



# Fall Into Fun



Summer might be ending, but that doesn't mean the party's over.

When we think of summer, we think of taking Fridays off, lying by the pool, and barbecuing with friends on weekends. Then, fall comes, and it's back to the old routine.

Not so fast! Autumn can be just as much fun as summer, if you fall into it with the right attitude. After all, you've got at least another month of nice weather before winter creeps in.

**Here's how to make the most of it.**

## A Reason to Celebrate

It might surprise you to know that September has as many national holidays as July and August combined. If you're looking for a reason to get out of the house or give a gift, try these occasions:

### Labor Day, First Monday of the month

This federal holiday gives most people the chance to celebrate work by not working. Traditionalists take advantage of the day off by camping over the long weekend, or having a cookout. For something different, try delivering a platter of ready-to-grill goodies or party snacks to your favorite boss or employee.

### Grandparents' Day, First Sunday after Labor Day

At the very least, you could call to say how much you appreciate Grandma and Grandpa. Even better, drop by with a basket of their favorite cookies. At best, nominate one of them for Grandparent of the Year (see [www.grandparents-day.com](http://www.grandparents-day.com)). If they're no longer with you, take some time to share memories of them with children or friends.

### Citizenship Day, Every September 17

This is the day to pop a cork and toast being born or naturalized in the U.S.A. If you know somebody who's gotten citizenship this year—or is in the process of doing so—invite them over for dinner, or offer your favorite book on American history, or write them a note of congratulations.

### First Day of Autumn, Varies

This is also the fall equinox, when day and night are the same length. Take a cue from ancient religions, which gave thanks for the harvest on the first day of fall. Cook seasonal foods like corn and squash, or offer roasted nuts and apple butter to your neighbors.

## PLACES TO VISIT:

**Labor Day:** Local parades; museums or art exhibits on union labor; the site of your dream job.

**Grandparents' Day:** The family home; retirement community where family or friends live; a genealogical library.

**Citizenship Day:** The city or county seat or state capitol; local history museum; commemorative immigration site, such as Ellis Island.

**First Day of Autumn:** Farmer's market; nearby orchards; friends or relatives who enjoy cooking with fruits and vegetables.

## Need more excuses to get together with loved ones? September has no shortage.

- Show appreciation for your blended family on **Stepfamily Day**, September 16.
- Take a trip to the closest historic tribal site on September 23, **Native American Day**.
- Sign up for a fall Spanish class at your community college in honor of **National Hispanic Heritage Month**, September 15 - October 15.

# ARE YOU READY FOR A TAILGATE?

Nothing says autumn in America like the start of the football season. And nothing beats a tailgate party to keep the fun rolling long after the days of summer are gone.

## A TAILGATING PRIMER

	For the grill:	In the cooler:	On the side:
<b>Basic</b>	Hotdogs, hamburgers, corn-on-the-cob	Potato, macaroni or fruit salad, coleslaw, cookies	Chips and dip, cheese and crackers
<b>Expert</b>	Marinated kabobs, steak tips, ribs	Ham and Swiss wraps, pasta salad, pound cake	Artichoke or spinach dip, bruchetta
<b>Specialized</b>	Sausage like bratwurst, chorizo or kielbasa, fajitas	Gazpacho, barbecue sauce, pralines	Pita, bagels or tortillas, hummus, salsa or clam dip
<b>Kids</b>	Chicken wings, quesadillas	Carrot sticks, fruit cups	Pretzels, string cheese

### DON'T FORGET...

- Barbecue tools
- Beverages
- Bottle opener
- Condiments
- Folding chairs and table
- Ice
- Napkins
- Rain gear
- Sunscreen
- Tablecloth
- Toothpicks
- Trash bags
- Water

### TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL TAILGATE PARTY

1. Keep dishes simple to please a variety of tastes.
2. Go for items that can be eaten with few utensils.
3. Prepare food ahead of time and bring it in re-sealable containers.
4. Make it a potluck and share the preparation.
5. Mark different cooking levels (rare to well-done) or flavors (mild to spicy) with notes on popsicle sticks.
6. As it gets cooler, substitute warm dishes, like chili or baked beans, for cold salads.
7. Cover salads and side dishes with strainers to keep bugs away.
8. Designate your party by flying a team flag, decorating your car and inviting everyone to dress in team colors.



### NOT A FOOTBALL FAN?

Never fear. September has plenty of reasons to party besides the football season kick-off. Other themes make for a great party to launch fall, and the tailgate ideas given here can be used for all of them.

- Back-to-school
- Block party
- Concert tailgate
- Hockey, soccer, volleyball or other sport tailgate
- Labor Day