



Like the feeling of love, picnics appeal to all the senses. The serenity and intimacy offered are altogether unpredictable. A blanket spread on the forest floor or a grassy field sets the mood for an adventure for urbanites. A few minutes of frolic with a Frisbee or a cricket ball stimulates the appetite. Picnics are best when they are a spur-of-the-moment decision, but well-coordinated, well-planned ones can be fun too, especially when they involve a large group of people.

The first thing you need to keep in mind while arranging a picnic is the means of carrying food. A grocery bag or a cardboard box will do, but a basket - whether an antique woven one with a solid wood lid or a large wicker basket - would be perfect. These days, plastic baskets are also very popular.

Plastic plates go recommended as do shallow bowls, or stacks of paper plates, reusable plastic or paper glasses, ice bucket, paper napkins and towels. Then you need small cutting boards, knives,

peelers, cutlery, match sticks, coal or clay burner, small tents, umbrellas, hammocks, folding chairs, stools and last but not the least, blankets.

For small picnics, you can create a theme - 'pitha puri bonvojon' for instance. For a themed picnic, a colourful shotronji or tablecloth, or some colourful serving dishes and unusual flower vases are a must. You can easily arrange wild flowers on top of the picnic table, thus setting the perfect ambience.

Sometimes just finding the time to catch up with friends or enjoy a quiet hour can seem an elusive pleasure. The busier our lives become, the more difficult it is to resist busywork, from ringing phones and just-landed emails to the stack of mail waiting in the family room.

Happily, a perfect day can bring us to our senses, luring us outdoors to enjoy what only the sun, sky, and a whispering breeze can restore - the sound of the earth and our inner clam.

Sometimes, an impromptu garden party

can be as fulfilling. In tropical weather, the backyard can be an excellent venue for a quick family picnic. Within peripheral walls of the garden, children can enjoy the time freely, the plants and the shade of trees providing a lush respite from the heat.

The appeal of picnics is possibly in the prospects of having a meal out in the open. As most are arranged at midday, when the sun is the hottest, a few precautionary measures should be taken to prevent spoiling of the food. To keep insects and flies at bay, place food on the table and cover with a fine mesh screen or other covering, or in a container until ready to be served.

Final note -

For our picnic we spread a local shotronji and to create a decorative mood, placed a Turkish kilim on the green grass. Colour has a great impact on our mood, and when complemented with the serenity of the outside setting, the picnic becomes even more entertaining. So, we arranged colourful plates for serving and wooden

bowls for salad and clay pots for 'pitha-puri'!

Sometimes, a simple clay vase and a bougainvillea, and some arum leaves can change the whole ambience. Like a visually pleasing arrangement of some clay kettle, tea cups, printed plates or different types of basket for various items such as spoons, napkins, and other accessories.

We arranged neat tables for desserts. We used clay dishes for pithas, but fruits and cakes were placed on two-tiered standing plates. Food is the main focus for picnics, so we arranged some evening snacks and placed them in the silver dish.

At the end, do not forget to take all your garbage with you when you leave, and most importantly, have a great time.

By Nazneen Haque Mimi
Interior Consultant

Journeyman

Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel

E-mail: journeyman.interiors@gmail.com

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