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Readin', writin' ... and a really good time!

Moms, celebrate a return to school days with a farewell-to-summer feast with friends

When the long, lazy days of summer give way to the more structured start of a new school year, the mood at your house may be one of resignation, of celebration – or both. Chances are, the parents are ready to return to a routine, however ambivalent the pupils may be. The kids' first day of school is a great time to invite the moms in your circle to a grown-up back-to-school bash, featuring a delicious end-of-summer lunch menu.

Set the tone with the right invitation, suggests lifestyle expert Amy Tobin, of [Inspired Ideas](#). She recommends creating a hall pass, report card or certificate of achievement. You may also want to give guests an “assignment” or two:

- Ask each mom to bring a photo from her school days. You can use them as part of the décor, and reminisce about the styles, trends and friends of your childhoods.
- Encourage everyone to dress in their school colors, or spirit wear from their alma maters.
- Party with a purpose. Request that guests bring a few school supplies to help a needy child.

A menu that makes the grade

No gathering would be complete without a satisfying menu. Start with Pinwheel Steak Skewers, flavorful spirals of *Certified Angus Beef*® brand top sirloin or flank steak garnished with feta cheese and garden-fresh tomatoes and oregano. A breeze to put together, Tobin suggests serving the petite kabobs on small chalkboards.

Summer's flavors continue to shine with Grilled Filet with Watermelon and Bibb Salad. *Certified Angus Beef*® brand filet mignon is not only one of the leanest cuts, it's the most tender, too. The salad is easy as A-B-C, 1-2-3 to prepare for a party, and especially delicious served with crusty bread and herbed butter. Tobin recommends washing the lettuce, cutting the watermelon and preparing the vinaigrette early in the day, then grilling the filets last-minute and assembling the salad while the steaks are resting.

No meal is complete without dessert! Tobin says a dessert buffet, full of bake-sale favorites like cupcakes, brownies and cookies, is sure to earn top honors. Display selections on cake stands, and top cupcakes with sweet marzipan apples. Be sure to have some brown paper lunch bags available so guests can take home any leftovers!

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Pinwheel Steak Skewers

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds *Certified Angus Beef*[®] top sirloin or flank steak
- 1 cup beef broth
- 2 tablespoons red wine
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 3 large ripe tomatoes, diced
- 6 ounces feta cheese
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh oregano
- Rosemary as needed for garnish
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 6 metal skewers*



Instructions

1. To make marinade, combine beef broth, red wine, Worcestershire, vegetable oil and Italian seasoning. Place steak and marinade in zipper-locking plastic bag; refrigerate 2 hours.
2. Remove steak from bag and discard any leftover marinade. Slice across the grain into thin strips. Roll each beef strip and thread onto skewers, season with salt and pepper, and grill to desired doneness.
3. To serve, combine olive oil and tomatoes, and divide among 6 small plates. Top with feta cheese and oregano. Place one skewer per plate and garnish with rosemary.

*(If using bamboo skewers, soak in water one hour before using.)

Serves 6

Grilled Filet with Watermelon and Bibb Salad

Ingredients

- 4 (6-ounce) *Certified Angus Beef*[®] tenderloin filet steaks
- 1/2 serrano chile pepper, finely diced
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh mint
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cups 1/2-inch diced seedless watermelon
- 1 head Bibb lettuce, cleaned
- Salt and pepper to taste



Instructions

1. Prepare vinaigrette by whisking together serrano pepper, balsamic vinegar, honey, mint and olive oil.
2. Season filets and grill over medium-high heat until desired doneness. Remove from heat and allow to rest.
3. For salad, toss watermelon, lettuce and vinaigrette together. Serve with filets.

Serves 4

Recipes provided by the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand

About the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand

The *Certified Angus Beef*[®] brand is the best Angus beef available and a cut above USDA Prime, Choice and Select. Ten standards ensure its premium quality and incredible flavor, tenderness and juiciness in every bite. It is proudly featured by more than 12,300 restaurants and retailers around the world. For more information, visit www.certifiedangusbeef.com, or follow the brand on Facebook and Twitter.

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