

COASTAL LIVING®

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simple summer menu

At her Cape Cod home, a Boston chef keeps the party casual, the recipes easy, and the guests happy.

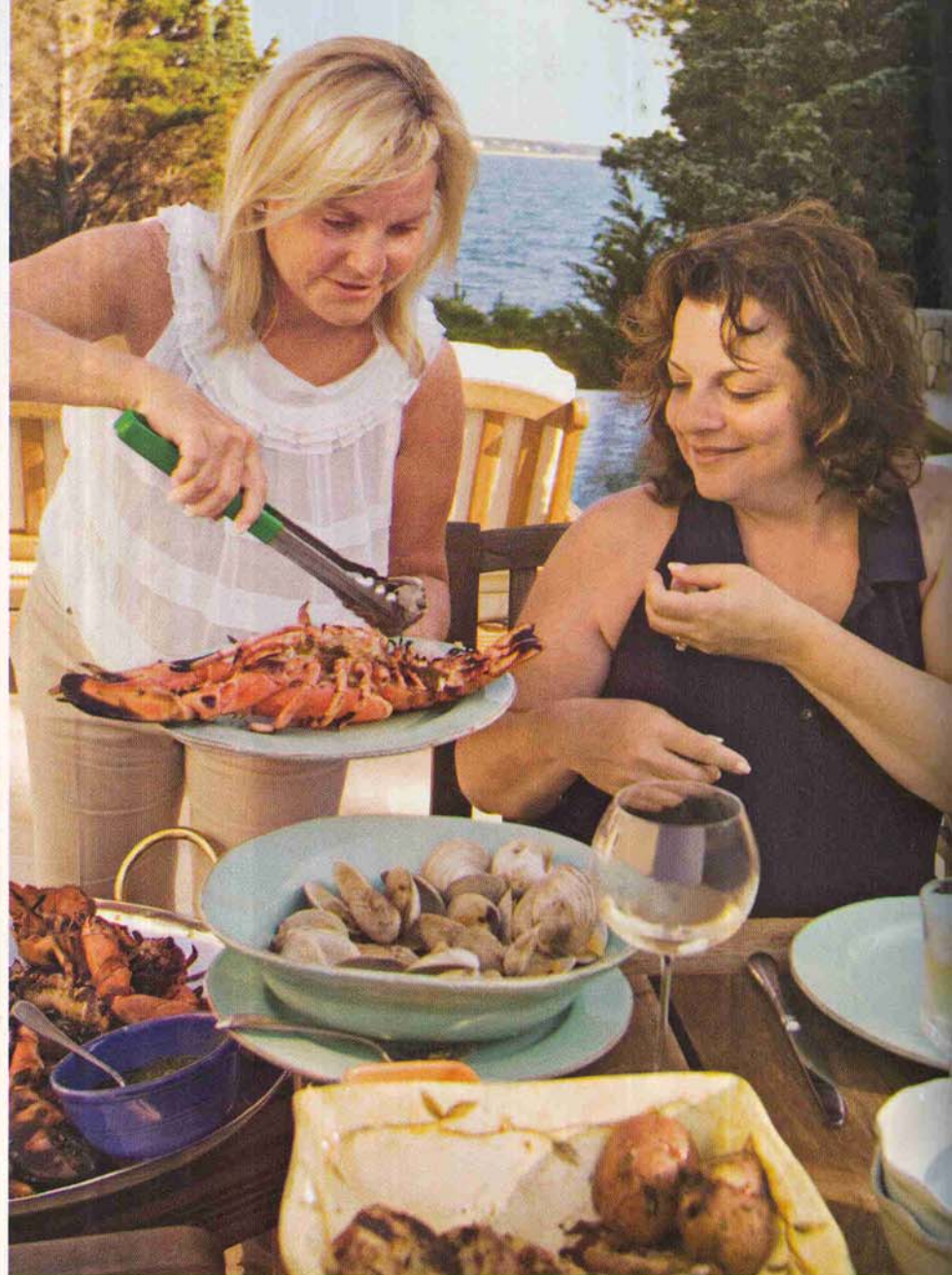
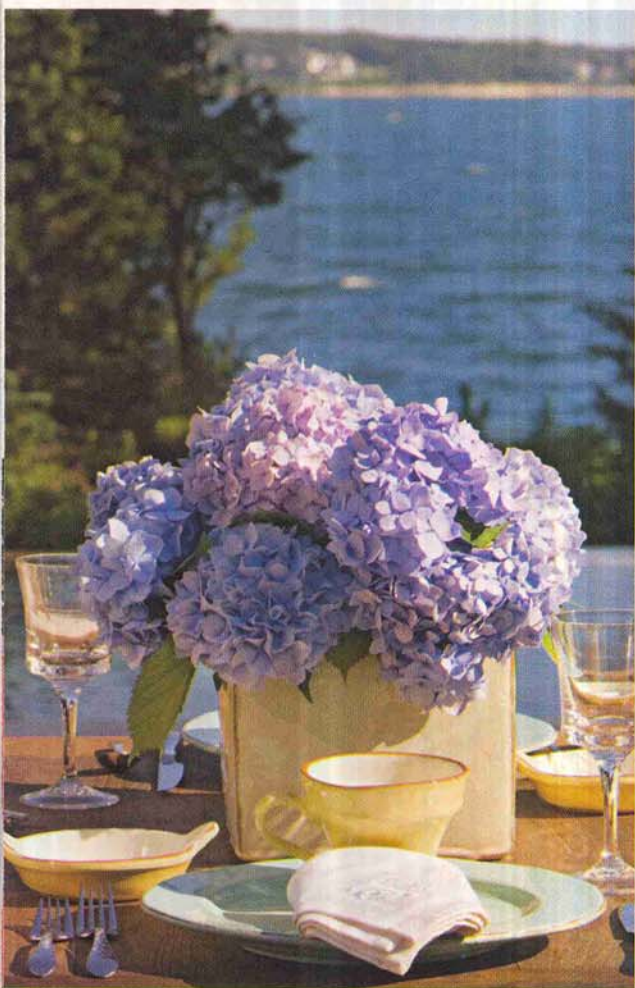


bold flavors, big portions, and fresh ingredients—that's what Chef Stephanie Sokolove likes to serve up for friends at her seaside home. No one who's eaten at her popular Boston restaurant, Stephanie's on Newbury, should be surprised. "We're known for what I call sophisticated comfort food," she explains. "The ingredients are familiar, but they're prepared with a slight twist—a more imaginative approach." The menu ranges from staples such as chicken pot pie

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Today's menu features grilled lobster, potatoes, and clams. "When the lobster pops and sizzles, you know the fire's hot enough," says Corey Comeau (opposite, far left), executive chef at Stephanie's on Newbury. Stephanie says grilling the clams is simple: "Cook them until they open, then a few seconds more."





All the dishes have panache, but nothing is complicated.

with a sage crust to dishes enlivened with Italian, Asian, and Mexican influences, as in the lobster quesadilla, a perennial favorite.

“It’s the same way I cook at home,” she says, pulling fragrant cornbread from the oven. Flecks of jalapeño chiles give it a slight kick. But aside from that nod to Mexico, today’s lunch fare is rooted in New England traditions and flavors. “The idea is to take advantage of the season—the produce is so fabulous now,” Stephanie says. Naturally, lobster is the main course, split, grilled, and brushed with

pesto. “I thought of pesto because I have so much basil in my garden,” Stephanie says. “This is one of those things that looks impressive but isn’t difficult.”

Indeed, all the dishes have panache, but nothing is complicated. “The key word is ‘easy,’” she says. “No elaborate preparations. I want to be with my guests, not in the kitchen. Simpler means that less can go wrong.”

Before the guests arrive, she enlists the help of the restaurant’s executive chef, Corey Comeau, to prepare everything that can be done in advance. More

When Stephanie gets time away from the restaurant, she entertains on the broad, stone-paved pool terrace outside her Massachusetts home. Her garden yields the hydrangeas that adorn the table.



Peach-Raspberry
Cobbler



Corn Chowder
with English Peas



“I want to be with my guests, not in the kitchen.” —Stephanie Sokolove

fresh basil goes into Corn Chowder with English Peas. The garden also supplies parsley to garnish the chowder and flowers for tables on the spacious pool terrace. Stephanie throws together a cornucopia-in-a-bowl salad and makes a luscious Peach-Raspberry Cobbler. “It’s rustic, the way I like it, with a crunchy streusel topping,” she says.

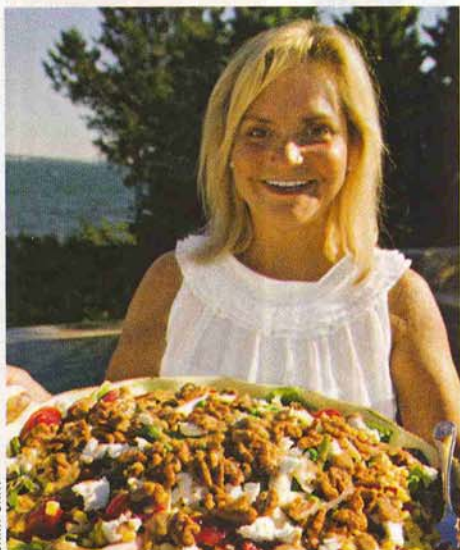
As the guests arrive, Jim Sokolove welcomes them with glasses of wine. “My husband’s not a huge foodie,” Stephanie admits. “He’s been known to have cereal for dinner. But he loves this kind of friendly feast.”

Stephanie seems as much a mother as a chef when she declares, “I want everyone to be comfortable and have plenty to eat.” Her daughter Courtney says, “In summer we have people here every weekend, and we always want Mom to cook.” And who wouldn’t? This sort of unfussy, bountiful meal suits the season beautifully.

For Stephanie’s recipes, turn to page 124.

Stephanie’s on Newbury, Boston, Massachusetts; 617/236-0990 or stephaniesonnewbury.com

simple summer menu



"I never want to make something so elaborate that I can't enjoy my guests," says Boston chef Stephanie Sokolove of her entertaining philosophy (for more on her backyard party, turn to page 98). "Try to do as much ahead as possible—and make sure you have help doing the dishes!"

Summer Salad with Shallot Vinaigrette

- 3 red beets
- 2 ears fresh corn, shucked
- 1 cup green beans
- 1 cup fresh English peas
- 1 (6-ounce) package fresh baby spinach
- 1 head green leaf lettuce, washed and torn into pieces
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup Shallot Vinaigrette
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup toasted walnuts or pecans
- 1/2 cup crumbled goat cheese

Bake beets, covered with foil, at 400° for 30 minutes or until tender. Cool, remove skins, and cut into thin wedges.

Cook corn in boiling water to cover until crisp-tender, and drain. Plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process; drain. Repeat with green beans and peas.

Toss spinach and lettuce with 1/4 cup Shallot Vinaigrette in a large bowl. Cut corn kernels from cobs, and combine with beets, beans, peas, and red onion. Top greens with beet mixture, walnuts, and goat cheese. Drizzle with dressing to taste. Makes 6 servings.

Shallot Vinaigrette

- 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- 1 teaspoon chopped capers
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Combine first 4 ingredients in a food processor; process until smooth. With processor running, gradually add oil in a slow, steady stream. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes 1 cup.

Corn Chowder with English Peas

- 1 pound red potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 8 ears fresh corn, shucked
- 1 quart whipping cream
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 cup fresh English peas
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 bacon slices, cooked and chopped
- 1/4 cup loosely packed fresh basil, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Garnish: chopped fresh parsley

Bring potatoes and water to cover to a boil; cook 8 to 10 minutes or until tender. Drain and set aside.

Cut off corn kernels, reserving 4 cobs, and set aside. Place cream in a stockpot over medium-high heat. Add reserved corn cobs, and simmer 40 minutes or until reduced to 2 1/2 cups. Discard corn cobs, and pour liquid through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a bowl, discarding solids.

Sauté shallot in butter 2 minutes or until translucent. Add corn kernels, peas, and sugar; sauté 6 minutes. Add strained cream and reserved cooked potatoes. Stir in bacon and basil, and cook until thoroughly heated. Season with salt and pepper. Garnish, if desired. Makes 4 servings.

Grilled Farm Potatoes

- 2 pounds fingerling potatoes, halved
- 2 pounds red potatoes, quartered
- 1/2 cup Warm Bacon Vinaigrette, divided

Cook potatoes in boiling salted water 7 to 10 minutes or until just tender; drain. Drizzle 1/4 cup Warm Bacon Vinaigrette through a strainer onto warm potatoes, leaving bacon with the remaining vinaigrette.

Grill potatoes in a grill basket over medium-high heat 5 minutes on each side or until soft. Place in a large bowl; drizzle remaining 1/4 cup vinaigrette over potatoes. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Warm Bacon Vinaigrette

- 3 strips bacon, finely diced
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Cook bacon and water in a medium skillet over medium heat 4 minutes or until water has evaporated. Add oil; cook 2 minutes or until bacon is crisp. Remove from heat, and pour into a small bowl. Whisk in vinegar and remaining ingredients. Makes 1/2 cup.

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entertaining recipes

Grilled Split Lobster with Pesto

Before preparing the lobsters, chill them in the freezer 10 to 15 minutes. This has an anesthetizing effect on them.

2 (1- to 2-pound) live lobsters

Pesto

Place 1 lobster, shell-side down (belly up), on a cutting board. Place the tip of a large knife in the center of the lobster, cut lobster in half from the center to the head, and then cut in half from the center to the tip of the tail. Pry open, leaving shell intact on back, if desired. Repeat with remaining lobster. Brush $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Pesto on each lobster. Place lobsters on grill, shell-side up (belly down).

Grill, covered with grill lid, over medium-high heat 5 minutes on each side or until fully cooked. Remove from heat; baste with another $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Pesto. Serve immediately. Makes 2 servings.

Pesto

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup pine nuts, toasted
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 cups loosely packed fresh basil leaves
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt

Process pine nuts and garlic in a food processor until blended. Add basil; process until finely chopped. With processor running, gradually add oil in a slow, steady stream. Add lemon juice, cheese, and salt; process until mixture has a thick consistency. Makes 1 cup.

Peach-Raspberry Cobbler

Serve this colorful fruit cobbler with your favorite vanilla ice cream or a large dollop of sweetened whipped cream.

1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
10 cups thick-sliced peaches (8 large peaches)
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
2 (6-ounce) containers fresh raspberries
1 cup brown sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, cut into small pieces
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup regular oats
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped walnuts

Garnish: vanilla ice cream, whipped cream

Whisk together first 3 ingredients in a medium bowl. Place peach slices in a large bowl. Sprinkle sugar mixture over peaches, and toss until combined. Sprinkle vanilla over peach mixture, add raspberries, and toss gently. Let stand while preparing topping.

Whisk together brown sugar and 2 cups flour in a medium bowl. Cut in butter with a pastry blender until it resembles coarse meal. Stir in oats and walnuts. Pour peach mixture into a lightly greased 13- x 9-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with topping (dish will be full).

Bake at 350° for 45 minutes or until filling is bubbly and top is golden. Serve warm. Garnish, if desired. Makes 8 servings. 🍌