

first things first

RITUALS

Upgrade Your Tailgate

Your guide to grilling, guzzling, and recovering in the name of football this fall

You finally scored season tickets—or your kid finally made varsity—and you're doing it big this year: "reserved" parking spot, up at 6 am to prep, and no expense spared on the weekly (or big annual) spread. Here's how to kick your tailgate up a notch, or several, this season.

Upgrade: Your Burger

Replace your boring beef-and-American patty with this Greek-inspired flavor bomb from Chef Michael Psilakis, owner of MP Taverna in Irvington, and served at his New York City restaurant, Kefi. (See www.foodsafety.gov for guidelines on keeping your pre-made patties cold until ready to cook on-site.)



PHOTO BY DANIEL KRIEGER

Lamb Burger (Makes 1)

8 oz ground lamb
1 shallot (diced)
1 scallion (chopped; green and white part)
3 cloves garlic confit (Cook garlic in 2 Tbsp of olive oil on very low heat until very soft)
1 tsp parsley
1 tsp oregano
1 tsp dill
¼ tsp crushed coriander salt and pepper
brioche bun

For garnish:

4 arugula leaves
1 slice sweet onion (grilled)
4 Thassos olives (pitted and diced)
4 sun-dried tomatoes
2 Tbsp crumbled feta
fresh dill and mint
1 tsp lemon juice
1 tsp extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper

Preheat grill to medium-high heat. Combine all burger ingredients,



PHOTO BY CHET GORDON

besides bun, in large mixing bowl and mix well. Using a ring mold, form a patty. Brush with olive oil and grill to medium rare (approximately 3 minutes per side). While burger is cooking, place all garnish ingredients in mixing bowl, dress with lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place burger on bun, garnish with salad, and serve.

*Upgrade: Alternative Beer Beverage*

Rather than ostracizing thirsty non-suds-drinkers or hassling with mixed-drink ingredients, pick up a couple boxes—yes, boxes—of **Bridge Lane** wine. Lieb Cellars' lighter, fruitier label is affordable and features a portable 3-liter box (\$40) and a 19.5-liter plastic keg (\$260). Find the locally made and produced Long Island wines at Rochambeau Wine & Liquors in Dobbs Ferry (www.rochambeauwines.com) and www.liebcellars.com.

*Upgrade:***Your Culinary Chops**

Impress your crew by earning your chef's coat at **The Official Jets Cooking School**, held at The Institute of Culinary Education (ICE) in Manhattan. For \$150 per class, learn to make gourmet game-day dishes from ICE's professional chefs, plus meet current and former Jets players and cheerleaders.

Remaining classes (through January 31, 2015) include Tailgate Tennessee-style with Comfort Dishes, Flavors of the AFC East, and Thanksgiving with a Tailgate Twist, which will feature a perfect deep-fried turkey and sides and sweets designed for reheating on the grill.

You can take home a gift bag containing, among other items, a Wusthof knife set and Jack Black grooming products. And you'll also gain access to an exclusive VIP Jets Experience, including a behind-the-scenes tour of MetLife Stadium. Sign up at www.ice.edu.

Upgrade: The Other Game

Encourage group activity—and keep your blood flowing—by commissioning a custom, regulation pair of hand-painted birch cornhole boards from Hudson Valley-based **Ward Boards** (\$179.95 to \$270; www.wardboards.com). All have collapsible legs for easy transport and storage.

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Upgrade: The Day After

We asked Ilyse Schapiro, a registered dietitian and nutritionist in Harrison, how to curb the inevitable hangover after a great game. Besides drinking plenty of water before, during, and after imbibing, she advises:

Choose a healthier meal. "It's a myth that greasy foods help with a hangover, and don't eat them before drinking either. A mix of protein, carbs, and good fats will slow the absorption of alcohol in your blood."

Take a multivitamin before you go out or first thing in the morning to replenish B and C vitamins depleted while drinking.

Eat a banana to replenish depleted potassium stores, which may exacerbate hangover symptoms.

Stick to light-colored drinks like light beer, vodka, and white wine to avoid compounds that increase the likelihood of unpleasant after-effects even in lower doses.