

light my fire

This summer I plan to reenact my suburban childhood by hanging outdoors all day, every day. I recently moved from Manhattan to a comparatively pastoral community in Brooklyn, NY, complete with a little patch of AstroTurf out back. It's there that I plan to wile away the summer hours drinking iced tea, catching up on all the angry politically correct books I didn't have time to read all winter, watching Yankees games on a portable TV and, most important, firing up the barbecue for friends in my "Kiss the Cook" apron. Being a meat-lovin' gal, I can think of no better way to cook burgers, hot dogs and ribs than to throw them over charcoal. But occasionally I wake up feeling vegetarian, and on those days these seafood shish kebabs will be just the ticket (yes, yes, I know real vegetarians don't eat seafood—for them, substitute chunks of the firmer tofu for the shrimp). And oh yeah: Have a beautiful summer.



PROCURE:

2 pounds of large shrimp

1 lemon

olive oil

2 or more garlic cloves, minced

2 tbsp. fresh (or 1 tbsp. dried) rosemary

10 stainless steel skewers (available pretty cheap at most supermarkets)

3 small red onions, quartered

20 large or medium mushrooms left whole (cut the stems off)

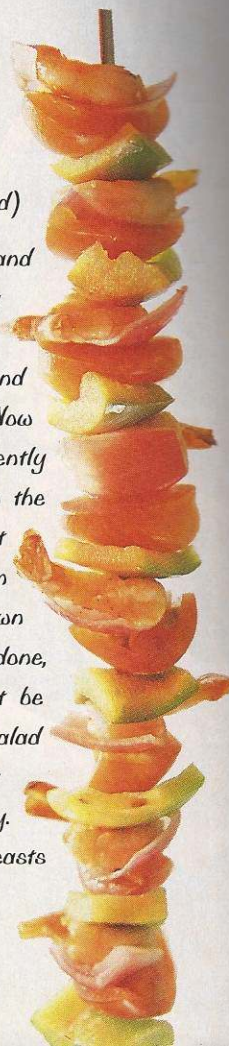
2 green, red or yellow peppers, seeded, cored and cut in big squares

20 firm red cherry tomatoes (or 6 regular tomatoes, quartered)

Make someone else fire up the grill. You stay in the kitchen and dump your shrimp into a bowl. (DON'T peel them or they'll dry out while cooking.) Squeeze in the lemon, a tbsp. or 2 of olive oil, and add the garlic and rosemary. Mix thoroughly, cover and let sit in the fridge for 30 minutes (even longer is better). Now take your skewers and form your kebabs, randomly and gently pushing on the veggies and shrimp—mushrooms are good on the end to hold the other stuff in. Once the coals are deemed hot enough, throw the kebabs onto the grill, periodically flipping 'em over and basting with olive oil so they stay moist and brown evenly. Cook till the shrimp and veggies look kinda crispy and done, about 15 minutes. (CAUTION: Shrimp is shellfish, and must be cooked thoroughly or you'll get sick.) Serve with a tossed salad (romaine lettuce, not iceberg for heaven's sake), slice up a big crispy loaf of Italian bread, crack open a watermelon and enjoy. PS: If shrimp isn't your bag, or is too pricy, cubed chicken breasts work great in this recipe too.

Kim's Summer-ific Shrimp Kebabs

(serves 4)



FLAMING KIM PHOTO: SPIKE KEBAB PHOTO: DORA HANDEL