

FOOD

Fuel for the Long Trek

In the olden days, B.C. (Before Cholesterol), food for an extended backpacking or paddle trip was simple. The first trail dinner was always a thick steak, potatoes baked in campfire coals (in an area that allowed fires), or a pound of pasta with butter. This method made for a light pack but poor health.

Trail food needs to be lightweight, easy to cook (no cooking needed is best of all), calorie dense, tasty and healthy. Following are a few examples.



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Home-Made Granola

This granola is low in sugar and includes some healthy fats and high-fiber rolled oats, nuts, and dried fruit—all good stuff.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 cup walnut
- 1/4 cup agave syrup
- 1 Tbsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 3 1/2 cups rolled oats
- 1 1/2 cups chopped unsalted mix of walnuts and almonds

Directions:

1. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes or until golden brown, stirring occasionally.
2. Stir in: 2 cups dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, chopped apples, dates, apricots, prunes, etc.)
3. Cool, bag in tightly sealed plastic bags, and freeze any you aren't going to use within a week.

Oh Boy! Outdoor Oatmeal

Why it's healthier: Oatmeal is a tasty, hot, and satisfying alternative to cold cereals, though low-sugar, whole-grain cold cereals can be a healthy option. The old-fashioned oatmeal and the high-fiber oat bran in this version are slower to digest and fuel you at least until camp is broken and you are a mile or two down the trail. Nuts add heart-healthy fats and dried fruit adds more fiber and nutrients.

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup old-fashioned oats
- 1/4 cup oat bran
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 3 Tbsp. of your preferred mix of chopped walnuts, sliced almonds, Raisins and dried cranberries
- 1.3 oz. packet of Carnation Instant Breakfast

Process:

Bring water to a rolling boil and stir in oats and oat bran. Cover and let sit for a few minutes. Top with nuts and dried fruit, mix in the packet of Carnation Instant Breakfast and enjoy!

Gallop Gorp

Why it's healthier: With additional seeds and nuts, this gorp packs more protein, fiber, and healthy fats than the traditional mix. The different tastes and textures make it tempting. And yes, the chocolate—in moderation—is good for you.

Ingredients:

- 16 oz. granola (Use Edie's Granola above, or choose one rich in whole grains and fiber and low in sugar and fat)
- 1/2 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1/2 cup shelled sunflower seeds
- 1/2 cup cashews
- 1 cup peanuts
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup dried apricots, cut into small pieces
- 3.5-oz. bar of low-sugar, high-cocoa content dark chocolate, broken into small chunks (optional)

Process:

Mix ingredients and store in a zippered plastic bag. Or, as we learned on a recent AMC Winter Workshop Weekend led by the New Hampshire Chapter, store gorp in a Nalgene bottle and keep it accessible as you hike. Just tip the bottle back and enjoy. This method is more convenient and less messy than a plastic bag.

Nut Butter and Dried Fruit on a Bagel

Dried fruit is much higher in healthy fiber than the sugary jelly of a traditional PB&J sandwich—and the fruit is usually lighter and easier to carry. One large wholewheat bagel is equal in calories to about five slices of bread, and easier to carry.

Ingredients and Process:

1. 1 large whole-wheat bagel
2. Almond butter or peanut butter, spread thickly
3. Sprinkle on chopped almonds or chopped peanuts for more protein and an interesting texture and add raisins or chopped dried apricots.