This September, South Africans will be looking forward to a big event. No, the World Cup isn't making a repeat appearance; instead they'll be turning their attention to another one of South Africa's pastimes – barbeque. The word *braai* is Afrikaans for "barbeque" and is an immensely popular pastime in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. September 24 marks South Africa's National Braai Day, a celebration of the country's rich cultural heritage.

Similar to a potluck, *braaing* is a laid back social event. Families and friends get together at a picnic spot or at someone's home to cook meat and vegetables over an open flame. For most, it doesn't matter what goes on the *braai*, so long as it's good. Popular meat choices include kebabs, marinated chicken, pork and lamb chops, steaks, and seafood in coastal areas. Along with meat and vegetables, South Africans include a dish called "
pap
," a thick porridge made from corn.

Nobel Peace laureate and Emeritus Archbishop, Desmond Tutu is the patron of National Braai Day, and has called on South Africans across the globe to throw some meat on the *braai* to honor the nation's multi-cultural heritage and the fall of apartheid. While the 78-year-old will be retiring from public life this year, he says will remain the patron of the
braai
campaign, which aims to unite South Africans in an activity enjoyed by all demographic groups and religious denominations.

"The important thing is all of us on that one day again getting together and just enjoying the fact of being South Africans," said the Archbishop.

Of course, you don't have to be a South African to enjoy National Braai Day. Fire up your grill on September 24, throw some meat on the coals, and celebrate along with them!

Learn more about National Braai Day here .