



## Nurturing Lakeside Living-“Up North Living”

Lakeside dwellers share a secret that often goes unnoticed by the work-day world. They understand that the cottage-type environment of lakeside living lends itself to easy entertaining. Wisconsin’s lakeside dwellers appreciate the fleeting nature of summer and quickly become adept at utilizing their waterside environment to nurture relationships with family and friends. From neighborhood picnics and family reunions to intimate cocktails for

two on the deck at sundown, lakeside dwellers have adapted some strategies that make entertaining easy, fun and carefree. The key to easy entertaining revolve around three main themes: supplies, logistics and attitude.

Keeping a well-stocked pantry for entertaining need not be expensive. Staples include condiments (ketchup, pickles, ranch dressing, baked beans, nacho sauce and chips, paper plates and napkins), favorite beverages (a selection of lemonade, beer, wine, soft drinks and coffee), food for grilling (ready-made burgers, brats, chicken breasts, fish and vegetables), and a few staples for dessert (cookies in the freezer, boxed brownies). Don’t forget to keep some graham crackers, marshmallows and chocolate on hand for campfire samore-making. Try stocking the freezer with frozen lemon and limeade, and a few frozen pizzas for feeding late-day skiers. Keep lots of ice on hand.

Lakeside logistics focus on minimizing entertaining efforts. Place your stackable deck chairs in close proximity to where they are most often used. Cover them with weather resistant, easily removed covers when not in use to cut down on cleaning tasks. Use some durable plastic bins for storage (yard toys, chair cushions, towels) and seating on your deck. Have an umbrella table and grill nearby. Have a supply of yard games readily available for a variety of ages (bocce ball, croquet, horseshoe, water guns, readily accessible for use). Keep a supply of beach towels in the laundry room or on the deck for swimmers and skiers. Take a wicker basket and keep it filled with various sunscreen and insect repellent. Keep acrylic serving trays, bowls, grilling tools and campfire tools within easy reach of your outside entertaining area. Keep a supply of acrylic drink ware and disposable silverware close at hand. Make sure that there are easily-recognized containers for recyclable materials and disposable materials.

Nurturing a relaxed attitude is the key to carefree lakeside entertaining. Lakeside gatherings are often impromptu events, revolving around weather conditions and workday schedules. A calm lake at suppertime is a great opportunity to gather a few friends for waterskiing, followed by pizza and a campfire. An early-morning fishing trip is followed by



coffee and sweet rolls. A mid-week cocktail on the deck scenario is often weather –driven. Sunday picnics and family reunions are often planned “at the lake”. Lakeside dwellers understand the importance of “seizing the moment” to share summer’s joy. Lakeside dwellers also understand how to share the responsibility for entertaining with guests. They use the “come on over, bring meat/buns for your family and a dish to pass” theme frequently. This gives everyone an opportunity to share in preparation of the meals. Alternatively, a “snacks-only” theme and an invitation to bring “your favorite snack or drink to share” is the only impetus needed for a relaxing, carefree gathering. Opting for the buffet line set-up for meals and letting your guests help with clean-up are additional strategies used to make lakeside entertaining enjoyable and stress-free.

Lakeside dwellers understand that the nurturing environment of living by the lake is a joy worth sharing with friends and family. Lakeside dwellers are adept at saying “Let’s Party” and using their cottage setting to nurture the important relationships in life.