

the **CrossFit** JOURNAL ARTICLES

Fit to Eat

Summer Picnic Menu

Benjamin Sims



The beginning of summer is always an exciting time for food. Everything really starts to come alive, begging to be eaten straight out of the ground or off the vine. Ingredients I have dreamed about all winter are finally here - wild salmon, ripe tomatoes, sweet peaches, and tender green beans. Here is my Zone-friendly summer picnic menu for a warm evening.

Summer Picnic Menu

Poached Salmon Salad

Fresh Peaches
with Yogurt and Almonds

Four 4-block servings

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Fit to Eat - Summer Picnic Menu (continued...)

Poached Salmon Salad

- 4 pieces skinless salmon fillet, 4.5 ounces each
- 4 Early Girl tomatoes, or the best tomatoes you can find
- 4 cups haricots verts (thin, tender green beans), with tips trimmed off
- 4 shallots
- 3 stalks celery
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 bunch fresh basil, leaves and stems separated
- 12 olives, pitted and chopped roughly
- 2 lemons
- 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 2 eggs
- 1 oz. (about 3 tbsp) extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper



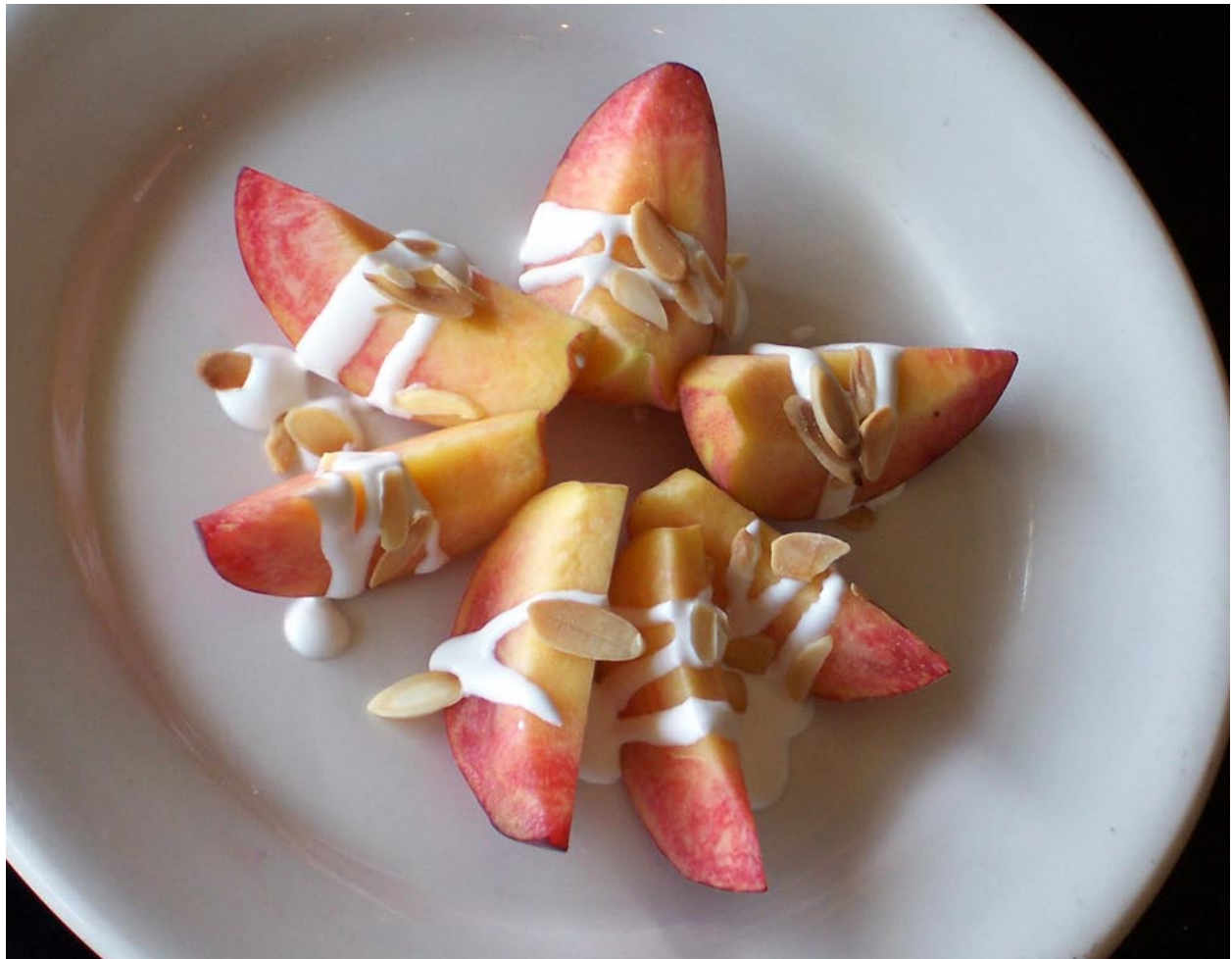
Start by filling two medium pots with cold water. To the first pot add two of the shallots, one stalk of the celery, and the garlic, all roughly chopped. Add the stems of the fresh basil (reserving the leaves for later), the bay leaf one of the lemons cut into quarters, and salt (it should taste like the sea); bring this pot to a slow simmer. To the second pot, just add salt and bring to a boil.

When the salted water comes to a boil, carefully drop the two whole eggs into it, reduce to a slow simmer, and set a timer for 7 minutes. Fill a large bowl or pot with ice water. After 7 minutes, add the green beans to the pot with the eggs and cook for another 2 minutes. Drain the eggs and beans and immediately immerse in the ice water.

Thinly slice the remaining two shallots, put in a bowl, and pour in red wine vinegar. Slice the two stalks of celery and cut the basil into thin strips. Stem the tomatoes, cut into quarters, and place in a separate large mixing bowl. Remove the green beans from the ice water, pat dry, and add to the tomatoes, along with the shallots and vinegar, basil, celery, olives, and the olive oil. Season generously with salt and pepper (tomatoes need more salt than one might think to bring out their

flavor). Leaving the cooked eggs in the cold water bath, peel them (the shells come off easily and neatly underwater).

Meanwhile, your other pot of water with the herbs and vegetables has been simmering and becoming flavorful for the salmon. Making sure the water is not boiling but is just about to, drop the fish into it gently and cook at a low simmer for about 3 to 4 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets. The salmon will turn opaque and firm up; if you bend the fillets a little bit there should still be dark pink in the center when you pull it out of the water. If the fish is the same color all the way through and flakes apart in the water, it will turn out overcooked and dry. Pull out of the water gently with a spatula. If the salmon seems slightly undercooked, that is best, as it will continue to cook from the residual heat. (You can always drop it back in the water if you want to cook it more, but there is no recourse for overcooking.) The salmon, tomato, and green bean salad and the eggs can all go into the refrigerator until you are ready to serve them. When you are ready to eat, cut the eggs in half lengthwise, assemble everything on plates, and sprinkle salt and fresh cracked pepper over the Salmon and hard cooked eggs.



Fresh Peaches with Yogurt and Almonds

(Dessert)

- 4 ripe peaches
- 1 cup organic plain yogurt
- 2 tbsp sliced toasted almond

The hardest part about this dessert is finding good peaches. They will not be in a supermarket; the best source is typically either a farmer's market or a generous friend with a peach tree. Finding a good peach is one of the joys of summer—you will know when it is right, and all others will seem like a waste of time. Give the peaches a rinse and cut into quarters, removing the pit. Spread on a plate and top each quarter with a spoonful of yogurt and a sprinkle of almonds.



Benjamin Sims is currently chef at Ristorante Avanti in Santa Cruz, CA. He graduated from the California Culinary Academy in 1996 and has trained and worked in the San Francisco Bay Area, Italy, and London. Benjamin has been a regular at CrossFit Santa Cruz for the past two years, in which time his pull-ups have increased from zero to twenty-five. (Yes, he kips.)