

A

GEAR

The upgrade VIBE ELEMENT 45

It's made from a single piece of plastic, like its more monstrous and expensive rivals. That means this chest can take a beating and keep its contents colder longer, says [Luke Deszczulka](#), cofounder of [bestcooler.reviews](#). It also has a drainage spout, slip-resistant rubber feet, and the all-important built-in bottle opener. \$170, [vibekayaks.com](#)



The splurge SOVARO 45QT

This one would look great on a yacht deck, but you aren't just paying for style. Mold-resistant cork insulation is a heat defense layer between the sun and your next round, says [Luke Deszczulka](#). The lid is sealed with an airtight gasket and the retractable handle makes for easy moving on a swaying deck. From \$695, [sovaro.com](#)



THE FASTEST WAY TO CHILL

Pour cold water into your beer-and-ice-loaded cooler—enough to make a small liquid layer above the ice, says Rhett Allain, Ph.D., an associate professor of physics at Southeastern Louisiana University. The water creates better thermal contact, reducing chill time. Stir in a big handful of kosher salt, which helps drop the freezing point.

1 DAY BEFORE

Go shopping. Your list:

- 1 zucchini
- 3 heirloom tomatoes
- 2 onions
- 3 bell peppers
- extra virgin olive oil;
- 1 bag of charcoal briquettes
- 6 beef tenderloin steaks (8 oz each)
- aluminum foil
- a fifth of your favorite gin
- 2 liters of tonic water
- 1 cucumber
- a handful of juniper berries (optional)
- 10 medium-thick slices of fontina or provolone cheese
- 10 large kaiser rolls
- basil for garnish

Okay, now what do I feed these people?

Nine friends will raid your backyard in 24 hours. Michelin-starred chef Fabio Trabocchi has you covered with his favorite cookout cuisine: gourmet cheesesteaks. Here's your plan.

1 HOUR TO GO

Ignite the briquettes in a chimney starter. While you wait for red-hot coals, slice the zucchini, tomatoes, and onions into half-inch-thick disks. Slice the peppers into thick strips. Toss them in a big bowl with a drizzle of olive oil and a few big pinches of salt and pepper.

45 MINUTES OUT

Pour the coals on one side of the grill; this creates a searing area and a warming area. While the grate heats up (15 minutes or so) set your oven to warm. Take the tenderloins out of the fridge and season both sides with salt and pepper.

30 MINUTES OUT

Oil the grill grate. Grill the vegetables on the hot side of the grate until you see black char

marks, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer pieces that look done onto a baking sheet as you go. Cover the sheet with foil and set it in the oven.

15 MINUTES

Set the table with some glasses, a bowl of ice, a jigger, the bottle of gin, the tonic water, and the cucumber (sliced) and juniper berries. Open the grill's damper.

THE ARRIVAL

While your friends are busy making their own gin and tonics to their preferred strength (garnishing with cucumber and berries), you grill the steaks over direct heat to medium rare, about 4 minutes per side.

10 MINUTES IN

Take the meat off the flame; rest it beneath foil for 5 to 10 minutes. Fix yourself a drink. Mingle.

22 MINUTES IN

Slice the meat against the grain in half-inch-thick pieces to roughly the length of the kaiser rolls. Set the strips in groups of four on the warming side of the grate with a slice of cheese on top to melt. Toast the rolls on the other side. Pull the veggies out of the oven, garnish with basil, and serve with the sandwiches. Collect praise.

Food styling: Jamie Kimm; prop styling: Angela Campos/Bernstein & Anfrulli