

The Providence Journal

Tailgating shifts into high-tech gear

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By Buzz McClain

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It's autumn, the season when our weekends turn to watching little Auggie knock down shots on goal for his soccer team, following Dawn's cross-country team to fields of dreams far from home and tailgating in a parking lot hours before your favorite football team kicks off.

Some of us are more enthusiastic than others when it comes to the stadium — or not-quite-stadium — experience, but we can all benefit from the latest luxury gear to make watching fall sports more pleasurable.



For those wanting to dine in style, there's the four-person backpack for \$88.

RIVA FOUR-PERSON BACKPACK

Paper plates are for amateurs. Show your class with plastic! This clever backpack contains everything you need to dine in quasi-luxury in the middle of a parking lot. Unzip the leak-proof textured pack and reveal four place settings — including Melamine dinner plates, polycarbonate stemmed wineglasses, four sets of stainless steel tableware — as well as two insulated wine coolers, two food-storage containers, wooden salt and pepper shakers, a wooden cutting board, a cotton tablecloth, a cheese knife, a dirty plates bag (how thoughtful) and the inevitable corkscrew. In storm blue or woodland green. \$88; www.tailgatingpartysupply.com.

HAMMAKA TRAILER HITCH STAND WITH HAMMOCK CHAIRS

You've envied these pickup truck essentials for years, thinking each season, "Man, I got to get me a couple of those." And why not? You sit suspended above the parking lot, relaxing with your feet propped up, gently rocking in the breeze as if on a throne of air while those about you are stuck in crummy folding lawn chairs. \$119.99 for the hitch, \$59.99 for each chair or \$239.97 for a set of two chairs and the stand; www.everyhammock.com.

GAS-POWERED PARTY BLENDER

This looks like something Tim Allen would have come up with on Home Improvement: a gasoline-powered blender. With handlebars. The two-stroke, variable-speed engine whirs 10 cups of your favorite mixed beverage in an 85-ounce stainless steel pitcher. This might be more fun than the game you came to watch! \$275; www.cookware.com.

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