



Pile up the food on pretty plates. Floral fiesta paper plate, £2.99 for 12, Candle & Cake

Fill to the brim with refreshing drinks. Vertical ripple jug, £10, Waitrose

Add colour to your al fresco meal. Moroccan tea light set, £9.95, Furnish.co.uk



Raise a glass. Arabian Nights copper martini glass, £5, Sainsbury's



Light up the evening. Konstsmide Assisi Solar Lantern, £27.50, Internet Gardener



Serve a fresh salad. Toscana melamine salad bowl, £12.99, Lakeland. Tuscany acacia salad servers, £10, T&G Woodware



Eating al fresco

Now that summer is finally here, what better excuse to get outdoors and enjoy food with friends? All you need is some colourful crockery, blankets for comfort and stylish outdoor lighting to cast a soft glow into the long, warm evening.

For the barbecue, visit greatbritishmeat.com and try Heck's gluten-free sausages and veggie options (from Tesco). For inspiration, read new books *The Real Greek: Eat Healthy Together* by Tonia Buxton (Blink Publishing, £20), and *The Social Kitchen: Food For Family And Friends* by Shally Tucker – her daughter, Dani, gathered together the recipes in her mum's memory in this beautiful book; all proceeds go to Dermatrust.

Blogger spotlight



Karen Burns-Booth is a freelance writer and recipe developer who splits her time between Yorkshire and south-west France, where she runs a cookery school. She is inspired by seasonal food, travel and the best of British cooking and has lots of tasty, good-for-you recipes and ideas on her blog, lavenderandlovage.com, which celebrates the joy that comes from preparing and sharing food with loved ones.

OUTDOOR ESSENTIALS

Pack these in your picnic basket for the perfect finishing touch



Paprika mayonnaise, £3.45, Brindisa



Rosemary Honey mustard, from £22, Maille



English Provender Proper Pickle, £1.50, Ocado



Ugly Lemon & Lime, 99p, Ugly Drinks



Hampstead Tea organic iced tea, £1.39, Wholefoods Market



B.fresh cold-pressed juice, £2.49, Waitrose