



Australian  
Farmers



National Agriculture Day

A GUIDE TO HOSTING THE PERFECT

# Long Table Lunch

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#AgDay2020



From what to cook, what to pack,  
how to style up your table, capture  
the day and even a playlist of perfect  
grazing tunes; here's our guide to  
the perfect long lunch.

### LONG SPRING LUNCH MENU

FILO, SPINACH AND DILL TART

RADISH AND POMEGRANATE SALAD

SPICED CAULIFLOWER AND CHICKPEA SALAD

SWIRLY, CRUNCHY ROCKY ROAD

This is of course, just a suggestion but made with the intention to give an idea of what might work for you too. A beautiful tart or quiche is always going to be a crowd pleaser, and when served with a couple of lovely salads and some chutneys it's perfect for this kind of event. All the cooking is done well in advance, you don't need to worry about a barbecue and all that needs to be done on the day is slice and serve.

## Radish and Pomegranate Salad

A simple but really bright, crunchy and delicious salad; this works particularly well to offset the filo spinach and dill tart.

### METHOD

Chop one telegraph cucumber into chunks, slice a bunch of radishes into thin discs and pick the leaves off a bunch of mint. Combine in a large bowl, then dress with a simple lemon and olive oil dressing and sprinkle with nigella and pomegranate seeds.

## Filo, Spinach and Dill Tart

PREP TIME 15 MINUTES / COOK TIME 40 MINUTES / SERVES 6-8

A lovely simple and easy tart, this one can take all kinds of variations. You could swap in (or add) silverbeet or kale for the spinach, and if you prefer, leave out the bacon or swap for ham, cooked chicken or smoked salmon.

### INGREDIENTS

*Olive oil, for cooking*  
*1 red onion, finely diced*  
*8 handfuls English spinach (about 1 big bunch), roughly chopped, stalks discarded*  
*A few pinches of salt*  
*8 good sized rashers of bacon, cut into lardoons*  
*1 cup (230g) ricotta cheese*  
*½ cup (100g) crumbled feta cheese*  
*4 eggs*  
*Grated zest of 1 lemon*  
*1 handful dill, finely chopped*  
*100g (3½ oz) butter, melted*  
*⅔ Cup (100g) pine nuts, toasted*  
*6 sheets filo pastry*  
*¼ cup (40g) sesame seeds*

### METHOD

Preheat the oven to 220°C (425°F). Heat a little olive oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 5 minutes or until soft. Add the spinach, a handful at a time, waiting for each to wilt a little before adding the next one. Add a few pinches of salt as you go and cook until all of the spinach has just wilted. Remove from the heat and set aside. Add a little more of the oil and then fry the bacon until cooked through.

Add ricotta in a big bowl and whisk in the feta, eggs, lemon zest and dill. Season to taste.

Now to line the tart tin with filo pastry. I use a 24cm (9½ inch) spring-form cake tin, but a rectangular baking tray with 5cm (2 inch) sides would be good, too. Grease the base and side of the tin with a little of the melted butter. Lay the filo pastry out on a work surface. Brush one pastry sheet with the melted butter and gently lay it across the cake tin, then press into the tin so the excess pastry is hanging over the side. Repeat with the remaining pastry sheets.

Spoon the spinach mixture into the pastry, top with the bacon, the ricotta mixture and sprinkle with the pine nuts. Bring the pastry edges over the filling to make a rough lid. Brush with a little more melted butter and sprinkle with the sesame seeds. Bake for 35 minutes or until the pastry top is golden brown.

# Spiced Cauliflower and Chickpea Salad

PREP TIME 20 MINUTES / COOK TIME 35 MINUTES / SERVES 6 - AS SIDE SALAD

This substantial, delicious salad is perfect for barbecues, picnics or anytime you're asked to bring a plate. It's also hearty enough to serve on their own, there's no risk of wilting and it tastes just as good served cold or at room temperature.

## INGREDIENTS

*1 tsp ground coriander*  
*½ tsp ground cumin*  
*½ tsp ground turmeric*  
*½ tsp dried chilli (to taste)*  
*1 tsp caster sugar*  
*½ tsp sea salt*  
*1 cauliflower, cut into florets*  
*⅓ cup (80ml) olive oil*  
*2 brown onions, thinly sliced*  
*¾ cup (150g) dried chickpeas, soaked overnight in cold water, then cooked until tender, or 400g (14oz) tin chickpeas, rinsed and drained.*  
*1 handful coriander (cilantro) leaves*  
*1 handful flat-leaf parsley leaves*  
*2 handfuls mixed salad leaves*  
*Juice of 1 lemon*

## METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F). Combine all of the spices, sugar and salt in a small bowl. Place the cauliflower on a baking tray. Drizzle with a little of the olive oil, sprinkle with the spice mix and rub to combine. Roast the cauliflower for 35 minutes or until the florets are beginning to char on the edges.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining olive oil in a frying pan over medium-low heat and cook the onion for 15 minutes or until caramelised.

In a large serving bowl, toss together the roasted cauliflower, chickpeas and onion. Just before serving, add the herbs and salad leaves, drizzle with the lemon juice and season to taste.

A long lunch in the paddock, park, nature strip, wherever; really is one of life's most memorable and wonderful experiences.





## Swirly, Crunchy Rocky Road

PREP TIME 5 MINUTES / COOK TIME 10 MINUTES / MAKES APPROX. 20 PIECES

Rocky road always goes down well and this one, I promise, will be a particular crowd pleaser. It's also perfect for picnics and lunches like this because you can just have it all cut up and ready in the esky then place on a few big platters with some strawberries or fresh fruit as well and pass around. No washing up, no messy cutting of cakes and lots of happy rocky road lovers.

### INGREDIENTS

*1 ½ cups (200g) roughly chopped good-quality dark chocolate*

*1 ½ cups (200g) roughly chopped good-quality white chocolate*

*1 cup (90g) nice marshmallows, cut into pieces with scissors*

*¾ cup (110g) salted peanuts*

*½ cup (110g) crystallised ginger*

*Edible flowers to decorate*

### METHOD

Grease and line a 20cm (8 inch) square cake tin with baking paper. Melt the dark chocolate in a bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Do the same with the white chocolate in a separate bowl.

Stir the marshmallows, peanuts and ginger into the dark chocolate. Spoon into the tin and swirl in the white chocolate by using a knife to mix the two chocolates together, in and around the other ingredients. Sprinkle with a few edible flowers for decoration, then place in the fridge to set for at least 2 hours.

Once hardened, slice the rocky road into even pieces and package up for your lucky friends. If the weather's warm, store in the fridge.

'I love the salted peanuts and the ginger works well for me, but you can of course swap in or out anything you prefer; maybe add half a cup of broken shortbread biscuits, or perhaps some jellies or dried cranberries'.

# How to host a really great Long Lunch - *in the great outdoors!*

We have hosted many a long lunch here on our deer farm in Orange NSW. Some for 30–40 people, some for just ten and sometimes for just our family. And what we know (have learnt) for sure, is that even though these events take a little planning and effort, it's all so worth it.

People we've hosted still come up to us years, sometimes 10 years later to say how much they enjoyed that day, how wonderful it was in the green grass under the willow trees by the creek, enjoying a three course meal featuring the produce that our farm proudly produced.

*Here are a few things we've learnt along the way that I hope will help you when planning your long lunch for this AgDay:*

## 1. **Have a back-up plan**

The best laid plans can always be thwarted by wind or rain. So it's a good idea to always plan an alternative location for your lunch, just in case. This is also a good excuse to clean out the shed or dig out the old market umbrellas you haven't used for ages!

## 2. **Make a list!**

It sounds obvious but it's also the only way to make sure that nothing essential gets left behind in the rush of the morning. Write down absolutely everything you'll need and tick everything off as you pack.

## 3. **Don't forget a little first aid kit**

November is (for my family and farm at least), peak hay fever time so I always have a stash of soothing eye wipes, antihistamines and tissues just in case we get caught in a sneezing, itchy eye fit! Also handy to pack sunscreen, bandaids and sting cream just in case.

## 4. **Style it up**

Even the dodgiest old trestle table can look good when covered with a big drop sheet. I have three or four huge ones bought at our local paint shop for about \$15 each. They are a great neutral colour, nice and thick and actually look quite smart when all dollied up for lunch. If you have a bit of a crew coming, you can also grab a pair of pinking shears and cut up another of the drop sheets into a bunch of cheap, cute napkins too.

Then grab a few big jars, vases or even buckets and fill with foraged branches, whatever pretty thing is growing in your area, just pick lots of that and go with the theory of more is more. If it's not windy, trail vines or branches down the table in amongst the vases.



If it is windy, use some rocks to keep them in place. Repetition and abundance works a treat!

#### 5. Serve 'family style'

Set the table with dinner plates then just plonk big platters up and down the table so people can serve themselves and each other 'family style'.

I went to a wedding once where they did this, and even took it a step further; the main meal was a roast lamb per six people and under every sixth seat was taped an apron, whoever was sitting there was designated carver. It was a really fun way to get everyone involved, break the ice and get people chatting.

#### 6. Keep it really, really simple

Just do one or two fabulous dishes, things like the quiche and salad here, things that travel well and don't mind sitting at room temperature for a bit. And posh it up with a few different jars of condiments; delicious chutneys, mustards, pickles and fancy salts.

#### 7. Keep your drinks cold and bring more water than you think you'll need

Decant your white wine, rose or iced tea into a thermos or one of those super duper insulated big drink bottles, that keep drinks nice and cold for hours. Other than that, just get your biggest esky and fill it with ice then drinks. There's nothing nicer than reaching for an ice cold bottle of mineral water or whatever your tippie while in the great outdoors.

And get (or borrow) one of those big water dispenser/canteens. In all the lunches we've hosted here on

the farm, water is the one thing I always fail to bring enough of. People seem to get thirstier when eating outside. And also, there's always a knife or something that needs a quick rinse mid-serving.

#### 8. Pack for the pack up

Bring a big Tupperware container to scrape all the leftovers in - lucky chooks! And pack extra tea towels to wrap and wipe knives, cutlery, big bowls and platters down before packing back in the car. Also, a few garbage bags for general waste and one to bundle all your cloths up, ready for the wash back home.

#### 9. Bring extra hats and sunnies (if you have them)

Someone will absolutely forget a hat, and if you're like me you'll definitely have a few extras hanging up in the laundry so grab them and any sunnies lying around. Also perhaps a couple of scarves/shawls just in case it gets really hot and sun-burn-y or it's getting really cool. Basically we want our guests to be as comfortable as possible so they have the best time, and these little gestures mean a lot. They say to your guests that you do care and really want them to have the best time.

#### 10. Check you have enough gas in the barbecue!

I speak from experience; it's a major bummer to be halfway through cooking your beautiful venison or lamb backstrap and the barbecue goes out. Not ideal.

#### 11. Don't forget the tunes!

Charge up your portable speaker and download your favourite long lunch playlist (or try ours, see page 9). Music makes such a difference.

## Cheat sheet for taking great photos of your Long Lunch

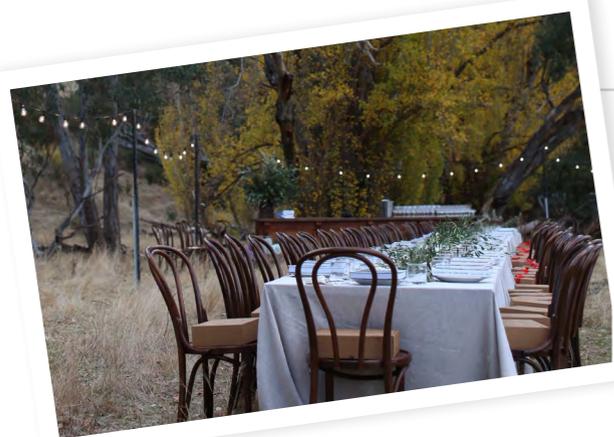


Because if you don't instagram it...did it really happen? Just kidding. But of course, these events are so much fun and worth capturing properly, not only for posterity but also so you can share your AgDay long lunch (don't forget our hashtag #AgDayAU) and maybe also inspire others to host something similar at their place!

1. Clean your phone camera lens! This is a small thing but can make a huge difference. Because when you think about it, our phones are always pretty grotty; shoved in pockets, bags, dragged around the kitchen etc. So before you take a photo, just give the camera lens a gentle clean with a clean cloth or even the bottom of your t-shirt.
2. Before you just snap away, think about what you are actually trying to achieve in taking this photo. Think about composition, think about the story you're telling. Slow down, pull back and give it a bit of time!
3. So about composition; this is basically the act of putting things together. In this context we mean doing so in a way that is pleasing to the eye, so they 'look good'. Having an idea of what makes composition work can make a big difference to your photos, and the easiest way to ensure composition is on track is to use the rule of thirds. This is an important design principle where an image is divided

- into thirds – horizontally and vertically to create a grid. The four points in the middle where the lines meet are the most interesting places for the eye to land. You never want the main subject of your photos to land right in the middle, but if you push it just off-centre, up or down a bit onto one of those grid sweet spots, then your image will pack a much more interesting punch. Your smartphone should have an inbuilt grid – turn it on! So for example, when you take a photo of your table all set up for lunch, make sure the table/grass is in the bottom third and the sky is in the top third or vice versa.
4. Hold your phone steady! Photographers use tripods for a reason; and that is to keep the camera as still as possible for the sharpest image possible. Same goes with your phone. So hold it with two hands, lock your elbows into your sides and make yourself as statue while you take the pics, It will make a difference!

5. Don't use the zoom function! On the majority of smartphone cameras, the zoom will result in a blurry photo. Take the photo as is and then crop in later if you need.
6. When taking photos of people, give them direction! Ask people to all look up at the same time, stop eating and talking while you take the photo or maybe even throw their hands in the air! Also, try to get a bit higher than the people you are snapping as this can be more flattering.
7. Don't forget to snap the details and processes too; yes we love the big money shot of the table setting and view or whatever, but detail shots are great and useful to have too! Details of the table setting, a close up of someone carrying the tray of salad to the table, or even the menu written up beautifully. These all make for a gorgeous slideshow!
8. Backlight your photos; this means take the photo with the sun coming from behind; this can be much more flattering and gives everything a gorgeous glow!
9. Try a few different angles; get down low and snap upwards, hold your phone flat and horizontal over the table for a birds eye view of the setting (or flat lay), come in close and then stand back. Snap portrait and landscape versions. Give yourself lots of options so at the end of the day when you're collapsed on the couch with a well deserved cup of tea or g&t, you can choose a bunch of favourites to edit and share.
10. Edit your photos! Use an app like VSCO or Snapseed to give your photos a quick brighten, sharpen or crop. Or use one of their filters to really make it pop. Just go easy on these, sometimes filter presets can be a bit heavy handed!



## Long Lunch Playlist

A great playlist of happy, chill music that just goes on and on is the final touch for our perfect long lunch. We've put together exactly that over on [Spotify \(link here\)](#).

## Seasonal Produce Calendar

It just makes sense to base your menu around whatever is in season don't you think? Well just in case you're not convinced yet, here are a few reasons...

- When we cook with the seasons we are also supporting our local farmers.
- Cooking seasonally is much cheaper than buying imported produce out of season.
- And of course, when we buy seasonal produce it is much fresher and will last far better than those figs imported from Turkey at huge cost not only to the end consumer but the actual fruit's condition too!
- It's just more delicious. Full stop.

To find out what's in season in your part of the country, check out the [Seasonal Food Guide's website](#).



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National Agriculture Day (AgDay) is a day dedicated to celebrating Australian agriculture and the people behind it, Australian farmers.

Despite coming off one of the worst droughts in living memory, coupled with bushfires and floods at the start of the year, farmers have had our back during the COVID-19 pandemic, continuing to grow the food and fibre we all depend on.

This National Agriculture Day (AgDay), we're asking all Australians to join us in support of our farmers and let them know that Australia is right behind them.

Find out more at [agday.org.au](https://agday.org.au)