

## Ideas for Camping Meals

**NOTE: Always check for the resources you need to prepare the meal. Griddle, briquettes, open fire, foil, pots & pans are not a guarantee. Do you have matches?**

1. **Dinty Moore Stew** – Tastes great! And it is as easy as open the can and heat. You can even leave it in the can. It tastes great because they put sugar in it
2. **Spaghetti** – Another simple meal. Buy the sauce in a bottle and bring the noodles. Boil Water, cook the noodles, and put the 2 together. Couple that with Salad in a bag and Heat some buttered & garlic French bread in tin foil over the fire and you got it all. To be really organized cook it up at home and put it in freezer-quality zip lock bags or Seal-a-Meal bags and simply heat in boiling water. Do not use sandwich bags as they melt.
3. **Fajitas** – Grill the chicken and/or beef at home on the BBQ. Put it in a freezer bag and freeze to avoid bacteria. Bring tortillas, grated cheese, beans (in a can), and any other fixings like lettuce, avocado, tomatoes, onions, and peppers. Have everybody put together his or her own to cater to specifics likes & dislikes. You can simplify this and simply do **burritos**. Remember to bring the taco sauce!
4. **Foil pouches** – Cook anything you want if you can have an open campfire. Here are websites to help with foil pouch ideas:  
<http://camping.about.com/cs/campingrecipelinks/1/blrcfoil.htm>  
[http://www.cooks.com/rec/search/0,1-0,camping\\_meals,FF.html](http://www.cooks.com/rec/search/0,1-0,camping_meals,FF.html)
5. **Dutch Oven** – many recipes available – check on-line – Here are some sample sites:  
[www.macscouter.com/Cooking/DutchOven.html](http://www.macscouter.com/Cooking/DutchOven.html)  
<http://www.csupomona.edu/~rosenkrantz/personal/dutchoven.htm>  
<http://www.isu.edu/outdoor/dutch.html>  
<http://www.macscouter.com/Cooking/AdditionalRecipes.html>  
<http://papadutch.home.comcast.net/dutch-oven-recipes.htm>



Pot roast with potatoes and carrots is common as well as the fruit and pastry desserts. Add some pudding for a twist. Cook whole chickens or other things. Think of any meals done in a crock-pot at home and you can pretty much duplicate it in the Dutch oven. Don't forget to buy briquettes.

6. **Hot dogs** – easy if you have that campfire.
7. **Hamburgers** – just use the foil pouches and the campfire does it all again.

8. **Pizza** – using the Dutch oven or a cardboard box that is foil lined. One of the simplest pizza recipes is simply to put your ingredients on a large tortilla and grill it on the griddle. This makes for fun and individualized meals.
9. **Eggs, bacon sausage** – Breakfast classics are always better on a campout.
10. **French Toast** – Make sure that there is a griddle available
11. **Chinese** – Consider bringing a wok, cooking oil (or peanut oil), rice can be cooked in a covered pot (check ahead for a matching lid), and then get creative with meat, veggies, peppers, etc. in any kind of stir-fry arrangement.
12. **Go Fish** – Catch trout and cook them up using cereal, breadcrumbs, or just plain. Put fish together with vegetables, rice, and salad and you have a nicely balanced meal.
13. **Canopy** – Not a meal, but if it rains can you stay dry in order to cook? You may be very hungry otherwise. There is a place for Pop Tarts
14. **Pastries - such** as muffins, bear claws, and donuts can add to a nice breakfast and stretch the eggs & bacon.
15. **Omelettes** – Get up early and grill the onions, mushrooms, peppers, and grate cheese for a customized meal. Bring an omelet pan and cooking spray
16. **All In One** – Get canned potatoes (saves a lot of time), eggs, bacon, sausage, and whatever you might like and cook them all together. It's sort of like breakfast burritos without the shell. The other potato option is to simply buy frozen hash browns.
17. **Chicken fingers** – buy them ready-made and then build a meal around them. Check other pre-boxed main dishes at Costco and build a meal around any of them. The BBQ wings are really good (very messy though so provide clean-up)
18. **Hoagies** – Don't do simple sandwiches – make them an event. Slice up tomatoes, get sliced cheeses and sandwich meats. Provide mayo, Italian dressing, Ranch dressing, and honey mustard.
19. **Bake cookies or Brownies** – A little extra effort will make a huge difference in the enjoyment of the meal. Some things can be cooked at home before you leave.
20. **Canned Potatoes?** – I have a friend who buys the canned potatoes and mixes those with eggs and ham for a great breakfast meal. Be creative about what to throw in and you have variety. Canned corn could make it far more interesting.
21. **Rice noodles** – check these out at the grocery store on the ethnic food aisle. They are fun to cook because they literally explode in size when you cook them. They are a cross between egg noodles and rice. Use them as a base for any meat with sauce. Add veggies and a salad.
22. **Mexican variety** – Make up enchiladas, burritos, tamales, tostadas, and Spanish rice for some real flare.
23. **Wok creativity** – Use a wok and make onion rings, French fries, or chimichangas. It doesn't have to be Chinese to be done in a wok. For a batter, either buy a box of tempura batter or make your own. Make sure you read the box. I use a few eggs (2-4), flour & cornstarch in a ratio of about 3:1, and spices

- to bring out the flavor. Pepper, salt, cayenne pepper, garlic powder, maybe some Dash.
24. **Smores** – Classic
  25. **Ethnic** – do you have some special ethnic dish? Build a meal around it. You might get a couple of scouts who'd rather starve than try something new, but they will learn.
  26. **Brats** – take the hot dog to a new plateau. Remember that brats need to cook slowly and they produce a lot of grease. Be prepared to clean up the mess.
  27. **Ribs** – Used to be an All-American dish. Cooked slow and basted with a good sauce. Yummy
  28. **Corn on the Cob** – Another American classic. Cook it in foil with butter and spices in foil pouches
  29. **Carrots** – Another foil pouch item. Add butter and brown sugar with some other spices for a real treat. Add slivered almonds for texture.
  30. **Fruit** – Add fruit to cereals, as a side dish, to a salad, and by itself. There are a number of different fruit salads or spinach with mandarin oranges, apples and walnuts, melons, and other ways of fixing fruit.
  31. **Root Beer** – Classic recipe: Get a 7-gallon water jug. Add 5 gallons of water, 5 lbs of sugar, 5 lbs of dry ice and 1 bottle of root beer extract. Let it sit for a while to carbonate. It's fun too.
  32. **Soup** – Many ways to do this and have fun. Hollow out a large bread loaf and pour a creamy soup in. Use the break you carved out to dip.
  33. **Fondue**. – Even dessert fondues can be more fun than smores. Get some skewers (or make your own); melt some cheese, and dip bread or meat into your cheese sauce for more fun. Use bananas, pretzels, marshmallows, and fruit in melted chocolate for dessert. Makes for far more fun.
  34. **Little Smokies** – A Scout classic. Grill in a pan and add baked beans, or BBQ sauce, or eggs and potatoes for a breakfast meal.
  35. **Grilled or BBQ Chicken** – Cut one or more whole chickens into the parts (breasts, thighs, wings, drumsticks, & back). Clean off excess fat. Rinse and blot dry with paper towel. Season to taste (Onion salt, savor salt, pepper, etc.). Sear on both sides to seal in juices, then cook on medium heat until pink is gone.
  36. **Grilled Beef** – learn the cuts of meat and how to apply different spices and sauces to provide variety. Take **corn on the cob** and **potatoes** (scrubbed) and put them in tin foil in the fire to cook along with the beef for a true American meal. Provide a variety of fixings for the baked potatoes.
  37. **Pita Bread** – cut up meat, lettuce, tomatoes, use your favorite salad dressing or sour cream, cheese, etc. in a flat bread pocket.
  38. **Biscuits** – make your own or buy the ones in the can that is fun to pop open. Add butter while they are cooking, cinnamon, and maybe even some powdered sugar & milk mix for icing.

39. **Vegetables** – There are many ways to fix veggies that are good to eat and good for you. Add sliced almonds, baby white onions, red pepper slivers (small), or artichoke hearts for texture, variety, and flavor. Cheese sauces can liven up a green vegetable. Do a stir-fry with a little peanut oil (check your folks for allergies first) and then add in some classic Chinese greens. Add rice, rice noodles, or pasta as an extender. Even some peanuts or cashews can add texture for some fun. Make extra bacon at breakfast, chop it up and add it to green beans. Buy the Durkee onions and toss some of them in to a vegetable. You don't have to have the mushroom soup – it's probably better without.
40. **Boiling Water** – Think in terms of what can cook in boiling water??? Pasta, freezer bags (but not sandwich bags!!), hard-boiled eggs, corn on the cob, freeze-dried meals, and frozen veggies. The freeze-dried backpacking meals are convenient but very expensive. Since Scouts are generally car camping this is wasted expense. In general, except for pasta, boiling water should be for cleanup.
41. **Bird's Eyes** – This is an old Scout favorite. Tear out the center of a piece of bread. Put a little butter on the bread and grill it on the griddle while cooking an egg in the hole.
42. **Pancakes** – Just need a griddle. Add fruit or chocolate chips to liven them up. Consider other syrups than maple.
43. **Oatmeal** – Bring things to add to give it variety. Just buy regular oatmeal and bring brown sugar, fruit, raisins, nuts, etc.
44. **Happy Hour!!!** – Bring some crackers and cheese to serve while you are fixing dinner and you will be able to get help in preparing your meal.
45. **AVOID soft drinks** – They have lots of caffeine and/or 1 teaspoon of sugar per ounce. The high fructose corn syrup has been widely attributed to American obesity. Consider taking time to make real lemonade.
46. **Salsa! Or Guacamole** – Another fun item to make. Mango salsa is really good too. Bring corn chips to serve with it. Fresh salsa is best.

**NOTE:** Most of the interesting meals above have more to do with added details. Something by itself is boring. Add variety by adding French bread, vegetables, and a salad to show some class and make it healthy. Serving a meal in courses also shows some real class. Remember – you are camping – you have time. Having your own little happy hour, adding in a fondue dessert, or a Dutch oven course can liven up the meal and make it memorable.

## Logistics:

- Check water supply, propane, utensils, pots & pans, etc. before you start. Gather all the things you need so it is easier to coordinate the meal elements. Do food prep before you start cooking (slice & dice, cleaning, finding utensils, etc.)
- Do not underestimate the power of a cooking TEAM. Divide and conquer in order to coordinate timing and preparation.
- A tablecloth adds a lot and can actually simplify cleanup.
- Clean up as you go. Dispose of trash and mess as you work each item for the meal. Clean preparation pans, cutting boards, knives, etc. as you use them.
- Show some flare! Bring a full apron and a chef's hat and see how much attention your meal will get! Candles and flowers on the table will really top it off.
- Don't forget to say grace and be thankful. It might be easier to wait until everyone has been served.
- Communicate – let your patrol know what the meal is and how to implement it, including how to dispose of trash properly. Make sure there is a large trash bag ready for them. Have everything ready including drinks.
- If you are expecting mess kits let them all know.
- As you eat have a stockpot warming up water for cleanup of mess kits and meal dishes and utensils.
- Encourage Scouts not to waste food. Take smaller portions and go back for seconds rather than toss it out. Bring baggies for left-overs.
- If you are camping for more than a 2-day weekend bring an extra meal and snacks to cover for contingencies. Make sure that meal requires very little preparation and no stove/fire. In other words have a meal that transcends all other failures.
- **Consumables.** When you buy food, buy paper towels, napkins, SOS, foil, and Baggies if you need them. Your patrol box does not restock itself. Buy either matches or a butane lighter every other time or at whatever frequency works. The **Patrol BOX QM** should create a list for your patrol at the end of the campout and turn that in to the **Patrol Leader**.
- **Wash station** – I saw a 30-page study where they tried to figure out why people get giardia even though they bought water filters/purifiers. The answer is simple: they do not wash their hands. The best way is to have a bar of soap in a nylon stocking (ask your mom for a ruined one and cut off one leg. Hang that from a tree branch where people will not get muddy. Supply a spigot-control water jug.
- **BE SAFE WITH FIRE!!!** - Do not take chances with fire. Keep a shovel, fire extinguisher, and a container of water handy. Check water before you start cooking. Send a person to get water after the previous meal rather than before a meal. Find something to pick up hot pans before you start. Have a surface that you can place a hot pan on. The plastic tables do not work to place hot items on. Keep flammable objects away from your stove and the fire.

- **BE SAFE WITH KNIVES!!!** – Make sure that your knives are sharp. A dull knife will slip and cut you. Curl your fingers as you hold an item when slicing. Give yourself enough room to work. Setup your work area with all ingredients before you start so you aren't frazzled. Have you noticed that all the cooking shows have everything ready to go?