

ADVENTUROUS JOURNEYS – NUTRITION

This reading assumes you watched the YouTube video on Nutrition for Hiking.

Catering for an Adventurous journey must not be confused with camp catering!!

Camp catering, especially where a vehicle is used, can include fresh produce which all add to the enjoyment of camping. Expedition catering for an unaccompanied, self-reliant expedition presents an entirely different form of challenge. In planning your menu, you have several tasks to consider and balance:

- Maximize energy recovery
- Minimize bulk and weight
- Consider the needs of your team
- Minimize the complexity in preparation
- Avoid illness on the journey
- Avoid the need for refrigeration/cold storage

Maximize energy recovery

On average it is expected that you will expend 350 - 500 calories an hour completing an Adventurous Journey. Therefore, as pointed out in the video, a balanced mixture of macronutrients (carbs, proteins, and fats), alongside proper hydration, is essential for making it through the day.

As a rough guide:

- Simple Carbohydrates, the sugars, candy, chocolate, sweet drinks - provide energy very quickly
- Complex Carbohydrates in the form of rice, pasta, bread, etc. supply energy over the medium term
- Fats such as nuts and oils provide energy over a longer period of time
- Protein such as chicken, peanut butter, tuna, sardines, etc. Help to rebuild your muscles.

In the evening, however, it is important refuel your body so you are prepared for the next day. Your choice in dinner menu plays a big role in this. Your meal should include high amounts of complex carbs and fats, alongside some protein to rebuild your muscles.

Minimize bulk and weight

One of the biggest mistakes we experience with hikers is overpacking- whether it is too much clothes, toiletries, or food. You may feel like you need to bring the house with you – just in case – but this can create problems. Weight is a red flag when it comes to journeys – the more you have, the more you must carry along the way. You don't want to feel like you're just hauling a

bag of bricks! Additionally, you Ideally, you don't want a situation where you have food left at the end of the journey.

One recommendation is to aim for 700g to 1kg of food per day, plus a small backup meal

Light weight options include, but are not limited to:

- Trail mix (especially when you make your own)
- Tortillas
- Hummus
- Beef jerky
- Instant oats
- Dried fruit
- Powdered milk and/or cocoa

Stick to smaller packages – e.g. the sample size chocolate is preferred to the family size.

When it comes to condiments, you do not need to bring your mom's spice bottle!! Empty a few teaspoons into a roll of foil or a small ziploc bag to reduce the weight.

Additionally, pack smaller containers!! Substitute the ketchup bottle for some Chefette or KFC ketchup packs. Bring the smaller peanut butter instead of the family size, or the soy sauce or salt packet instead of the Salt shaker. A dash of sauce of some kind can make a big difference.

Instant/Freeze Dried/Dehydrated meals are also an option, if you can source and afford them. Consider repackaging them in ziploc bags to save space and weight.

Consider the needs of your team

All bodies are not exactly the same. Persons have different preferences, habits and needs. You may for instance find yourself in a team with someone with a food allergy or intolerance, or may avoid certain foods for various reasons. As a team, it is your responsibility to work together to set out a menu that can be accommodating, yet enjoyable, for all. Vegan franks can be tasty if cooked appropriately!!!

Minimize the complexity in preparation

After a long day you do not want to spend too much time getting your food ready. You will likely be starving, sleepy or a combination of the two.

One pot meals mean that everything can be thrown and mixed as soon as they are ready. E.g. mashed potatoes w/ sausages/tuna

Zero pot meals can be an extra space and weight saver. You can consider meals that can be cooked in foil packs or over direct heat (no flame) e.g. baked (sweet) potato, breadfruit.

Avoid illness on the journey

Hiking without proper food hygiene is a ticking time bomb waiting to go off. When it does, it can not only ruin your hike but put you and your team in danger.

- Keep a small bottle of hand sanitizer around to use before preparing/cooking/eating and after nature calls.
- Consume all perishables on Day 1. Switch to durable options for hikes lasting longer.
- Ensure cutting and prep is done on a clean surface.
- Filter and treat water if you are unsure about the source. Treat water using boiling and/or using water purification tablets.

Avoid the need for cold storage

Having a fridge or freezer on the journey defeats our rule about minimizing bulk and weight. Unfortunately that also means that most menu options that require them are a no-no beyond Day 1.

If you plan appropriately, you can freeze your cold food the night before the journey to be used by the end of the first day. This works well for marinated meats. However beyond this, stick to canned (e.g. luncheon meat, sardine, pink salmon, tuna, canned chicken) or preferably dried/dehydrated foods – Aluminium is still pretty heavy, and in large numbers they will weigh you down

Putting it all together

A decent meal would include a large potato per person, some canned tuna or chicken, some veggies and a few condiments. Mac and cheese is a popular option. Ramen is useful but discouraged, as it has little nutritional value on its own. If you plan ahead, you can also consider stewed chicken and rice. Your meals should be exciting and varied - something to look forward to after a long day.

Powdered Drink mixes and electrolytes make great space savers. We encourage participants to save the cups and use a water bottle to mix the drink.

We always encourage the inclusion of a hot beverage in the morning, especially in the colder seasons. These beverages are a great pick-upper after a short night and can help to resolve any potential issues before departure.

Beyond the group menu items, you are free to bring your own personal snacks. This is also recommended, but don't overdo it and run into the weight issue.

Meal Plan Examples

Basic

	Day 0	Day 1	Day 2
Breakfast		Vienna sausages w/ crackers Hot chocolate	Box cereal Juice/hot chocolate
Lunch		Granola/Protein bar Canned sausages Drink mix	
Dinner	Packed Meal	Tuna Pasta w/ mixed vegetables	

Vegan

	Day 0	Day 1	Day 2
Breakfast		Mixed fruit Instant oats Box juice	Peanut butter on crackers Hot Chocolate
Lunch		Granola bar Trail Mix	
Dinner	Packed Meal	Vegan Franks + Penne alfredo with sweet corn and shredded carrots Fresh Start Drink Powder	

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