

D of E Gourmet Meal Suggestions

HOT EVENING MEALS

As a base (carbohydrates) :

- Any kind of dried Pasta in Sauce – but get the water right!
- Pre made pasta, lentil, couscous, dahl meals in a pouch – will quickly heat up
- Quick cook pasta (gluten free options available) – go for quick cook pasta as its ready in 5 mins
- Couscous (a type of pasta) – cooks incredibly quickly – lots of flavours
- Noodles – good filler but definitely need something adding to them
- Microwaveable Rice (gluten free options available) or Quinoa – no, there won't be a microwave at your campsite but it is pre-cooked and will heat up in a very short time in a pan or mixed with tinned or packet casserole or similar meaty, veggie or plant-based products
- Dried mashed potato mix (e.g., smash). Very light and produces A LOT of mash for a relatively small amount of packet mix. Bit sticky tho'!

Then add:

- Pitta Bread, Naan Bread, Fajitas, Bagels - already squashed so won't come to any harm in your rucksack and can be warmed up on top of a pan lid whilst cooking the base meal.
- Sauces in a packet – bolognese, black bean, pasta stir in sauces, veggie/plant-based sauces
- Vegetable/Chicken/Beef Stock cubes – to add flavour
- Pepperoni, Mattesons, Quorn, Beyond the meat – all sealed up, bomb proof! Slice and add.
- Dried Mushrooms/Onions – weigh nothing but plump up and add a lot of flavour to your dish, remember to add a bit of extra water for them to re-hydrate.
- Pesto and Herbs & Spices - can be packed into a little recycled plastic pot?
- Wayfarer Type Meals or similar boil in the bag options – expensive and tasty but may not fill you up. Can be bulked up with pasta or rice. Easy on the washing up, allows individual likes, but will everyone be able to eat at the same time?

Avoid:

- Soft fruit that is easily damaged and could spoil other food. Dried fruit is lighter & won't go off.
- Anything that can go off basically. DO NOT BRING FRESH MEAT** OR SOFT CHEESE. Anything from the supermarket shelves e.g., smoked and dried cooked meat, vegetarian, plant-based (e.g., beef jerky or pepperoni) should be ok as would small tins of meat such as tuna, spam or corned beef (remember RING PULL tops). John West does great pouches of tuna.

FOR DESSERT [Or snacks]

- Flapjack, brownies – why not make your own
- Fruit Cake, better still Christmas cake with icing on!
- Malt Loaf/Jamaica ginger/chocolate/golden syrup cake – buttered – yum!
- Crunchy Cereal bars or crunchy cereal / mini Weetabix type stuff
- Dried fruit – tropical is a particular favourite, also apricot and mango.
- Dried apple rings & Dried banana
- Add hot Instant Custard to any of the above when in camp - very fast and delicious
- Pudding pots – from rice to sticky toffee pudding
- Nuts/Trail Mix/Bombay Mix/Seed mix, make up your own trail mix – make sure no-one is allergic to nuts though!

BREAKFASTS

Having something hot for breakfast makes a very positive start to the day, even if it's just a cup of tea or hot chocolate with your cereal bars! Always finish eating breakfast about an hour before you start walking or you might feel queasy.

- Porridge (Instant oats) – an amazing array of flavours, gluten free options available. add some dried fruit, jam/honey, peanut butter for extra interest.
- Cereal bars, croissants, Pain au Choc, Choc Crepes (warm up on the Trangia pan lid - yum).
- Wayfarer breakfast meal (eg potato and beans with pitta bread)

Tip: Don't fry – makes a mess of your Trangia which you'll have to clean, gets extremely hot and in any case what would you fry? Remember you don't carry a fridge**!

DRINKS

- Water!
- Squeeze squash is a thought but once added to your water you'll have to drink it and you can't use that water for cooking or first aid.
- Hot Chocolate etc. instant drink sachets
- Tea bags – remember no milk so think herbal or red bush
- DO NOT bring energy drinks – they are sugar and caffeine and will give you a quick high and then a horrible low and that's it! They are heavy and what do you do with the can/bottle?

LUNCHES AND SNACKS

Mix and match from suggestions on this sheet – you should have got the general idea by now. Carry food that could be eaten on the move if the worst came to the worst. Don't plan to cook at lunch times. Do you really want to stop in the pouring rain, get more cold and wet and have to carry extra meths in order to do this? What if you're late, want to eat on the move, or can't cook for everyone at the same time? Bringing things to construct your lunches at the time is fun and gives you choices. Eg use the breads suggested above, or oatcakes, cheddars, ryvita as a base and add: - Spread from tubes (cheese, vegetarian pate) or triangles of cheese or mini cheese portions - pouches of tuna - jam/honey (find those little individual portions you get in restaurants), peanut butter - any spread could be decanted from the jar at home into a (recycled) little plastic pot that some other food came in originally. Even Lidl's do individual pre made cold pasta meals that you just need a spork for! Baby food pouches? Just an idea, prob more dessert than savoury!

TOP TIPS

- Re package everything down to the bare minimum, if necessary, write cooking instructions on to inside packet. Packaging, has to be carried and often is much bigger than needed. It can also be very fragile and burst/split when you shove other things on top
- On the other hand, don't use big hard lunch boxes because they always take up the same space, even when empty, and are awkward to pack.
- Get good energy value in relation to the "size" of the food. You have to get team kit into your rucksack so the space needed by, and the weight of, everything is critical
- Crisps might be one of your fave things but will end up as crumbs and possibly burst – think more "solid" if you like these kinds of snacks.
- Pack your foods for the day in separate bags so you can easily find them in your rucksack e.g. day 1 pack your lunch, snacks and dinner and keep to hand for that day, day 2 pack breakfast, lunch, snacks and dinner and keep separate from day 1 etc
- Read the recipe beforehand. If a recipe needs 250ml of water to reconstitute it measure this out before you go into your mug and mark the right level – this saves guess work at your campsite. There's also stamped (part) litre marks on one of your Trangia pans
- Make sure you eat well for a couple of days before you go on your expedition.
- And drink water too so you are well hydrated beforehand
- Go to large supermarkets eg. Asda, Morrisons & Tesco – they have lots of choice in this kind of food including gluten free, vegetarian and plant-based options
- If you must bring tins, find ones with ring pull tops
- To clean pans – use the scrub bud, keeping it in a small plastic bag away from matches. Washing up liquid, if you carry it, should never be used in washing up in a mountain stream.
- Don't forget the matches and be OTT in keeping them in plastic and dry – even the ground can be damp enough to make them useless.
- Don't leave the washing up, the later you leave it, the more stuck it will become - it isn't good campcraft anyway! A tidy area is a safe area