Unexpected Flavors

Forget meat. You can grill so many other foods!

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Who says only slices of chicken, beef, pork and other meat can stand up to the searing heat of a grill's metal bars? Not us! Practically any food you can think of is worthy of this cooking technique that acts as a flavor enhancer to boot.

If you've never tried grilling veggies, you may not think to include fruit, bread, cheese and even cooked rice on a list of foods to grill. But that would be a real mistake. These everyday foods can become grilled favorites that might just bump meat off your plate.

Ever heard of grilled pineapple, watermelon, apples, peaches and pears? Yup! All of these luscious fruits can take the heat. According to cuisine experts, when fruits are firm and barely ripe, soak them in liquor or drizzle them with a little honey, agave nectar, maple syrup or some other liquid sweetener—and then brush them with oil and grill 'em. (Note: Most, but not all, fruits should be peeled before you grill them.)

But if you just prefer to tackle veggies for now, follow this general rule of thumb: Don't peel the veggie; simply brush on some oil then place on the grill.

To shorten the cook time for certain grilled veggies, you can pre-cook them by steaming or blanching (submerging them for a few minutes in furiously boiling water) until they're a tad tender. But be aware that other veggies—especially eggplant, fennel, onions, mushrooms, peppers, sweet potatoes, summer squash and tomatoes—should be raw when you drop them on the grill.

You can even grill ice cream—yes, you heard right. But first dunk a scoop of the stuff in egg batter and roll the ice cream in a tasty dry food (think: bread crumbs or shredded coconut) to form an outside shell before grilling.

Hey, have fun. The idea is to open yourself to new taste sensations!

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