



*Eat, drink
& be merry*

HELEN LEDERER

Pack up a picnic

RIGHT, SO IT'S SUMMER and high time the tartan blanket and pannier were dusted off and put to good use under a tree with friends. If, like me, you have suffered from picnic envy, here are some suggestions for raising your game this year. No more hard-boiled eggs, Spam in a bap or lowly orange squash.

First, we need a handy screw-top in the cool bag, so why not insert a reassuringly good quality old world **Sauvignon Touraine Chateau de la Presle, 2007** from the Loire Valley (£9.95, Franklins). This is elegant and crisp with summery green-pepper sharpness and overtones of grapefruit grassy notes to keep your tongue interested.

Then, turn your attention to Sauvignon blanc's perfect partner in crime – cheese. This has to be a hunk of **Mahon Menorca** (£3.30 per 100g) from our friendly East Dulwich Deli (EDD). It's dry, crumbly and fruity with a sexy orange rind rubbed with olive oil and paprika for that "ohmigod" cheesy factor.

Offer to smear some gorgeous **Paxton and Witfield's Gooseberry Fruit Cheese Preserve** all over (the cheese, not you) as you hand it round (£4.20, EDD). Then tear off a chunk of their rustic **French walnut and raisin bread** (£3.25, EDD) in a macho sort of way and you're all set for the perfect impressionist painting photo opportunity – just add a parasol, some antique knickers and a top up.

For those driving home (or thirsty from playing frisbee with other people's over-excited children), offer some **Belvoir Organic Elderflower Pressé** (£4.85, EDD). I love pressés – this one is particularly zesty and really rather grown up.

As the sun shines on your picnic bonhomie, seal the deal with the secret weapon of picnic fare – a refreshing **Beaujolais-Villages Domaine des Nugues**, which offers an awesome burst of velvety red plums, strawberries and redcurrants. It's the real thing – a balanced, smooth, easy-drinking winner, especially if served slightly chilled. Better still, it's on special offer at Majestic (£8.69 or £6.95 each if you buy two). ●

www.helenlederer.co.uk

Stockists

EAST DULWICH DELI
15-17 Lordship Lane
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