

3 Grilling Hacks for Delicious, Plant-Based Summer Menus

FAMILY FEATURES

Cooking and entertaining outdoors can bring friends and family back together, but it doesn't have to be complicated. Simple, flavorful recipes can be easy on the home chef yet still tasty and enjoyable for those at the table.

One of the best parts of the season is grilled fare like burgers, hot dogs and fresh vegetables. This year, consider adding a plant-based option to your menu. Made with simple, recognizable ingredients, Lightlife offers vegan, non-GMO options that are made for the grill, like Plant-Based Burgers, Smart Dogs and Italian Smart Sausage. These products can help satisfy the craving for protein and are made with ingredients you can feel good about serving your friends and family.

"Food brings people together, and now more than ever, grilling season and dining al fresco is one of the best ways to do that," said Tommy McDonald, executive chef at Greenleaf Foods. "Think of the grill as an additional seasoning element – a zero-fuss way to add miles of flavor. One of my favorite products is Lightlife's Smart Dogs, which have been reformulated to taste better than ever. Try topping them with a freshly made onion jam or quick-pickled relish."

Consider these tips from McDonald to properly grill plant-based variations of your favorite meals:

Be mindful of cook times. Plant-based protein products typically taste best when cooked properly, usually over a low, open flame. When you're almost ready to dish them out in recipes like Grilled Pineapple Burgers with Honey Garlic Barbecue Sauce or Avocado Toast Dogs, give them a quick sear. If you're unsure, reference the recommended cook times on the packaging.

Keep it separate. During these seasonal celebrations, there's often some people who want traditional meat and others who crave plant-based options. To satisfy your group, drop a cast-iron skillet on the grill and allow it to heat up. Put your favorite plant-based proteins in the skillet, along with veggies, to keep the grill organized.

Top it off. Don't skimp on the toppings. The next time you're looking to jazz up burgers, sausages or hot dogs, make an easy DIY onion jam to spread on top. While the burgers and dogs are on the grates, prepare some extra coals; once they've burned down a bit, bury foil-wrapped onions in the coals. After the onions are soft and warmed through, pull them out and enjoy a smokey onion jam.

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Avocado Toast Dogs

Total time: 15 minutes
Servings: 4

Oil

- 2 medium avocados
- 1/2 lemon, juice only
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 4 Lightlife Smart Dogs
- 4 hot dog buns
- 1/2 teaspoon everything bagel seasoning
- sriracha

Lightly coat grill grates with oil and preheat to medium heat.
In small bowl, mash avocados, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Cover and rest in refrigerator.
Grill dogs 6-7 minutes, turning frequently.
While dogs are grilling, lightly toast buns.
Spread avocado mixture on one side of toasted buns. Sprinkle each with everything bagel seasoning. Add dogs and drizzle with sriracha.