



## **Fire Up the Grill Without Burning Your Budget** **Special to The Weber Newsroom™, by Monique Ryan, MS, RD, LDN**

If eating in more often has been one of your recession busting strategies for 2009, grilling season is the perfect set-up for streamlining your food dollars. Warmer weather, eating outdoors, and trying out new tasty grilling recipes all add up to lend a festive air to your budget minded at-home eats. And with *Weber's Way to Grill™* by nationally acclaimed grilling expert Jamie Purviance, both aspiring and experienced grill cooks can choose from dozens of nutritious and budget-minded recipes.

Some recession-proof grill and meal planning strategies:

### ***Pick the right protein***

Grill meals center around your protein sources and picking the right protein can save dollars. Less expensive cuts of red meat include loin and flank cuts. Poultry continues to be a good option, as do certain varieties of fish. Buying protein sources in bulk can also stretch your food dollar.

### ***Expand your protein repertoire***

Expand your protein repertoire. Some of the most inexpensive and nutrient rich protein choices include dried beans and lentils. Choose recipes that include black beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, and pinto beans. Prepare sides that include these nutrients-rich foods as well. Plan to “go vegetarian” with these rich proteins for at least two meals weekly for higher nutrient contents. You can grill vegetarian quite easily—Purviance even has a recipe in his new cookbook for grilling tofu.

### ***Practice portion control***

You can also practice a little protein portion control. Not only are modest protein portions of four to six ounces good for your health, they also stretch your food dollar a little farther. Ask your butcher to cut and portion out meat and poultry cuts appropriately.

### ***Practice weekly meal planning and grocery shopping***

One of the best ways to streamline your food budget is with weekly meal planning and once a week grocery shopping from an organized shopping list. Planning prevents the purchase of more expensive single items and impulse buys, and saves time as well. Look for budget supermarkets and have an action plan. If you are new to meal planning, start by taking an inventory of your pantry, freezer, and refrigerator. Stock up on inexpensive whole grain staples like brown rice, whole wheat pasta, and barley. Buy dry goods in bulk and when on sale whenever possible.

### ***Cook extra for leftovers***

Extra portions of healthy grilled meals can be packed for lunch the next day and save you food dollars at work. Grill additional amounts of lean and lower sodium choices such as fresh lean beef, poultry, and fish that can be used in sandwiches or salads the next day, replacing more processed lunchmeats. Freeze leftovers for a quick and healthy meal later in the week.

### ***Select in-season produce and buy local***

In-season produce is always less expensive and is best for flavor and nutritional value. Shop at your local farmer's market for the freshest and least expensive options available. Farmer's market produce is also easier on the environment, having traveled fewer miles to reach your plate and palate.

Chef Purviance has chosen three recipes—making a couple of healthier alterations—that are nutritious and yet not wallet-busters. You can serve either the beef or the chicken with the broccoli:



### Persian Chicken Kabobs



Serves: 6  
Prep time: 15 minutes  
Marinating time: 30 minutes

WAY TO GRILL: direct medium heat (350° to 450°F)

GRILLING TIME: 8 to 10 minutes

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: bamboo skewers, soaked in water for at least 30 minutes

#### Marinade

- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
  - ½ cup fresh lemon juice
  - 2 tablespoons dried oregano
  - 2 teaspoons sweet paprika
  - 2 teaspoons minced garlic
  - 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil \*
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- 10 boneless, skinless chicken thighs,  
about 4 ounces each, cut into 1½-inch pieces

1. In the bowl of a food processor or blender, puree the onion, lemon juice, oregano, paprika, and garlic. With the motor running, slowly add the oil.
2. Place the chicken pieces in a large, resealable plastic bag and pour in the marinade. Press the air

out of the bag and seal tightly. Turn the bag to distribute the marinade and let the chicken marinate at room temperature for 30 minutes.

3. Prepare the grill for direct cooking over medium heat.
4. Remove the chicken from the marinade and thread onto skewers, so that the pieces are touching (but not crammed together). Discard the marinade.
5. Brush the cooking grates clean. Grill the kabobs over **direct medium heat**, with the lid closed as much as possible, until the meat is fully cooked but not dry, 8 to 10 minutes, turning once. Serve warm.

\* Assumed 1/3 cup of oil is absorbed after grilling

Per serving:

Calories: 365; Total Fat 20 g; Saturated Fat 3.6 g; Cholesterol 156 mg;  
Sodium 165 mg; Carbohydrate 8.3 g; Dietary Fiber 2.84 g; Protein 38 g.  
Average cost per serving: \$2.40

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### Lemon Broccoli



Serves: 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Way to grill: direct medium heat (350° TO 450°F)

Grilling time: 4 to 6 minutes

Special equipment: perforated grill pan

- ½ teaspoons kosher salt\*, divided
- 1 pound broccoli florets, about 6 cups
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest
- 1/3 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1. Fill a large saucepan with water to within a few inches of the top. Add 2 teaspoons of the salt to the water and bring to a boil over high heat. Add the broccoli to the boiling water and cook until bright green and crisp-tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from the saucepan and plunge into an ice bath to rapidly cool them. Then remove the broccoli from the ice bath and drain.
2. Prepare the grill for direct cooking over medium heat. Brush the cooking grates clean. Preheat a grill pan over direct medium heat for about 10 minutes.
3. In a large bowl mix the broccoli, oil, lemon zest, and the remaining ½ teaspoon salt.
4. Spread the broccoli on the grill pan in a single layer. Grill over direct medium heat, with the lid closed as much as possible, until the broccoli is warm and just begins to brown, 4 to 6 minutes, turning occasionally.
5. Remove from the grill and garnish with the cheese. Serve warm.

Makes 6 servings

Per serving:

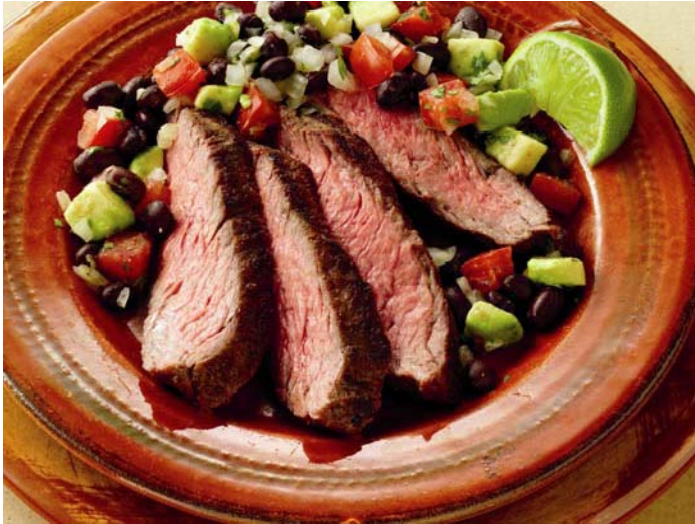
Calories: 70; Total Fat 3.8 g; Saturated Fat: 1.6 g; Cholesterol 5.4 mg;  
Sodium 233 mg; Carbohydrate 8.2 g; Dietary Fiber 2.6 g; Protein 5 g.  
Average cost per serving: 60 cents.

\* Salt amount slightly reduced from original recipe. Servings smaller from original recipe.

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## Carne Asada with Black Bean and Avocado Salsa



Serves: 6

Prep time: 20 minutes

WAY TO GRILL: direct high heat (450° to 550°F)

GRILLING TIME: 4 to 6 minutes

### Salsa

- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed
- 1 ripe Haas avocado, finely chopped
- 1 cup finely chopped white onion, rinsed in a sieve
- 1 cup finely chopped ripe tomato
- 2 tablespoons roughly chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon chipotle chile powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

### Rub

- 1 teaspoon chipotle chile powder
  - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
  - ½ teaspoon ground cumin
  - ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1½ pounds skirt steak, trimmed of excess fat  
Extra-virgin olive oil

1. In a medium, non-reactive bowl combine the salsa ingredients. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing the wrap directly onto the surface, and set aside at room temperature for as long as 2 hours before serving.
2. In a small bowl mix the rub ingredients. Cut the steak into foot long pieces to make them easier to handle on the grill. Lightly coat both sides of the steaks with oil. Season evenly with the rub. Let stand at room temperature for 20 to 30 minutes before grilling. Prepare the grill for direct cooking over high heat.
3. Brush the cooking grates clean. Grill the steaks over direct high heat, with the lid closed as much as possible, until cooked to your desired doneness, 4 to 6 minutes for medium rare, turning once or twice. Remove the steaks from the grill and let rest for 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Cut the steaks across the grain into ½-inch-thick slices. Serve warm with the salsa.

Per serving:

Calories: 350; Total Fat 21 g; Saturated Fat 7 g; Cholesterol 60 mg; Sodium 550 mg; Carbohydrate 15 g; Dietary Fiber 4.8 g; Protein 25 g.  
Average cost per serving: \$2.50.

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*Monique is a prolific nutrition writer and is the author of dozens of magazine articles and four books including, Sports Nutrition for Endurance Athletes, and Performance Nutrition for Team Sports. She is a regular contributor to VeloNews, Inside Triathlon, and Outside magazines. Monique has consulted for USA Cycling, USA Triathlon, the Chicago Fire Soccer Team, the Timex Multisport Team, and several professional cycling teams. She currently consults with coaches, athletic trainers, and professional and amateur athletes competing at all levels.*

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