

JU-SI ADVENTURES



LONG DISTANCE HIKING

(FOOD CONSIDERATION)



April 2019

Thru-Hiking Food – Our Perspective

Eating is one of the great joys of life. Good nutrition is a very important factor in remaining in good health and having the energy to achieve your distance walking goals.

The challenge in spending extended periods of time in the wilderness is that you need to plan and carry what you will consume in your pack. The book: *Mountaineering, Freedom of the Hills* by Harley and Abby McAllister estimates food consumption of 3,500 to 5,500Cal per day for long-distance walking/hiking with back-pack in challenging terrain. When we walked the Arizona National Scenic Trail, we planned 3,500Cal per person per day. It was perfect for Julie but Simon lost over 40lbs (18kg) in the first month. He needed 5,500+ Cal/day. Once we corrected this dangerous mistake, he felt more energetic and regained some weight.

Our food consideration section discusses what we have experienced and how we prepare.

- Dehydrated meals can be purchased in outdoor stores or homemade. If you plan on purchasing food from local grocery stores, you will have to be more imaginative and combine dry soups mixes or stews with instant rice, noodles, sausage, dry vegetables, and/or powdered milk or cheese. In smaller communities, your food options will be limited. Plan ahead to avoid having only peanut butter and chips to eat for the next passage.
- We often cook and dehydrate our own meals. We use the *Backpacking Chef* website and *The Ultimate Dehydrator Cookbook* by Tammy & Steven Gangloff and *September Ferguson*. There are many reference books on this topic. The home-cooked meals are more nutritious and less expensive than store bought. But it does take time and planning to cook all that food.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables are necessary for a healthy balanced diet but are very low in calories. Fresh food is healthy but it is bulky and weighs more. Consider these food items as treats when you visit communities.
- Choose food options that provide carbohydrates, proteins and fat and maximise caloric intake. The generally accepted ration is: 40% Carbohydrates/20% Protein/40% Fats.
- The Keto diet recommends 25% protein, 5% carbs and 70% fats. There is some scientific research that suggests that endurance athletes do well on this type of diet. If you are interested in this approach, please do your own research, start the diet prior to hitting the



One Day Ration from one of our Cache



Julie with our Meals for the AZT

trail, understand your specific needs and plan what your typical day of food will look like on the trail.

- Loosing too much weight may mean that your body is taking important nutrients from your muscle mass. This could be very dangerous and lead to long-term health issues. You will be walking for 6 or more hours a day. Consider eating 5-6 meals a day and include all Macronutrients in each meal. You will need to be mindful to eat more than you normally do at home.
- It takes energy to digest food. Large meals in the middle of your walking hours can cause gastric distress. Our schedule goes something like this: 6:30- morning snack (PB and drink), 11:00-2nd breakfast (dried eggs, or granola), 2:00 & 4:00-lunch 1 & 2 (nibbles-gorp, sausage, cheese,...) and at 6:00-supper (protein, dry veg, oil, and some rice), if we are still hungry at bedtime we have some nuts, or cheese.
- Try out what works best for you. What foods do you like to eat? Find food options that maximise health and calories that are enjoyable to eat. What will work for your body type?
- On walks such as the Camino de Santiago, you can purchase fresh food in communities on a daily basis. The hosts of the Albergues offer 3 course meals that will keep you going and are a great way to get to know your travel companions.
- The Great Transcanadian Trail offers grocery store options from small 7-11 style markets (dépanneur in Quebec); local farmer's markets to large chain grocery stores. But there will be areas where you will be in the Wilderness. Plan ahead and prepare cashes.



Communal Meal (Saint-Privat-d'Allier) on the Camino 'Le Puy En Velay'

- On Wilderness trails, groceries are few and far between. It is important to prepare caches for many of the passages. Prepare the cache boxes and mail them to the post offices, ranger stations or stores in the up-coming communities. Check before hand with the businesses that they accept holding the box for you. Some businesses, such as the US post office, only hold packages for 30 days. Remember to put a thank you card in the box!
- A cache box should hold 3-5 days of food and supplies. More than that will cause your pack to be unruly and heavy.
- Some caches will be dropped off in the wilderness, as there will be no community in the vicinity. Chose a safe location, such as under a bridge (see picture), by a recognizable tree or rock formation. It should be discretely placed to avoid disruption from curious hikers. Will you need water in this area?
- When approaching a community, review your plan to understand your shopping options in the next few days. Purchase what you need (food and supplies) to last you until the next community. Will you need fuel for your stove, fresh batteries, first aid supplies, toiletries?



Cache below East Florence HWY near the Gila River - AZT

Our suggestions are as follows. Variety and personal taste will fine-tune your selection:

BKFT:

- Granola 476 Cal/1 c-10g prot. -62g carbs-18g fat-6.5g fiber
- Skim milk powder 90 Cal/4 Tsp-9g prot. -13g carbs-0g fat-0g fiber
- Bars (*Clif*) 250 Cal/ bar-9g prot. -40g carbs-5g fat-5g fiber
- Peanut butter (natural) 90 Cal/1 Tbsp-4g prot. -3g carbs-7g fat-1g fiber
- Bagel (they pack well) 275 Cal/bagel-10g prot. -49g carbs-1.5g fat-4g fiber
- *Carnation instant BKFT* powder 130 Cal/pouch-13g prot. -39g carbs-1g fat-0g fiber
- Oatmeal (steel cut) 140 Cal/1c-6g prot. -25g carbs-2g fat-4g fiber
- Dehydrated eggs & bacon 284 Cal/1c-29g prot. -11g carbs-12g fat-4g fiber
- Pancake mix 230Cal/1c-6g prot. -28g carbs-10g fat-1.5g fiber
- Pre-made waffles 160Cal/1 waffle2.5g prot. -27g carbs-.5g fat-2g fiber
- *Pop Tarts* 200 Cal/tart- 2g prot. -38g carbs-5g fat-.5g fiber

LUNCH:

- Mixed nuts 600 Cal/1c-24g prot. -29g carbs-20g fat-8g fiber

- Dried fruit 260 Cal/1c-2g prot. -28g carbs-0g fat-2.5g fiber
- Cheese (cheddar) 202 Cal/2 oz-12g prot. -1g carbs-17g fat-0g fiber
- Sausage (pepperoni) 200Cal/2 sticks-24g prot. 3g carbs-10g fat-.5g fiber
- Jerky (beef) 75 Cal/2 oz-12.5g prot. .5g carbs-2.5g fat-0g fiber
- Dried hummus 45 Cal/Tbsp-3g prot. -7g carbs- 2g fat-2g fiber
- Tortillas (soft) 150 Cal/2 shells-4g prot. -23g carbs-3g fat-1g fiber
- *Fish* crackers 60 Cal/1/2c-2g prot. -9g carbs-2.5g fat-0g fiber
- *Mary's* crackers 140 Cal/13-3g prot. -21g carbs-5g fat-3g fiber
- Tuna tetra packs 150 Cal/pack-19g prot. -4g carbs-3g fat-0g fiber
- Nori seaweed 10 Cal/2.5g-1g prot. -0g carbs-.5g fat-0g fiber (Fe)

SUPPER:

- Dehydrated soups 120+ Cal/pouch-2g prot. -23g carbs-0g fat-0g fiber
- Instant rice 128 Cal/3/4c-3g prot. -2g carbs-0g fat-.75g fiber
- Instant noodles 133 Cal/1/2c-2.3g prot. -20g carbs-4.3g fat-1g fiber
- Instant mashed potatoes 227 Cal/1 c-4g prot. -30g carb-10g fat-4.5g fiber
- Summer sausage 203Cal/2oz-10g prot. -2g carbs-17g fat-0g fiber
- Dry vegetables 64 Cal/3/4 c-2g prot. -6g carbs-0g fat-8g fiber
- *Ramen* soup mix 190Cal/packet-4g prot. -26g carbs-7g fat-.5g fiber
- Dry meals from outdoor stores+/-240 Cal/serv.-12g prot. -31g carbs-7g fat-3g fiber
- *India* ready to eat meals 140Cal/serv. -5g prot. -13g carbs-8g fat-6g fiber
- *Mac and Cheese* 216 Cal/1 c- 3g prot. -14.5g carbs-4.3g fat-2g fiber

DRINKS:

- Instant coffee, tea 0Cal
- Instant cappuccino 80 Cal/ 1 Tbsp-9g carbs-4.5g fat
- Hot chocolate powder 33 Cal/1 Tbsp-.3g prot. -8g carbs-.7g fat-.7g fiber
- Hot apple cider powder 90 Cal/ 1 Tbsp-0g prot. -22g carbs-0g fat-0g fiber
- Electrolyte powder (*Nuun*) 80Cal/ 1 Tbsp-21g carbs (Na, Mg, K, Vit C)
- *Ener-C* drink powderdry cereal 25 Cal/ packet-5g carbs (Vit:A, B3,B6,B12,C,Ca,Mg,K)

MISC: These items have calories but are low in nutrients

- Candy bars 500Cal/100g
- Chips 540Cal/100g
- *Clif - Blocks* Energy Chews 100Cal/3 blocks-24g carbs (Na, K)
- *Sportbeans - Jelly Beans* 100Cal/28g (pack)-25g carbs (Na, K, Vit B6, B12, C)
- Dry cereal (*Cheerios*) 110Cal/1 cup-2g prot. -24g carbs-1g fat-3g fiber (Ca, K)
- Syrup (maple) 52 Cal/1 Tbsp-13g carbs (K)
- Honey 64 Cal/1 Tbsp-17gcarbs
- White sugar 49 Cal/1 Tbsp-13g carbs
- Oil (olive) 80 Cal/2 Tbsp-9g fat
- *MCT* powder 60 Cal/ 1 Tbsp-3g carbs-6g fat-3g fiber (Ca)

References:

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