

MEET THE PRESS  
HOW TO GET YOUR EVENT  
THE PUBLICITY IT DESERVES

ASBURY PARK IS BACK  
THE HISTORIC BEACH  
TOWN IS BUSTLING

FRESH-AIR FAVORITES  
DISCOVER 4 PERFECT  
PARKS FOR PICNICS

# new jersey

## meetings + events

MEETINGSMAGS.COM // SUMMER 2016

# HIP HOTELS

*Where to meet, play & stay in style*



▼  
**Wild  
Venues**

Local zoos and  
aquariums connect  
groups to nature  
**{20}**



*"Frogbridge is the Ritz-Carlton of picnic venues," says Scott Gersten.*

## PICNIC PRIMER

A cheat sheet to the state's classic picnic locations. **BY CAROLEE NOURY**

HAS IT BEEN TOO LONG SINCE YOU'VE ENJOYED A COMPANY PICNIC? There's nothing quite like spending quality time with your team under the sun (and away from the ringing phones, artificial lights and to-do lists). With a variety of venues to select from, why not start planning your picnic today? Below are four parks and one special event planner who exclusively plans picnics, ready to help you trade your flats for flip-flops.

### Frogbridge Picnics & Special Events, Millstone Township

Frogbridge's 86-acre resort is designed for memorable corporate picnics. With a variety of packages for catering, activities and amenities, you'll have plenty of options for your company's special day. Your team can splash around in the heated pool complex (where the staff will keep you stocked with dry towels) or at one of the three lakes, with options for paddle boating, kayaking and fishing. Invite the family to this corporate event, since activities also include a 30-foot rock wall tower with a 250-foot zip line across the lake, bungee trampoline, "Little Fenway"

wiffle ball stadium, go-kart raceway, bumper cars and boats, laser tag, air conditioned indoor gym, a golf driving range, Ribbits Ice Cream Arcade and more.

"Frogbridge is the Ritz-Carlton of picnic venues," says Special Event Planner Scott Gersten. The resort's trackless train shuttles guests around, making it easier to see more of the property and to soak up as much fun as possible. Frogbridge hosts company picnics from May 1 through Oct. 31.

### High Point State Park, Sussex

This scenic park on Kittatinny Mountain spans over 14,000 acres and offers breathtaking

views, swimming, trails and plenty of nature. Located in the Skylands region, the park's namesake is the highest point in the state at 1,803 feet above sea level. From there, the distant Pocono and Catskill Mountains are visible. "High Point State Park is sure to please a variety of visitors, whether they are looking to relax in the shade or take an adventure on a trail or anything in between," says Rebecca Fitzgerald, park superintendent.

Open for picnics year-round, High Point rents out three shelters with picnic tables that can each accommodate 75 people. With nearby grills, playgrounds and even a swimming area with lifeguards, there are plenty

PHOTOS: FROGBRIDGE PICNICS & SPECIAL EVENTS; (COMPOSITE) TOMAHAWK LAKE WATERPARK



## MBS KNOWS PICNICS

If a company picnic sounds like a great idea but you're not sure where to start, Marc Shikes, owner of MBS Knows Picnics, will do the work for you. "My role is pretty unique, since I do it all: book the location, hire the vendors, plan the entertainment and work together with my caterer to provide a fresh, delicious barbecue. I make it convenient for the picnic committee and the accounting department," says Shikes. He plans and coordinates events from May to October in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. "Since I work exclusively on picnics, I know the best, most dependable vendors and can match companies to their ideal venue," Shikes says. "I get to have fun planning the event they're going to remember and look forward to for years to come, and I get to take the stress off them. It's the best job, truly."

of options for company-sponsored fun and relaxation. Make reservations by phone or mail (visit the website to download and print the group picnic reservation form).

Spring-fed glacial Lake Marcia has a beach and is staffed by lifeguards during the swimming season. The nearby bathhouse makes changing in and out of swimsuits a breeze. The park's Dryden Kuser Natural Area includes an Atlantic white cedar swamp, which is home to endangered species such as three-toothed cinquefoil (a flowering woody perennial) and Cooper's hawk, identifiable by features such as its hooked beak and blue-gray tail marked with black bands.

### Forest Lodge, Warren

With over 80 years in the business, Forest Lodge has crafted a picnic wonderland. The facility boasts 50 acres, 75,000 square feet of pavilions and tented space and an aquatic area with three swimming pools, including a wading pool for little ones. Other recreation options include basketball, volleyball, soccer, bocce, softball, pingpong, badminton, swimming, kickball horseshoes and miniature golf. The outdoor space can accommodate up to 5,000 people.

Have a specific theme in mind? The Forest Lodge event planning team is dedicated to bringing guests' ideas to life. "Our on-site event planners can make whatever you think up a reality," says Vice President Linda A. Taylor, CMP. "We've had a living mermaid at a seafood bar, yoga classes for 500 guests and even an authentic king cake flown in from New Orleans for a Mardi Gras celebration." Another benefit is how little the visiting company has to do. "We handle everything: food, recreation, entertainment, team-building. It's all booked directly by us," Taylor says. Forest Lodge, which includes the recently renovated

Sherwood Room, provides a backup option for inclement weather. Picnic season is from May to October.

### Tomahawk Lake Waterpark, Sparta

Is traditional fun your brand of corporate picnic? If so, Tomahawk Lake Waterpark has you covered. "We offer an old-fashioned catered picnic under tents, the lake is crystal clear with a white sand beach and water slides, a beer garden, swan and duck boats, horseshoe pits, an 18-hole miniature golf course and volleyball courts," says manager Lynne Gallo.

Many companies opt for the all-you-can-eat-all-day package. "We start with coffee and homemade donuts. A little later there's soup. For lunch we offer the usual grill foods: hamburgers, hotdogs, veggie burgers, all with fixings and various salads; then there's soft-serve ice cream, popcorn and cotton candy. For dinner we offer charbroiled chicken, fresh corn on the cob and ziti marinara. Draft beer is served ice-cold all day and there are plenty of nonalcoholic drinks including birch beer, iced tea and lemonade," Gallo says. Picnic season is from Memorial Day to the weekend after Labor Day. 🍷

### Get Connected

FOREST LODGE  
forestlodgecatering.com | 908.754.7300

FROGBRIDGE PICNICS & SPECIAL EVENTS  
frogbridgeevents.com | 609.208.9475

HIGH POINT STATE PARK  
njparksandforests.com/parks/highpoint.html  
973.875.4800

MBS KNOWS PICNICS  
mbsknowspicnics.com | 856.985.5274

TOMAHAWK LAKE WATERPARK  
tomahawklake.com | 973.478.7490



Top: Guests take in the shade at Tomahawk Lake Waterpark. Bottom: Tomahawk Lake Waterpark specializes in old-fashioned fun.