island area. briefs, human-interest stories, a dining guide, interviews, lists and links to local resources.

July 3, 2005

## Cooking with Chef Lia

"Summer Food Safety"

Written by Lia Soscia for [Greenlight Long Island Magazine](#)

Summer is here and with it brings endless opportunities for cooking fabulous foods for picnics, boat trips, road trips and barbeques. Seasonal cuisine is rich with salads, grilled meats and fruit. What's better than enjoying all those fresh foods than at your favorite outdoor spot.

I find cooking outside, grilling vegetables and meats an enjoyable and rewarding culinary experience. You get to enjoy the fabulous aromas, mingle with friends while you cook and enjoy the view. My favorite part is that you get an opportunity to bring many friends to the table without all the indoor dining room limitations. (I don't know about you, but having 20 people over for dinner in my dining room is impossible!) Outdoor dining on the patio or at a park lends a certain atmosphere where people truly savor the entire eating experience.

Recently there have been a plethora of cookbooks that specialize in recipes for the great outdoors. Here are a couple titles that can give you some alternative ideas from the traditional barbeque fare:

- "Picnics: Easy Recipes for the Best Alfresco" by Robin Vitetta-Miller
- "Good Day for a Picnic" by Jeremy Jackson

It's important to keep in mind that during the summer months, it is especially important to take extra precautions and practice safe food handling when preparing perishable foods such as meat, poultry, seafood and egg products. The warmer weather conditions provide a perfect environment for bacteria and other pathogens in food to multiply rapidly and cause foodborne illness. Follow the suggestions below to help fight bacteria and reduce the risk of foodborne illness this summer. (Courtesy of the Partnership for Food Safety Education)

### Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands (as in Row, Row, Row Your Boat)

Always, wash your hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food

### Marinating Mandate

When marinating for long periods of time, it is important to keep foods refrigerated. Don't use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food. Boil used marinade before applying to cooked food.

### **Hot, Hot, Hot**

When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.

### **Temperature Gauge**

Use a meat thermometer to insure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.

### **Where's the Beef? Chicken and Fish?**

Hamburgers should be cooked to 160° F, while large cuts of beef such as roasts and steaks may be cooked to 145° F for medium rare or to 160° F for medium. Cook ground poultry to 165° F and poultry parts to 170 F. Fish should be opaque and flake easily.

### **Stay Away from that Same Old Plate**

When taking foods off the grill, do not put cooked food items back on the same plate that previously held raw food.

### **Icebox Etiquette**

A full cooler will maintain its cold temperatures longer than one that is partially filled so it is important to pack plenty of extra ice or freezer packs to insure a constant cold temperature.

And for those of you that enjoy boating on Long Island, here are recommendations on how to safely handle your foods while out on the water:

- Insulated coolers should be packed with several inches of ice or frozen gel-packs.
- Store foods in water-tight containers to prevent contact with melting ice water.
- All perishable foods, such as lunch meats, fried chicken, and potato or pasta salads, should be kept in a cooler with a cold source.
- Keep the lid to your cooler closed as tight as possible -- keep beverages in a separate insulated container.
- Don't forget about non-perishable foods that are great for boat trips such as peanut butter and jelly, fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, trail-mix and canned meat, poultry and fish.
- Keep cooler out of the sun, covered with a blanket or tarp if possible, for further insulation.

For more detailed food safety information you can also visit [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org).

*Chef Lia Soscia is a personal chef and owner of Home Cooking Consultant Personal Chef Services on Long Island. She has been cooking for almost 30 years for friends and family. Lia's Personal Chef Services include home meal preparation, cooking lessons & parties, recipe research and more.*

If you have any questions or need help with summer food safety, please visit Chef Lia at [www.ChefLia.com](http://www.ChefLia.com) or write her at [Lia@ChefLia.com](mailto:Lia@ChefLia.com). She looks forward to hearing your comments and questions. And continue to check back for more "Cooking With Chef Lia," only in Greenlight Long Island Magazine.

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July 2, 2005

## **Centereach's Ultra Lounge Continues its Grand Opening through July 15**