

# July



Celia Manley, Broker Associate  
Realtor ®  
Turn Key Properties  
601-214-3307 / 601-427-5088  
celia@celiamanley.com  
www.celiamanley.com



*Adventure isn't hanging on a rope off the side of a mountain. Adventure is an attitude that we must apply to the day to day obstacles of life.*

- John Amatt

## Host an Independence Day Celebration

Festivals, parades, concerts, and fireworks displays are all amazing choices to celebrate Independence Day, nothing beats the relaxation and joy of hosting close friends and family in your home. Even if it's last minute, you can put together a perfect backyard Fourth of July celebration with these easy tips.

### Decorate

Create a festive atmosphere with red, white, and blue decorations. Hang banners, flags, and garlands around your backyard and front porch. Use themed tablecloths, napkins, balloons, and serving dishes. Get creative and make your own decorations for a personal touch.

### Menu

Food has a distinct way of connecting us and our traditions. By the time the Fourth of July rolls around, you're probably itching to get outside in the nice weather - a backyard cookout tops the list of traditional fare for any summertime gathering. Put together a traditional or unique menu featuring a special red, white, and blue dessert, refreshing seasonal fruits, and anything fun. Or, let everyone show off their best and share the work with a potluck. Don't forget to make a snazzy red or blue drink!

### Activities

Games and sports are natural friend-makers. Provide activities for both kids and adults. Set up a net for volleyball or badminton, layout a croquet court, lawn darts, or run-through sprinkler, or sidewalk chalk for driveway art. Organize a scavenger hunt for everyone to participate in. Party poppers, bottle rockets, and sparklers are a special delight for kids. Check local regulations for personal fireworks displays and use safe practices.

### Dress Up

Encourage all your guests to dress up in red, white, and blue clothes! Wear silly hats, stripes, stars, and flags, and paint your face. Find something sparkly and have fun with it.

### Music

Create a playlist of patriotic songs to set the mood. You can find premade playlists online to save time.

### Get Out There

Consider planning an outing to watch a parade or fireworks display. This can be particularly exciting for children or if there are marching bands involving older kids.

Celebrate the spirit of America by reflecting on freedom and our multicultural history. Remember, we are stronger together. Enjoy the festivities, concerts, cookouts, parades, and fireworks this Independence Day!

# Caribbean Cobb Salad With Salmon

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## Ingredients

- 4 tsp. light brown sugar
- 4 tsp. reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. onion powder
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp. ground allspice
- 2 tbsp. plus 2 tsp. fresh lime juice, divided
- 4 (4-oz.) salmon fillets
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2/3 c. canned coconut milk
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/4 c. plus 2 tbsp. neutral oil, divided
- 2 large heads of romaine lettuce, chopped
- 1 mango, peeled, finely chopped
- 1 large red bell pepper, seeded, finely chopped
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 4 scallions, sliced
- 1 c. chopped purple cabbage
- 1 c. plantain chips
- 3/4 c. cotija cheese

## Directions

1. Mix brown sugar, soy sauce, onion powder, garlic powder, cayenne, thyme, ginger, allspice, and 4 tsp lime juice in a bowl. Season salmon fillets with salt and black pepper. Rub fillets with 2 tbsp of the seasoning paste and let sit for 10 minutes.
2. Whisk coconut milk, cilantro, 1/4 cup oil, 2 tsp lime juice, and reserved seasoning paste in a bowl to make the dressing.
3. Heat 2 tbsp oil in a large skillet. Cook salmon for 2-3 minutes per side until easily flaked with a fork. Transfer to a plate.
4. Arrange lettuce on a platter or plates, season with salt. Add mango, bell pepper, avocado, scallions, cabbage, and chips. Sprinkle with cheese and top with salmon.
5. Drizzle salad with half of the dressing and season with salt. Serve with remaining dressing on the side.
6. Make Ahead: Dressing can be made 2 days ahead. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Bring to room temperature and whisk before serving.

## Basic Outdoor Maintenance to Maximize Your Home's Curb Appeal

You never get a second chance to make a good first impression  
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Your home's curb appeal plays a crucial role in making a good first impression. It can attract potential buyers or deter them, making it essential to prioritize curb appeal before listing your home. Maintaining your lawn, landscape, and home exterior demonstrates the care and attention given to the rest of the property, increasing its appeal and perceived value. While extravagant additions like outdoor kitchens or pools may catch attention, the most significant improvements often come from simple maintenance tasks. Here are some regular maintenance jobs that can boost your home's curb appeal and make it more appealing to potential buyers:

**Clean the House:** A clean, well-maintained house makes a significant impression on buyers. Consider washing the roof, gutters, siding, windows, driveway, and fences. You can do it yourself using a power washer or hire professionals to make your house shine.

**Basic Lawn Care:** According to the 2023 Remodeling Impact Report, standard lawn care offers the highest return on investment for outdoor projects. Apply fertilizer and weed control seasonally, fill any holes, and seed bare spots.

**Landscape Maintenance:** Keeping your lawn neatly mowed and trimmed is crucial. Clean up edges along sidewalks, driveways, and garden beds. Mulch garden beds, trim hedges, and remove any brush or debris.

**Attend to Details:** Clean outdoor light fixtures and ensure they are in working order. Check the condition of your house numbers and mailbox. Consider giving your front door a fresh coat of paint to make it stand out.

**Tidy Up:** Outdoor clutter can be just as off-putting as indoor clutter. Organize tools and equipment, keep outdoor toys and pet supplies clean and orderly, and remove bulky items you no longer need.

**Spruce It Up:** Create an inviting front entrance by adding flowers, ferns, or decorative plants in containers on the porch, along walkways, or in garden beds. Consider creating a small seating area and placing a seasonal wreath on the front door. Even small additions can have a significant impact.

By prioritizing these maintenance tasks, you can significantly enhance your home's curb appeal and make it more appealing to potential buyers. Remember, a well-maintained exterior sets the tone for your entire home and creates a positive first impression.



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