



Vivien's Viewpoint ...

The humble picnic has been around since at least 1692 when first usage of the word appeared to represent an informal gathering held outdoors with participants contributing food and drinks to the table for sharing and for the enjoyment of all. How little has changed since then!

Locally we are blessed to have so many wonderful spots to enjoy our picnics. As a young bride in the '70s I came to Parksville on honeymoon. Beautiful ocean sunsets. Moonlight picnics then and swimming. Daytime strolls through those majestic old growth Douglas Firs of Rath Trevor Park and those indulgent explorations along miles of soft, sandy beaches looking-, just looking for whatever empty shells and sand dollars the tide had washed up to carefully preserve and take home to remember the warmth of those Parksville days through the cold of a Northern winter.

Through many years we brought our children and sometimes our own parents to the area to experience the pleasure of oh-so-enjoyable endless days on the beaches and we camped at Rath Trevor.

Picnics were our Family specialty with certain foods reserved for those outdoor occasions. Did the salt air add a special flavour to the Scotch Eggs? They never tasted better and of course we shopped at the French Creek Marina fish market for the best of seasonal shellfish There is nothing like your own Clam Chowder made right there at your campsite! Between S'mores and toasted marshmallows we would not have exchanged our picnic for the finest dining in the world!

I still love to go down to the Beach in the evening with friends and as you read this will be introducing my first grandchild to those joys



Photo by Photographer Ana La Rei, courtesy Parksville@QualicumBeach.com

of a picnic at Rath Trevor Beach. My favourite picnic food might still include Scotch Eggs, perhaps with a dollop of locally produced Artisan Edibles' Meyer Lemon Chutney or I might keep things really simple and choose some tasty crackers, topped with a soft Brie and their Champagne Rose Petal Jelly - one of my personal favourites!

My go-to **Scotch Egg** recipe can be found at www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/scotcheggs_85851 and you can read more about Parksville's **Artisan Edibles** at www.artisanedibles.com.