

b.y.o.b.

(bring your own bicycle!)



Guests pedal their way to an outdoor feast in Key West, Florida.





shaded

by palm fronds and papaya trees, guests dining at the Shields home in Key West, Florida, park—or rather, prop—their vehicles in the backyard. “Only in Key West would people come to Thanksgiving bearing food on bicycles,” hostess Donna Shields says. They arrive with baskets full of gourmet treats, fresh fruit, and bottles of wine secured with bungee cords. “When one of our friends showed up on his bike with a thermos of Tangerine Gravy, we knew we wanted to do this every year,” Donna’s husband, Ted, says.

The couple provide the staples (roast turkey, potatoes, and apricot-cranberry relish) but leave room on the outdoor buffet for their friends’ additions. “Voilà! We end up with a gorgeous meal,” Donna says.

She places a Dominican pork roast wrapped in green banana leaves next to a spicy sweet potato casserole and a boat of that infamous Tangerine Gravy. “Big color equals big flavor,” says Donna, a registered dietician and cookbook author.

Holiday gatherings are notorious for rich fare, but healthy options don’t have to be mundane. In place of the standard crudités, Donna serves Smoked Fish–Horseradish Dip. The light starter helps balance more-indulgent items, namely a coveted coconut cake.

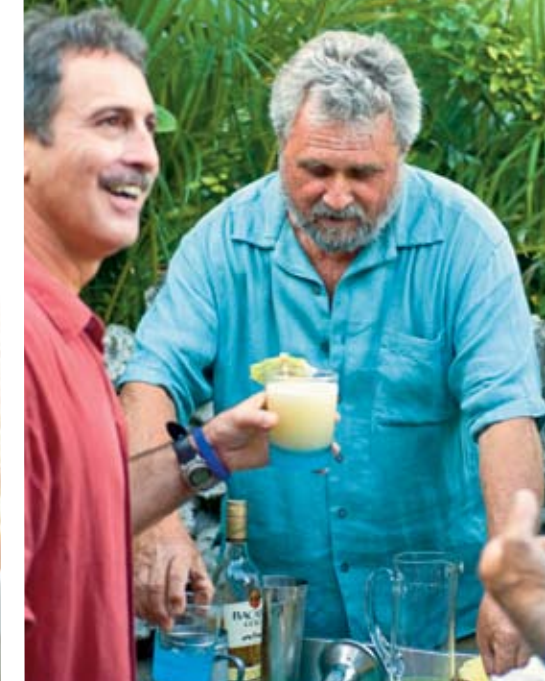
On the patio, Ted has set up a makeshift bar in the outdoor shower. He muddles pineapple, cherries, brown sugar, and bitters before adding rum and club soda. Friend Chris Robinson says he may pass on dessert for another Rum Old Fashioned, but changes his mind after the cake appears. When only crumbs remain, the group relaxes for awhile before pedaling off into the sunset. “This is perfect—we couldn’t ask for anything more,” Donna says.

For recipes, turn to page 134.

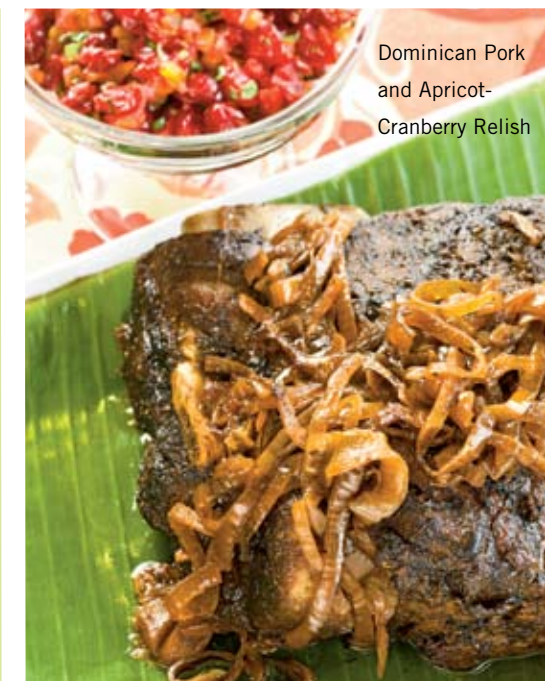
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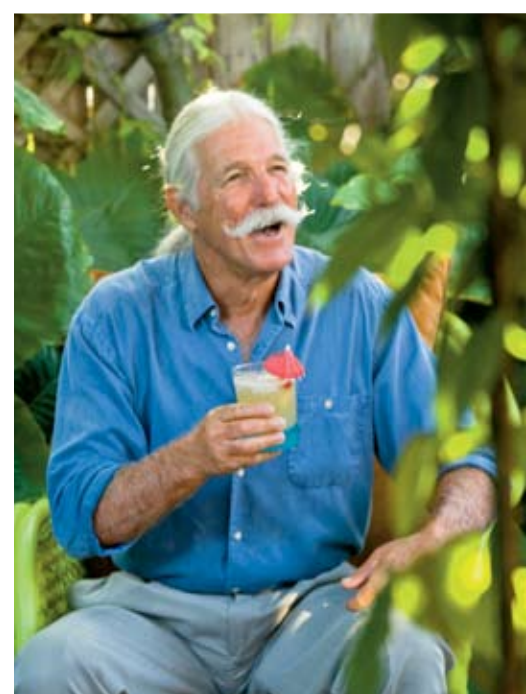
Sweet Potato-Jalapeño Casserole



The temperate November weather in Key West makes Thanksgiving an outdoor affair at the Shields home. Guests ride their bikes to the backyard, where Donna (top, left) pours wine and Ted (top, right) plays bartender. “A core group of us has been here for 15-plus years, and now we’re family,” Donna says. After everyone has had their fill of the holiday fare, spiked with Key West flavors and prepared with healthful choices in mind, Donna perks up the party. She serves espresso and Float Away Layer Cake—featuring a mango-pineapple filling and smooth vanilla frosting sprinkled with toasted coconut.



Dominican Pork and Apricot-Cranberry Relish



Float Away Layer Cake

