

Feeding the furnace



Raw ingredients for field breakfasts

Think of your body as a machine and without a constant source of energy, both are dead in the water or in this case, *on the mountain*.

Deciding on what and how much food to bring has been a large and sometimes tasteless learning curve for me. Forming a menu is a balancing act between the menu's weight/bulk and overall calories. Too much food and you are carrying unnecessary weight, too little and you can literally starve yourself. I have made both mistakes and wouldn't recommend either.

It never ceases to amaze me how food or drink can revitalize ones spirits and physical being. On one hunt, we had already spent the day grinding into our chosen spike camp location with heavy packs. After setting up camp, I chose to do some quick glassing of the surrounding mountains and as luck would have it, I spotted some rams. Being younger and possessing more enthusiasm than brains, we decided to give it a go. In my haste, I neglected to pack any food. After an unsuccessful stalk, we commenced our descent off the mountain, when I absolutely crashed and at that moment, I felt it was beyond me to climb down off that mountain. Thankfully, my partner had wisely packed a couple of bars and gave me one. Once the contents of that bar hit my bloodstream, I rapidly re-gained my strength and climbed down without further incident, *lesson learned*.

Regarding freeze-dried meals, we are now spoiled for choice. Back in the old days everything tasted like it was seasoned with chili powder, from spaghetti to seafood, *yuck*. I often didn't finish the entire contents of the package, as I just couldn't stomach it. It's a brave new world now and I look forward to eating my freeze-dried dinners. All my dinners now are freeze-dried and I choose them referencing two criteria, personal taste and calorie count. Ordering online allows you to access a greater choice of meals and you can assess the overall calorie count through the retailer or the manufacture's website.



The finished product – just add hot water and GO!

With regards to breakfast, I like to make my own oatmeal and add ingredients for nutrition and taste. I mix all the ingredients in a large bowl and then I transfer to individual zip locks for daily consumption. The following amounts are approximates and you can vary for taste and meal size requirements. One third of a cup of Red Hill quick cooking rolled oats, 2 tbsp of oat bran, 3 tbsp of powdered milk, cinnamon to taste, 1 tsp of chia seeds, 2 tbsp of shredded coconut, 1 tbsp hemp seeds and then I add various dried fruits to the different zip lock packages. The dried fruit I use are as follows: cranberries, apricots, bananas, apples, mangos and pineapple. All you need to do is add hot water into the zip locks, stir, and then let sit for 5 minutes. A new combination I am looking forward to trying this year is oatmeal, nuts, coconut and cocoa powder.

I don't pack lunches per se but more of a variety of snacks to consume while hiking or glassing. One delicious meal/snack I make is from a recipe I read about online. I mix together ½ cup of unsalted almond butter, ½ cup of cashew butter, 6 tbsp of agave sugar, 2 tbsp of almond oil, ½

tsp of almond extract. I then add olive oil until I reach the desired consistency. Spread into some wraps and you have an energy packed meal.



The reward of a bountiful hunt – Fresh Stone's Sheep tenderloin on the Whisperlite

Being heavy, I endeavor to consume these wraps in the first couple of days.

Other foods: chocolate and protein bars, small flavored cans of tuna, sardines, beef jerky, instant coffee packs, some energy chews, like power shots, and some Emergen-C packs to add to water. This is not an all-inclusive list but some of the items I always try to include.

I carry a couple of luxury items in the event we are successful. The first is a small bag of seasoning salt and the second is a small amount of olive oil, but in the event you don't have any oil you can use animal fat. The above picture speaks volumes so no explanation is required ☺

Happy trails,

M. Kirk