

Fire up the barby! The good weather is here, minced meat is on sale in the supermarket, and the nights are longer. It's time to clean the outside furniture, put a tablecloth on the table, buy propane for the barbecue, and decide what's for dinner. Our barbecue has spent the winter under a heavy duty, plastic cover. Now we can get it out, clean it up, put in a new tank of fuel, and get out the recipe book. The longer days are so much more cheery than the short ones of winter. Eating outside, 'al fresco', is a real pleasure, and always makes the food taste better. This weekend is a special spring celebration in Wenatchee; it's Apple Blossom weekend. There will be a parade through the center of town, a food fair in one of the parks, and a carnival in another. It is the perfect time to invite friends and family over, after the day's events, and have one of the favorites: hamburgers, hotdogs, marinated chicken, thinly sliced beef, vegetables on a skewer, or a vegetarian kebab. Yummy! A potluck is also a good choice. That's when each couple or family that comes over brings a dish of some sort. One person brings a salad, another brings a dessert, perhaps drinks can be brought, and then the host family supplies the main dish. You can eat and chat away until the sun goes down and the stars come out. I look forward to the days when it stays warm until nine or ten o'clock at night, so we can all stay out until we all get sleepy. A friend of mine barbecues all year long. She has a covered deck or patio, so even when there is snow outside in the middle of winter, she can barbecue whatever she wants. So, this weekend, tell your friends, bring some beer and some punch, and come and join us.

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: minced meat, propane, heavy duty, deck.

1. This recipe calls for minced meat, just like the beef we use for hamburgers.
2. Propane is the gas that is best for barbecues.
3. I bought myself some heavy duty gloves; they are perfect for gardening and rough work.
4. I need to sweep the deck before our friends come over for a barbecue.