

# **Backpacking Meal Planning**

**-What makes a good menu?-**

**-Breakfast-**

**-Lunch-**

**-Dinner-**

**-Snack-**

## What makes a good menu?

The National Outdoor Leadership School estimates that backcountry traveler's burn between 2,500 and 4,500 calories per day, depending on their individual physiology and their activity. That translates into roughly 1.5 to 2.5 lbs. of food per day.

In a diet-conscious society, that may sound like a huge caloric intake. But food is the fuel your body burns as it powers up and down wilderness terrain. Finicky eaters typically morph into indiscriminate chow hounds after a few high-output days on the trail.

Anticipate that you will feel hungry often and that much of your quiet time on the trail will be spent thinking about food. Plan ahead for this stomach-gnawing reality.

If you're facing a borderline decision about how much or little to carry, take a little more. Feelings of unsatisfied hunger can distract you from the other sensory joys of a great hike. One of the 10 Essentials for an overnight trip, in fact, is a supply of extra food. One day's worth of food is a smart emergency backup.

On the other hand, don't overdo it. A common beginner's blunder is to bring too much food on a trip, forcing you to lug unwanted bulk and weight in your pack. Experience will teach you what amount of food works for you.

Consider a few basic guidelines:

### **Factors to Consider**

- **Taste**—eat what you like. Don't try and convert your taste buds to new types of food deep in the backcountry.
- **Calories**—Don't inaugurate a diet program during a multi-night hike. You'll need ample calories (and water!) to fight off fatigue and headaches.
- **Nutrition**—it's fine to tear into a candy bar during a trip, but for the long haul you want to rely on complex carbohydrates and proteins. Intelligent quick-eats such as nuts and dry fruits provide a stable flow of energy to your muscles.
- **Weight and Bulk**—Stick to lightweight and low-bulk foods as much as possible, especially on long journeys.
- **Ease of Preparation**—unless you are an experienced gourmet, keep things simple. It's smart to be well-supplied with no-cook food items in case your stove malfunctions.
- **Cost**—Convenience has its price. Freeze-dried meals and energy foods can be expensive, but at the end of a long day when your weary body only has enough energy to boil water, such luxuries seem justifiable.
- Refrigeration is one of those civilized luxuries you leave behind at the trailhead. Thus **fresh foods** are good for 1 day inside your pack, maybe 2. Carrots can sometimes last longer.

- **Canned foods** sometimes have a place in your pack if the trip is short and your hunger for grocery store food is high. Tins of tuna or other canned meat products can be a nice toss-in item for a pot of rice, for instance. But skip foods packaged in traditional 15-ounce (or larger) cans. The weight and bulk just aren't worth it. Don't even think about toting glass bottles.
- **Dry foods** (pasta, noodles, instant rice, soup mixes, and drink mixes) are light, take up minimal volume inside a pack and offer you some decent taste alternatives.
- **Freeze-dried/dehydrated** foods have improved considerably in taste, texture and appearance in recent years. They cost about the same as a meal at a modestly priced restaurant, but they won't taste quite that fresh and savory. Still, put into perspective, they deliver above-average taste sensations in far-flung places.
- **Spices** can be crucial to boosting the appeal of backcountry food. Consider bringing your own spice kit, which could include pepper, garlic powder or salt, basil, cayenne pepper, lemon pepper, cumin, crushed red pepper, cinnamon or whatever else is essential to your home kitchen.
- Flavored **beverages** can taste mighty refreshing after a few days of nothing but water. Powdered drink mixes are a nice mid-trip treat. Take note that the caffeine in coffee and tea is a diuretic, which counteracts your efforts to keep yourself hydrated.
- For winter camping, bring extra food to help keep your internal fires stoked and rebuff any chance of hypothermia. Carry your ready-to-eat items close to your body during the day so they are not frozen solid when you want to eat them.

For a multi-day hike, there are three steps in determining how much food I need:

1. Specify the composition of my daily rations;
2. Determine the duration (in days) between the start and finish; and,
3. Multiply (1) x (2).

For example, if my daily rations consisted of just five Snickers, and my trip was 4 days long, then I would bring 20 Snickers. This is a very simple example, but it makes the point.

SNICKERS PER DAY	TRIP DURATION (DAYS)	TOTAL SNICKERS NEEDED
5	4	20

A thru-hike is really just a series of consecutive multi-day trips. On my 208-day Great Western Loop, for example, I resupplied about 50 times, or on average about every 140 miles, or 4 days. To determine how much food I need for an entire thru-hike, then, I modify the steps just slightly:

1. Specify the composition of my daily rations;
2. Determine the duration (in days) between each resupply point;
3. Multiply (1) x (2) to determine how much food I need sent to each resupply; and,
4. Sum all food needs from (3) to determine how much food I need to buy for the entire trip.

For example, if my daily rations consisted again of just five Snickers, and if my thru-hike had four resupply points that were 4, 6, 7, and 10 days apart (27 days total), then I would need 135 Snickers.

SNICKERS PER DAY	DURATION BETWEEN RESUPPLIES (DAYS)	TOTAL SNICKERS NEEDED
5	4	20
5	6	30
5	7	35
5	10	50
<b>TRIP TOTALS</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>135</b>

#### Daily Rations

Of course, my daily rations are not as simple as just five Snickers. Rather, they consist of a breakfast, four to six mid-day snacks, desert and dinner. I prefer these small, distinct meals because they keep my energy level sustained. But they also make planning easier because they can be broken apart in orderly rows.

Below is an example of what my typical rations looks like:

HOUR	MEAL	EXAMPLE	OZ	CAL/OZ	CALORIES
0.0	Breakfast	Granola + powdered whole milk	5.0	120	600
2.5	Snack 2	Chocolate candy	3.0	150	450
4.5	Snack 1	Chocolate bars	3.0	150	450
6.5	Snack 3	Jerky	3.0	100	300
8.5	Snack 4	Protein bar	3.0	100	300
10.5	Snack 5	Trail mix	3.0	150	450
12.5	Snack 6	Salty snacks	3.0	150	450
15.0	Desert	Chocolate pieces	2.0	150	300
15.0	Dinner	Pesto potatoes with cheese	6.0	150	900
<b>DAILY TOTALS</b>			<b>31.0</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>4200</b>

My experience is that most backpackers only need about 3,000 calories per day, so in most cases I do *not* recommend that you replicate exactly the food plan above. Instead, use 3,000 calories/day as a starting point and adjust up or down as you see fit.

If a pile of food worth 3,000 calories seems like its way too much or way too little, adjust the amount before you even start your trip. If the 3,000-calorie pile looks reasonable, then make adjustments before your *next* trip based on the results from your first.

#### Predicting duration

Even if I determine correctly the amount of calories I need *per day*, I may not necessarily leave the trailhead with the correct amount of food *for the entire trip* because this calculation depends on whether I determined correctly how many days it would take to reach the next resupply point, which itself is a function of the distance I cover each day, i.e. my pace, noted as MPD, or miles per day, since

Distance = Rate x Time, or

Distance between resupply = MPD x Days

If I underestimate how much time it will take by overestimating my MPD, I will have to ration my food so I do not run out, as happens in the example below. If I overestimate how much time it will take by underestimating my MPD, I will be free to eat more each day than I originally planned. During a thru-hike, I *never* arrive in town with food leftover.

	TRIP DISTANCE (MILES)	PACE (MILES PER DAY)	TRIP DURATION (DAYS)	SNICKERS PER DAY	TOTAL SNICKERS NEEDED
<b>Estimted</b>	120	25	4.8	5	24
<b>Actual</b>	120	20	6	5	30
<b>SHORTAGE</b>					6

My ability to accurately predict MPD has improved with experience. I've learned how my pace is affected by:

- Travel mode, e.g. hiking, skiing
- Daylight, e.g. long summer days, long winter nights
- Terrain, e.g. flat, mountainous
- Elevation, e.g. oxygen-deprived Colorado, oxygen-rich Appalachians
- Ground cover, e.g. good trail, game trails, tussocks, deep powder, Spring corn
- Pack weight, e.g. heavy, light
- Physical fitness of myself and others in my group, e.g. peak form, off-the-couch
- Group size, which affects group efficiency
- Trip objective, e.g. speed record, casual

If you are new to backpacking, you need data points before you can start predicting your pace on a multi-day hike or a thru-hike. The best thing to do is go on “practice hikes” to better understand your abilities and comfort level. Also,

if you have a friend who is an experienced backpacker and who understands your capabilities and comfort level from other athletic pursuits, then consult them.

### Complexities

So far, I've stuck to simple examples: one person, one meal, one ingredient. But, more realistically, the situation is more complicated:

- 2+ people
- 2+ meals
- Intentional duplication of a single meal, e.g. two "chocolate" snacks per day
- Meals with multiple ingredients
- Meals with multiple ingredients, some of which are also used in other meals (e.g. butter)

These complexities can be easily accounted for in Excel, as I've had to do. I'd like to share my solutions but I do not have a planning file that is currently ready to be made publicly available. I hope to offer one eventually.

### **Pack it Gourmet- Dried Fruits and Veggies**

## **Breakfast**

**Grits:** great with savory items like ham, cheese, and vegetables

**Oatmeal:** best with fruits, chocolate, and other sweet add-ins

### **Apple Cinnamon Oatmeal(1)**

½ Cup old fashioned oatmeal Quaker® Old Fashioned Oats cook sufficiently with a minute of boiling but retain a little chewiness which I like better than pure mush

¼ Cup dried apples

¼ Cup raisins

¼ Cup granola

1 tsp sugar (optional)

½ tsp cinnamon

Pinch salt

1¼ cups water

The recipe above has 382 calories. A ½ cup of milk on the side (2 Tbsp powdered milk) adds 76 calories. To make a larger portion with 537 calories use ¾ cup oats, ½ cup dried apples, ½ cup raisins, ½ cup granola, 1½ tsp sugar, ¾ tsp cinnamon, pinch salt, 1¾ cups water to rehydrate. A ¾ cup of milk on the side (2 Tbsp powdered milk) adds 114 calories. The large portion is for VERY hungry hikers.

### **Chocó-fruit granola (1)**

½ Cup old fashioned oatmeal

½ Cup dried fruit - any kind (banana & mango shown)

¼ Cup granola with nuts & chocolate pieces

1 tsp sugar (optional)

Pinch salt

1½ cups water

#### **At Home:**

Pack milk powder, granola, and raisins in separate small bags and enclose in larger bag with other ingredients. Raisins are packed in their own bag to keep their moisture from migrating to the other ingredients.

#### **On the Trail:**

Combine all ingredients except milk powder and granola with water in pot and soak for five minutes. Light stove, bring to boil, and cook for one minute. Stir frequently and add more water if necessary. Insulate pot and wait five minutes. Top with granola.

### **Strawberry Sensation (1)**

1 cup Strawberry Frosted Mini-Wheat's

1/2 cup dried strawberries

1/4 cup yogurt covered raisins

1/4 cup chocolate chips, milk or dark

**At home:** Combine all ingredients into zip lock bag.

**On the trail:** Eat as breakfast or a snack.

### **Pizza Grits (1)**

1/4 Cup quick grits or 1/2 cup precooked and dried polenta

1/4 Cup dried tomatoes, peppers, mushrooms, and onions

1/4 Cup dried deli ham

2 Tbsp dried pineapple pieces

1/4 Cup Pepperidge Farm Pizza Flavored Goldfish or freeze dried grated cheddar cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

1 1/4 cups of water

**At Home:** Pack goldfish in a small plastic bag and enclose with other ingredients in a larger plastic bag. **On the Trail:** Combine grits, vegetables and ham with water and soak for five minutes. Light stove, bring to boil, and cook for one more minute. Insulate pot and wait ten minutes. Prior to serving, stir crumbled Goldfish or other cheese options into grits. If you use powdered cheese, add a little extra water.

### **Apple Almond Cinnamon Couscous (1)**

1/4 cup couscous

2 tablespoons dried apples

1 tablespoon chopped almonds

1 tablespoon powdered milk

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

pinch nutmeg

1 teaspoon brown sugar

**At home:** put everything in a zip locking plastic bag.

**In camp:** add enough hot water to cover, stir, Let sit for 5 minutes. Stir again and enjoy.

### **Scrambled Eggs (4-5)**

1 package ova-easy dehydrated eggs (equivalent to 12 eggs)

1.5c water

1T oil

Mix and cook to desired consistency.



### **Hash browns (4-5)**

One Carton Dehydrated hash browns (food lion or giant)

2c hot water

Soak in hot water for ten minutes, drain and cook in 1t hot oil.

### **Breakfast Burritos (4)**

Combine cooked hash-browns with eggs, cook, and wrap in a tortilla with shelf stable bacon. Hot sauce or salsa adds some flavor.

### **Breakfast Scramble (1)**

1 3/4 cup instant mashed potatoes

1/2 cup freeze-dried eggs with bacon

1 1/2 cup water

1 Tbsp dry milk

Cheddar cheese (optional)

**At home:** Combine all dry ingredients in a zip lock freezer bag.

**On the trail:** Heat water in pot (the hotter the better). Add to freezer bag and stir. Let sit for 5 minutes.

### **Summer Sausage Breakfast Hash (2)**

1 tablespoon oil

2 small potatoes, diced

1 small onion, diced

1 clove garlic, chopped

8 ounces summer sausage, cubed

Salt and pepper

Heat oil over medium heat, add potatoes and onion. Pan Fry for 10 to 15 minutes, until browned and soft. Stir in garlic and sausage and keep over heat until sausage is warmed through. Divide onto plates, and add salt and pepper to taste. (Serves two)

### **Salami Breakfast Frittata (2)**

1 teaspoon oil (optional)  
1/4 cup salami, chopped  
1 small onion, diced  
4 eggs (or equivalent powdered egg mix and water)  
1/4 cup cheddar cheese, finely chopped  
Salt and pepper

Scramble eggs (or prepare powdered eggs) in a bowl, set aside. Heat oil over medium heat, add salami and onions. Heat for 5 to 10 minutes, until onions are soft. Stir in eggs, reduce heat, and cover for 5 minutes--move the pan occasionally to ensure that eggs aren't burning. Sprinkle cheese on top of the egg mixture, cover and continue cooking until cheese is melted and egg are firm, about 5 minutes.

### **Pepper and Pesto Omelet(2)**

4 raw eggs (or use powdered)  
2 teaspoons pesto mix from package  
1/2 green pepper (or dehydrated)  
1/2 onion  
6 ounces instant hash browns  
2 tablespoons oil

**At home** Pack whole eggs safely in a hard tub.

**In camp** Chop and sauté onion and pepper. For pesto, add 1 tablespoon oil and amount of water specified by package instructions. Cook omelet, then mix in veggies and pesto. Fry hash browns and place eggs on top.

## **Lunch**

### **Pitas/Tortilla's/Flatbreads**

- Peanut butter, jelly, marshmallow fluff
- Tuna/chicken, pepperoni, cheese
- Hard meats/cheeses
- Cucumber/ salami/goat cheese
- Smoked or canned salmon is a nice treat
- really anything that tastes well, goes well on bread.

### **Snacks**

Just bring an extra serving of your favorite snack for lunchtime

### **Pasta salad (1)**

1pk ramen noodles

1T Italian dressing

1t minced onion and garlic powder

1/4 c pepperoni (diced)

Add 1 cup water to ramen noodles, soak for 10 minutes or until tender, drain, add dressing, onion/garlic, and pepperoni.

### **Hummus**

Powdered hummus, pitas, and fresh vegetables make a good lunch

### **Lipton Broth**

When it's cold, a hot cup of broth makes a trail stop a delight.

### **Shredded Rice Salad (2-3)**

1 box Rice-A-Roni Savory Whole Grains Chicken & Herb Classico (or any other quick cooking brown rice with seasoning)  
1 carrot  
2 radishes  
1 small pickling cucumber  
1 shallot  
2 tbsp. rice wine vinegar  
1 tbsp. olive oil  
¼ c. Pine nuts  
2 packets True Lemon crystallized lemon

**At home** Toast pine nuts until golden brown and pack in zipper lock bag. Combine vinegar and oil in leak proof mini bottle.

**In camp** At breakfast time, combine rice, seasoning packet, and 2 cups boiling water in a wide mouth leak proof bottle. At lunchtime, drain any leftover water (if there is any). Grate the veggies and add to the rice. Add pine nuts, vinegar mixture, and lemon packets. Shake gently to combine. This is great served with tortillas, pita or crackers.

### **Chicken Flatbread(2)**

1 foil packet chicken  
1 2.5-ounce-packet shelf-stable ranch dressing (such as Hidden Valley's six-pack cups)  
1/8 cup raisins  
1/8 cup cashews (salted or unsalted)  
1/2 tablespoon curry powder  
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt (can omit with salted cashews)  
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
2 tortillas or pitas

**At home** Put everything, except the chicken and dressing, in a quart-size zip-top bag. **In camp** Empty chicken packet and ranch cup into the zip-top bag and mix thoroughly. Scoop mixture onto tortillas and roll up (or stuff into pitas), and chow down.

### **Spring pasta Salad**

3 oz ramen  
1/4 c freeze dried green peas  
2 T freeze dried sliced olives  
1 1/4 t lower sodium vegetable bouillon  
1 t italian herb seasoning  
1/2 t true lemon powder  
1/4 t ground black pepper  
1 T extra virgin olive oil (1 packet)  
2 pkt parmesan cheese  
1 1/4 c water

Crumble the ramen into bite size pieces. Pack it, the vegetables and seasonings in a quart freezer bag. Tuck the oil and cheese packets in with the bag.

Add the cool water to the bag, seal tightly and let sit for 15 to 20 minutes to rehydrate. Open up the bag, stir in the oil and the cheese. Add salt to taste, if desired.

## **Dinner**

### **QUINOA TACO SALAD (4)**

1 cup quinoa  
1/2 red onion, chopped  
1 bell pepper, seeded and chopped  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 15-ounce can black beans, drained  
1 tomato, diced  
1 cup instant brown rice  
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil  
1 cup cheddar cheese, sliced or grated  
1 avocado, diced (optional)  
Salt and pepper

**AT HOME** Rinse quinoa well and air dry thoroughly, then pack in a zip-top bag. Combine onion, peppers, and garlic in a second zip-top bag and combine beans and tomatoes in a third.

**IN CAMP** Bring 2 1/2 cups of water to a boil and stir in quinoa and rice. Return to boil, then reduce heat to medium and simmer for five to 10 minutes, until water is absorbed. Set aside. Sauté the onion, pepper, and garlic in oil until onions are soft. Stir in beans, tomato, and the quinoa and rice mixture. Divide into bowls and top with cheese, avocado, and salt and pepper to taste.

### **Black bean tortilla Casserole (4)**

1 15-ounce jar of salsa  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 7-ounce box dehydrated black beans  
8 corn tortillas  
1 1/4 cups Monterey Jack cheese

**AT HOME** Measure salsa and oil into airtight containers.

**IN CAMP** Rehydrate beans according to package directions while you shred or slice the cheese. Pour olive oil in your pan and completely cover the metal surface with four tortillas, torn into pieces. Spread half the beans, cheese, and salsa on top. Layer with the remaining tortillas, then the beans and salsa, and top with cheese. Cover pan, and cook on low heat for five to 10 minutes, until center is hot and cheese melted. Cut into quarters, serve.

### **Five Ponds Fajitas (4)**

2 large tortillas  
3 ounces teriyaki beef jerky  
2 ounces cheddar cheese  
2 tablespoons salsa  
1/4 cup diced yellow onion, red pepper, green pepper. Try Harmony House Foods dehydrated vegetables.  
2 tsp olive oil.

The recipe called for lettuce – we omitted this. Sauté onion, peppers, and jerky in olive oil. Spread in tortilla with salsa. Sprinkle on cheddar cheese and serve.

### Mexican Chili Mac 'n' Queso (6)

1 lb. penne or elbow macaroni  
1 small can chopped green chilies  
2-3 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
4-5 green scallions, chopped

1 package spicy (not sweet) chorizo, either ground or in the casings. If in casings, remove casings and finely dice.

1 cup grated parmesan

1 cup grated cheddar

Cook pasta until al dente and drain well. Sauté garlic, chorizo, chilies, and scallions in a little olive oil until softened.

Combine chorizo mixture with pasta, top with both cheeses and mix well.

*\*Backpackers' Tips: At home, prep the chorizo mixture and combine it in a zip-top bag, then freeze. It will stay cold in your pack for a day or two). Cheese will stay freshest if left in chunks, then grated or finely diced in camp.*

### Cashew Beef Curry (2-3)

1 bag Boil-in-bag Brown rice  
1 cup shredded beef jerky  
1/2 cup chopped cashews  
3 tbsp. Curry powder  
1 tsp. coarse salt  
1/2 c. dry milk  
3 ounces pepper jack cheese

**At Home:** combine curry, salt and milk in a zip-top bag.

**At Camp:** Cook rice as directed on the package. As water begins to boil, add jerky to pot. Meanwhile, shred or finely dice the cheese. When rice is cooked, remove the bag and the softened jerky pieces, drain all but about 1/2 cup of the liquid. Add curry mixture and stir to form a thick sauce. Slit the rice bag open and add rice to the pot, along with the cashews, jerky and cheese. Toss to combine.

### AMERICAN CHOP SUEY (4)

1 tbsp. olive oil  
1 lb. lean ground beef  
1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes  
1 6 ounce can tomato paste  
1 chopped onion  
1 chopped bell pepper (any color)  
2 tbsp. dried oregano  
2 tbsp. dried basil  
1 tsp. crushed red pepper  
3/4 pound elbow noodles

**At Home:** Heat oil and gently sauté the onion and pepper until the onion is translucent. Add the meat and brown thoroughly, breaking it up as you go with a wooden spoon. Drain off any accumulated fat. Add the spices, then tomatoes, and simmer for about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, cook the pasta till al dente and drain. Let the sauce cool, then spread it on the dehydrator trays. (If you don't have tray liners, cut wax paper to fit the shape of your trays.) Spread the cooled macaroni on separate trays, making sure it doesn't stick together (rinsing with cool water first helps). Dehydrate both components until they're brittle (about 6 hours or overnight). When done, combine about 1 cup macaroni and 1 cup sauce in a 1-quart zip-top bag. **In Camp:** Add about 2 cups boiling water to the bag, squish it around and let it rest in a cozy for about 10 minutes, or until everything is tender

### **Spicy Peanut noodles (2)**

#### **Dry ingredients**

1/4 cup textured vegetable protein  
(dehydrated)  
1/4 cup coconut cream powder  
1/2 stock cube (beef, chicken, or vegetable)  
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder  
1/4 cup dried vegetables like carrots or peppers  
5 ounces rice vermicelli noodles  
1 handful roasted peanuts

#### **Wet ingredients**

2 tablespoons crunchy, unsweetened  
peanut butter  
1/2 to 1 teaspoon Thai green curry paste  
1 teaspoon rice (or cider) vinegar  
1/2 teaspoon soy sauce

**At home** Mix the sauce ingredients and put in an airtight container. In another bag, add the dry ingredients, but keep noodles separate. **In camp** Boil about two cups of water. In another, smaller pot, add dry ingredients (except peanuts) and then mix in enough boiling water to submerge the veggies. Cover and let sit five minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Add the sauce ingredients and stir well. Meanwhile cook noodles in the first pot (about five minutes on medium). Drain, add sauce, and cook over medium flame until sauce reaches a boil. Add water, as needed, for the sauce to coat the noodles. Top with peanuts.

### **Farmers Mash (1)**

1 package white chicken in a pouch  
1 package Knorr Vegetable Soup Mix  
1/2 of a 5.25-ounce box of scalloped potatoes  
1/8 cup instant potatoes

**AT HOME** Place the scalloped potatoes and vegetable mix in one zip-top bag and the instant potatoes in another.

**IN CAMP** In a pot, stir the scalloped potatoes and vegetable mix into 2 1/2 cups water. Boil for one minute uncovered. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer uncovered for two minutes. Add the chicken and the instant potatoes, stirring slowly and continuously to thicken the stew. Once the instant potatoes are dissolved, let simmer uncovered for one to two minutes. Serve hot. Tip: Crumble in crackers for crunch.

#### **Spice Things Up**

*Heat fiends: Wake up your taste buds with these three modifications.*

- >> Add two teaspoons (or more) of wasabi powder.
- >> Stir in a cheese packet from a Mac 'n cheese box and red pepper flakes.
- >> Add pinches of horseradish to taste.

### **Chicken Pot pie (2)**

¼ cup white flour ¼ cup cornmeal  
1 tablespoon white sugar  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1½ tablespoons margarine  
½ of a 5.25-ounce box of scalloped potatoes  
½ package Knorr Leek Soup Mix  
1 package white chicken in a pouch

**AT HOME** Put flour, cornmeal, sugar, and baking powder in a zip-top bag. Place the scalloped potatoes and leek mix in separate zip-top bags.

**IN CAMP** You will use two pots for this recipe. In the smaller pot, add the potatoes and two cups of water. Cover and bring to a boil. Let boil for one minute, stirring occasionally. Add the leek recipe mix, stirring contents continuously until fully dissolved. Reduce the heat to medium-low and mix in the chicken. Cover the pot and let simmer three to four minutes, until potatoes are tender. Set aside.

While the first pot is simmering, make the crust: Add ⅓ cup water and 1 tablespoon margarine to the zip-top bag containing the dry flour ingredients. Squish the bag with your fingers until the dough becomes runny like pancake batter. Once the stove is available, heat the larger pot on medium, and coat the bottom with ½ tablespoon of margarine. Pour the batter into the pot, making sure to completely cover the bottom. Cook two to three minutes on medium heat until bubbles appear and the crust begins to pull away from the sides. Shake the pot (up, down, and sideways) or use a spatula to loosen the crust from the bottom.

Once the stew is ready, remove the lid and carefully flip the crust onto the top of the pot-pie filling. Cover the pot, and put it back on the burner on medium for one to two minutes to finish baking the other side of the crust. To serve, you can either eat right out of the pot with your companion, or carefully cut the pie in two, flip the crust onto a plate, and spoon the filling atop it.

### **Dill Salmon (4-6)**

2 tablespoons olive oil  
Salt and black pepper  
1 (1 1/2- to 2-pound) salmon fillet  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1/2 white onion, chopped  
2 tablespoons chopped garlic  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil  
3 tablespoons chopped fresh dill  
1 large lemon, sliced

This recipe is so easy to make in an aluminum foil wrap—and cleanup is easy! Take a sheet of foil and pour 1 tablespoon of olive oil on it. Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Lay your salmon fillet on the oil, then pour the other tablespoon of olive oil on the surface and sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper. Squeeze some lemon juice on top. Throw your onion on top of that, along with your garlic and basil. Sprinkle with the dill, then place the sliced lemon on top of everything. Place another piece of foil on top and seal the edges of the top and bottom pieces of foil. Grill over medium-high heat for 35 minutes (or over a fire using a backpacker's grill), or until the salmon is cooked to your liking. Some people prefer their salmon undercooked, but we like it cooked completely through.



### **Tomato Pasta with Spinach-Cheese Sauce (1)**

- 1 1/2 tablespoons dried cream of spinach soup or spinach powder
- 3 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 1/2 tablespoons buttermilk powder or butter powder
- 1 tablespoon powdered milk
- 1/4 teaspoon oregano
- A few grains of cayenne pepper
- 3/4 cup (3 ounces) tomato-flavored pasta (semolina-based pasta works too)

**At home** Combine all ingredients except pasta in a zip-top bag. **In camp** Mix powdered ingredients with 1/4 cup boiling water. Let stand. Meanwhile, bring to boil 3 to 4 cups of water and add the pasta. Follow package directions for boiling time, stirring frequently to make sure pasta doesn't stick together or to the pot. When pasta is al dente, remove from the stove and pour off liquid. Combine with spinach-cheese sauce. If you're using spinach powder rather than soup mix, add salt and pepper to taste.

### **Salmon and Mushrooms (2)**

- 2 6-ounce portions of king salmon (either in vacuum-sealed pouches, or fresh and frozen pretrip)
- 1 ounce dehydrated porcini mushrooms (or 8 ounces fresh)
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar\*
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 ounces arugula
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice (about 1 medium lemon)
- 8 slices of Wasa flatbread

**At Home** Pour lemon juice into a spill proof container. In a separate spill proof container, stir in balsamic vinegar and olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. Put extra salt/pepper in a zip-top bag. Pack the arugula lightly in another zip-top, leaving some air; stow in the top of your pack so it doesn't get squashed.

**In Camp** Place your grill over the fire. Rehydrate mushrooms (soak in hot water about 15 minutes, but follow package instructions) and cut in quarters. Season mushrooms and salmon with salt and pepper and set on grill. Cook mushrooms until tender (about one minute on each side). Place them in a bowl with the arugula, add lemon juice, and toss. Cook salmon about four minutes on each side. Divide the arugula mixture between two plates. Place grilled salmon atop each portion. Shake up container with vinaigrette to remix it, then drizzle it around the perimeter of plates. Serve with flatbread.

### **CHILI CRUNCH (3)**

- 1 box dry chili mix
- 2 cans kidney beans
- Corn chips
- Cheddar cheese
- Hot sauce

**At home** For lighter weight, remove beans from cans and dehydrate them (or buy dried beans from sites like packitgourmet.com). Combine dry chili mix and dehydrated kidney beans. Individually pack corn chips, cheddar cheese, and hot sauce. **In camp** Add dry mix and beans to 7 1/2 cups water. Stir well. Bring to a boil and simmer 15 minutes or until done. Serve in bowls and sprinkle with cheddar cheese, corn chips, and hot sauce.

### **TORTELLINI STEW (2)**

2 cups dried tortellini  
1 cup thinly sliced dried tomatoes  
3 tablespoons dried, chopped green pepper  
1/3 cup onion flakes  
1 teaspoon basil  
1 teaspoon oregano  
1 teaspoon thyme  
1/4 teaspoon powdered garlic  
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese

**At home** Place all ingredients except Parmesan cheese in a zip-top bag. Pack Parmesan cheese separately.

**In camp** Add tortellini mixture to 2 quarts (8 cups) boiling water. Stir until water returns to a boil. Stirring occasionally, cook uncovered for 20 to 25 minutes. Spoon into bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

### **Clam Chowder(3)**

1/4 pound butter (1 stick)  
1 medium-large onion  
32 ounces milk (can use powdered)  
5- to 6-ounce box dehydrated potato (like Betty Crocker's Hash Browns)  
1 tablespoon flour  
1 6.5-oz. can clams (tuna or salmon also work)  
Black pepper to taste (grind fresh if you can)  
Sourdough bread (optional)

**At home** Place dry ingredients in separate zip-top bags.

**In camp** Sauté the chopped onion in the butter. When the onion is translucent, add the flour to the melted butter, making a paste. Slowly add the rehydrated milk while stirring and blending. Add the clams and potatoes. Simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are rehydrated (taste to see if they're ready). Sprinkle on pepper. Best served with sourdough bread. Serves 3.

### **Indian Pilaf**

3/4 cup instant brown rice  
1/4 cup red quinoa  
1 tablespoon dried red bell pepper  
2 tablespoons dried carrots  
1/4 cup freeze-dried tomatoes  
1/3 cup dried cabbage  
1/4 cup freeze-dried zucchini  
2 tablespoons dried onion  
1/4 teaspoon dried garlic powder  
1/8 teaspoon cumin  
1/8 teaspoon coriander  
1/8 teaspoon dried ginger powder  
1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning  
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper  
1 cube chicken bouillon

**At home** Put veggies and spices in a zip-top bag. Store rice and quinoa in separate bags.

**In camp** Bring 2 1/2 cups of water to a boil. Add chicken bouillon and quinoa; simmer for five minutes. Add the contents of the veggie/spices bag to the pot, stir, and boil for another five minutes. Add the rice, stir, and boil for about 15 minutes or until tender. Serves 2.

#### **Tomato and Kale Pasta (4)**

12 ounces pasta, such as linguine

1 large bunch of kale, center ribs removed, leaves roughly chopped

1 pound cherry tomatoes, halved or 1 14-ounce can of diced tomatoes

4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Salt and pepper, to taste

Freshly grated parmesan cheese

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil and cook according to package directions. Reserve about 1/4 cup of the pasta cooking water. Meanwhile, heat oil over medium heat in a large skillet and sauté garlic until lightly brown and crisp. Remove garlic from the pan and place on a paper towel, leaving as much oil in the pan as possible. Add red pepper flakes, tomatoes, kale and about 2 tablespoons of the pasta cooking water to the pan, and cover. When the kale turns bright green and wilts, remove the lid and stir. Continue cooking until the kale is tender. Add the pasta to the kale mixture and stir to combine. Add some of the pasta cooking water if it seems dry. Serve hot with freshly grated parmesan cheese.

#### **Zucchini Pasta (3-4)**

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

1 medium white onion, halved and thinly sliced

4 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced

1/4 cup water

1 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons milk (optional)

1/2 pound linguini or spaghetti

Freshly grated parmesan cheese In a large skillet, combine olive oil, onion and zucchini. Sauté over medium-high heat for about 5 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium low and add water and salt. Cover and continue to cook until zucchini and onions are soft. Meanwhile, in a large pot, cook pasta according to package directions. Add the pasta to the zucchini mixture and stir to combine. Serve hot with freshly grated parmesan cheese.

#### **Red lentil & Tortilla Soup (2)**

4 tablespoons olive oil

1/4 cup minced onion

1/4 cup minced carrot

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 habanero pepper, minced

1/8 cup red lentils

2 cups water

Salt and pepper to taste

2 six-inch stale flour tortillas

2 tablespoons dried chives

6 tablespoons grated Manchego cheese

Several lime wedges

**In camp** Heat oil in a pan. Sauté onion, carrot, garlic, and pepper until caramelized. Add lentils and cook for about a minute. Add water, cover, and simmer (stirring occasionally) for about 15 minutes—until lentils are soft.

Mash the lentils with a fork. Add salt and pepper. Rip tortillas and place them in two bowls. Add soup, then garnish with chives, cheese, and lime.

### **Coconut Curry (1)**

1 cup couscous  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
3 tablespoons mixed dehydrated vegetables  
2/3 cup powdered coconut milk mixed with 1 1/4 cup water  
1 4-ounce chicken packet  
2 teaspoons curry powder  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
1 tablespoon sugar or honey  
1 tablespoon soy sauce

**At home** Dehydrate a mixture of vegetables such as peas, red peppers, carrots, spinach, and corn (or buy freeze-dried from a store or [packitgourmet.com](http://packitgourmet.com)). Put curry and garlic in a zip-top bag. Transfer oil and soy sauce to spill-proof containers. **In camp** Boil 1 1/4 cups water, add couscous and olive oil, remove from heat, and cover. Let sit for five minutes or until water is absorbed. Heat reconstituted milk to a simmer; add rehydrated vegetables and chicken. Mix in curry and garlic powders, sweetener, and soy sauce. Spoon over couscous and enjoy.

### **Smoked Salmon Pasta (4)**

8 ounces angel hair pasta  
1 packet instant chicken broth  
8 ounces smoked salmon  
4 garlic cloves, chopped  
1 tablespoon onion powder  
3 tablespoons butter  
4 tablespoons dried  
tomato flakes  
1/4 cup capers  
4 tablespoons Parmesan cheese

**In camp** Sauté garlic in butter. Add tomatoes, onion, broth mix, and 1/2 cup water. Let sit off heat for 15 to 20 minutes while pasta cooks. Flake salmon into sauce, and add capers. Drain pasta. Toss pasta and sauce; serve with Parmesan sprinkled on top.

### **Falafel with Tahini Sauce (2)**

1 cup falafel mix  
Vegetable oil (enough for frying)  
2 tablespoons tahini (sesame paste)  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
Salt to taste  
2 large pita pockets, halved

**In camp** Add 3/4 cup water to falafel and mix thoroughly; let it sit for 10 minutes. Shape falafel into small patties and fry in oil, on both sides, to desired crispiness. To make the sauce, combine remaining ingredients (except pita), and thin it with warm water to the consistency you want. Put falafel balls into pita pockets, spoon on sauce, and eat.

### Colombian Arepas (2)

1 cup arepa flour  
2 ounces dehydrated, precooked ground beef\*  
2 ounces of freeze-dried, mixed bell peppers\*  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
1 white onion  
1 clove garlic  
1 pint cherry tomatoes (or freeze-dried salsa)  
2 teaspoons Mexican oregano  
1 teaspoon ground cumin seed  
salt and pepper

**At home** Mix arepa flour and a pinch of salt in a quart-size zip-top bag. Pack oil in a spillproof container. Keep cherry tomatoes in their original plastic container. Mix spices in a zip-top bag. **In camp** To make arepas (aka cornmeal patties), add 1 cup of water to the bag of arepa flour and whisk to make a dough. Seal bag and let sit for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, chop onion, mince garlic, and halve the cherry tomatoes. Boil 12 ounces of water, and use half to rehydrate the ground beef and half to rehydrate the peppers. Set both aside for 5 minutes, then drain. When the dough is ready, form it into patties 3 to 4 inches across and a half-inch thick, using your fingers to smooth any cracks on the edges. Heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat in a pan, and fry the arepas in batches—about 3 minutes per side, or until the crust turns golden. Between batches, add oil if needed (1 tablespoon at a time) to keep arepas from sticking to the pan. When all the patties have been cooked, add the final tablespoon of oil to the pan, along with onion, garlic, oregano, and cumin. Sauté at medium-high heat until the onion softens (about 3 minutes), then add the beef, peppers, and cherry tomatoes. Sauté until the beef is heated through (about 3 minutes) and the tomato has softened. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and serve the beef mixture over the arepas. If there are any leftover patties, drizzle them with honey for a sweet finale.

Note: Arepa flour is precooked corn flour and shouldn't be confused with masa harina.

### Chicken Guaco-Taco's (2)

4 small flour tortillas  
1 7-ounce chicken breast in foil pouch  
1/2 white onion  
1 4-ounce block cheddar cheese, diced  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1/2 packet taco seasoning  
1 avocado

**At home** Put the oil in a spillproof container and the avocado in a hard container like a cup. **In camp** Heat oil in pot on medium heat, chop and add onion, and sauté until it softens (3 minutes). Add seasoning, three tablespoons water, and chicken. Simmer until water is evaporated and meat is heated through (about 5 minutes). Meanwhile, mash avocado (in a zip-top bag to save a dish); mix in sauce. Scoop chicken into tortillas; top with cheese and guacamole.

### Mango Curry w/ Rice and Lentils (2)

2 1/4 cups water  
1/2 cup green lentils (dry)  
1 cup basmati rice  
Curry  
1 cup water  
1/2 cup dried, chopped mangos  
1 chicken bouillon cube  
2 1/2 teaspoons curry powder

2 teaspoons garam masala  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
1/2 teaspoon dried ginger powder  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1 teaspoon dried onions, chopped  
1 teaspoon turmeric  
1/2 teaspoon red cayenne pepper powder  
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

**At Home** Mix all dry curry ingredients (mangos through cumin) in a zip-top bag.

**In Camp** In a pot, bring 2 1/4 cups water, lentils, and rice to a boil. Simmer three to four minutes, cover, and set aside, allowing the rest of the water to be absorbed. In a second pot, add the zip-top-bag ingredients to one cup water and bring to a boil. Simmer five to 10 minutes, until mangos turn a slightly darker color and sauce has thickened. Scoop rice and lentils into bowls, and top with curry. Serve immediately.

### **Wasabi Potatoes w/ Salmon (1)**

1 1/2 cups instant potato flakes  
1 1/2 cups water  
1 6-ounce salmon pouch  
2 teaspoons wasabi powder (check the Asian section of your grocery store)

**At Home** Pack potato flakes and wasabi powder in a zip-top bag **In Camp** Bring water to a simmer. Add the potato-wasabi mix and stir until smooth. Remove from heat, add salmon, and serve. Tip: Skip the salt—it brings out the wasabi's bitterness and dampens its spice.

