



# Backcountry Cooking:

Eat, Paddle, Love  
Or  
Paddle, Love, Eat

Quiet Adventures Symposium  
25<sup>th</sup> Year

Belle Isle  
Detroit, MI



# Meal planning for backcountry travel

- Minimize weight, reduce bulk
  - Efficient and canoe-friendly packing
  - Cross-over food and gear
- Simplicity
  - Maximize taste, minimize prep time and ingredients
  - Cooking should be a means, and not an end
  - “Simplicity in all things is the secret of the wilderness and one of its most valuable lessons.” Sigurd Olson
- Prior planning prevents piss poor performances
  - Share ideas and apply learnings
  - Be practical, cost-effective, and creative
  - Enjoy your “vacation” fun
  - Leave no trace



# If you have seen one outfit, you've seen one outfit!



# Menu planning





A blue bird, possibly a noddy, is shown in profile with its long, straight beak wide open. It stands on a rocky, moss-covered shore with sparse green vegetation. In the background, there is a body of water and a distant shoreline under a cloudy sky. A speech bubble containing the text 'COOKING EQUIPMENT' is positioned to the left of the bird's head.

**COOKING  
EQUIPMENT**

Isle Royale  
2015

# Multi-purpose kitchen equipment



## Spork

- Spoon
- Knife
- Fork



## Tangia lid

- Strainer
- Pot lid
- Cutting board



## Pocket knife



## Aluminum foil

- Cleaner
- Cook food
- Keep food warm

## Swedish Army

- Cup/bowl
- Measuring cup
- Unbreakable plastic



## Tortilla warmer

- Serving bowl
- Warmer
- Prep bowl



## 5/10- gallon bucket

- Seat
- Dry storage
- Easy/carry access



## Nesting





# Choices in heat source for cooking



Fuel



Canister



Alcohol



Cook  
System



Fuel Box



Campfire



What ever



# Fuel Canister Debate



\$6 = 30 minutes

We're sorry. Due to Department of Transportation restrictions, REI can no longer ship pressurized fuel canisters. REI stores continue to carry a full selection. Find the store closest to you.



Refillable?

Flame King- one-pound bottle

Ignik - five-pound Gas Growler



Recycling?

Jet boil CrunchIt

"They're basically little bombs,"

# Fuel Saving Tips Before the Trip

Measure fuel (2 oz./person/day)

1 burner/4 people



Heat exchanger pots and pans

Plan one pot meals

Flexible menu items

Limit ingredients to <5

Chemically-treat water

Select quick cooking foods



# Fuel Saving Tips During the Trip

Use lids/pad

Keep stove busy

Cozie

Lower boiling point

Delay dishwashing

Cold water rinse



Pre-soak/hydrate food

Alternative heat source

Thickening agent

Cut food in small pieces

# Do cozies work to save fuel?





# Cooking without Gas

Save time, fuel and increase quality of food.



Boiling Point ~205 degrees	Cooking 180 degrees	140 degrees (food safety)
Ground/lid Off heat	2 minutes	6 minutes
Pad/lid Off heat	6 minutes	15 minutes
Pad/lid/cozie Off heat	12 minutes	48 minutes



Save fuel....get cozie!

# Design and Build!



Tree Kitchen



Cleanup Kit



Spice kit



Coozie



Manpron



# Sprouting Ideas



## Materials

- Plastic jar
- Cheese cloth
- Rubber band
- Seeds (alfafa)

## Process

Day 1      soak seeds (off trail)

Days 2-5    rinse seeds (2X) (off trail)

Day 5-6    expose to sunlight/sprouting

Day 7      eat

## Tips

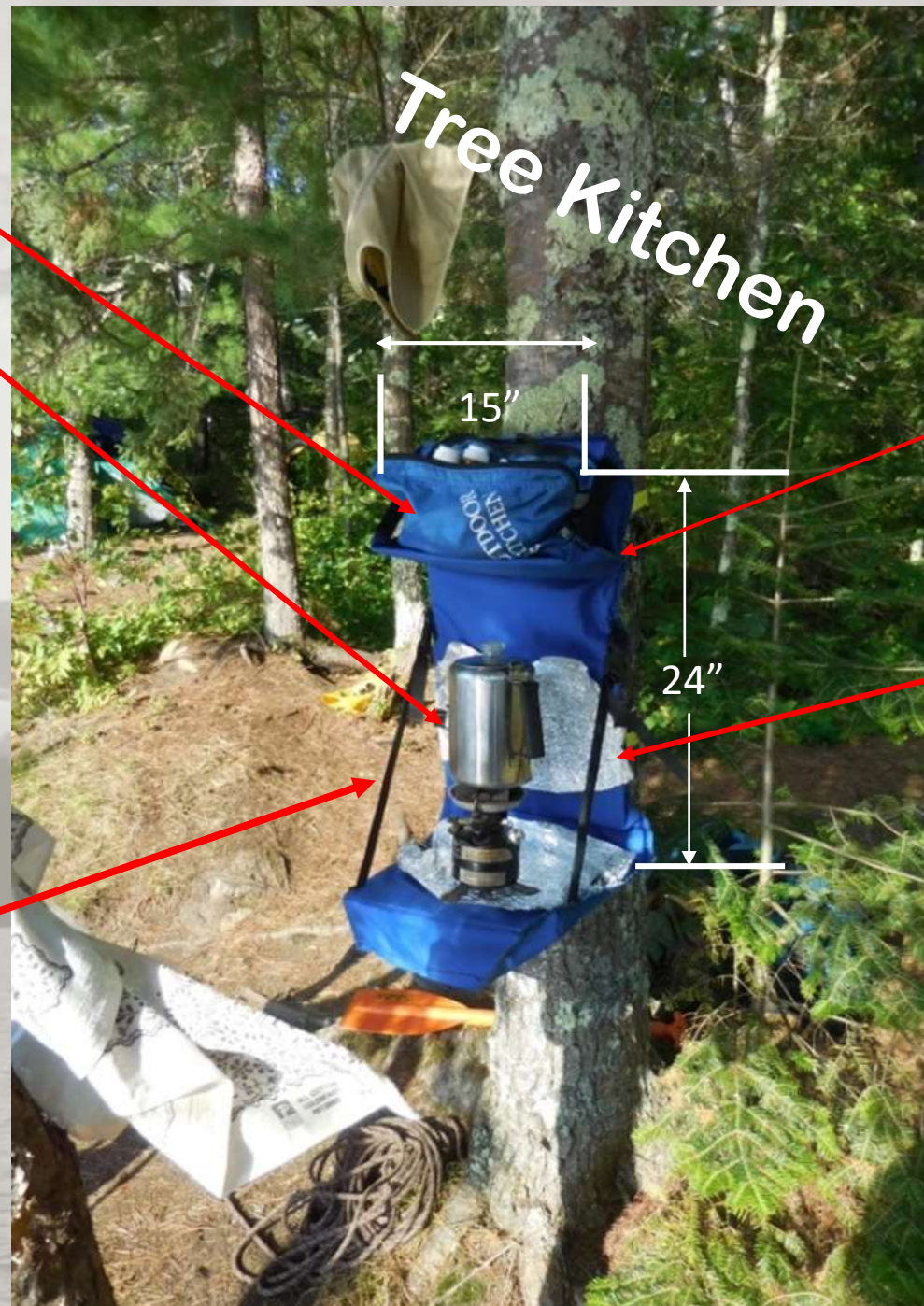
- Keep cool
- Eat soon



Two 3' adjustable straps attached to tree

Masonite board covered with polyurethane laminate

30" adjustable support straps



Tree Kitchen

15"

24"

Collapsible spice shelf

Reflective material



Folds up and slides into back of food pack



# Cleanup Kit



Water  
bucket  
(adapted)



Double camp sink



Dish cloth / mesh with  
draw string

Tea towel

Bleach \*  
container

Vinegar  
container

Dish soap  
container



Scraper  
(attached)

Scrubbies

Dunk bag

Leave no trace...

# Spice Kit



Outdoor Research



# Critter Proofing Food



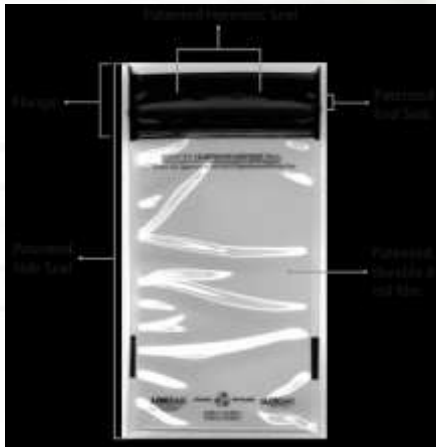
Hang it



Barrel it



Urosack it



Aloxak





# Menu Options

Isle Royale  
2015

# General packing tips

- Sturdy designated accessible insulated food pack
- Eat fresh and frozen first
- Nesting saves space
- Cans or bottles restricted in some areas
- Internal organizers by food group or meal...
- FOOD: 1.5 to 2.5 lbs. of food (or 2,500 to 4,500 calories) /person/day
- Always be on the look out for new foods and ideas
  - Shop at non-traditional stores (IKEA, Trader Joe's, Co-op, international groceries, Internet)



Cooke  
Custom  
Sewing

Food Group	Examples	Feature
Veggies	Carrots, potatoes, onion, cabbage, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cherry tomatoes	Little refuse, easy to carry
Fruit	Dried and fresh. Raisins, craisins, apples, prunes, lemon, lime	Snacks
Cheese/ meat	Pecorino romano, pepperoni, beef sticks, foil packets, summer sausage, cheese sticks	No refrigeration
Breads	Bagels, Eng. muffin, pita, tortilla, flatbread, skinny buns, crackers, fry bread, pasta, crisp bread, chow mein noodles	compact
Protein alternative	TVP, dry soups, quinoa, beans, powdered PB, nuts	Add-ons, can-free
High calorie snacks	Peanut butter, energy bars, desserts, instant pudding	High calorie, minimum prep
Fresh	*Eggs, meat, fish (frozen, fresh, dried)	Use frozen and fresh first
Multi-use	Spices, garlic, vinegar, flavor packets, tomato paste, honey, ghee	Flexible and interchangeable
Cooked snacks	Soups, ramen, beans/rice	Quick
Beverages	Powders in straws, coffee, tea bags	Just add water



# Meal Options



Freeze dried/dehydrated



Pre-packaged



Raw, fresh, frozen, freeze-dried

**Cost---Convenience---Taste**

# Almost a Dozen flexible options

- Vinegar
- Ghee
- Milk
- Packets
- Spices
- Pasta
- Peanut butter
- Food foil packets
- Pecorino romano
- Fry bread
- Baking powder

# 1. Vinegar

- Characteristics

- 5% acetic acid (95% water)
- Evaporates quickly
- Citrus and tomatoes

- Benefits

- Food

- Reduce pathogens
- Improve flavor/taste
- ↓ glucose index
- Improves appearance
- Eco-friendly
- Maintain structure
- Baking soda

- Camp

- De-odorizer (tent)
- Personal deodorant
- Cleaning
- Bug repellent
- Bear deterrent?



‘Vinegar is the duct tape of food’

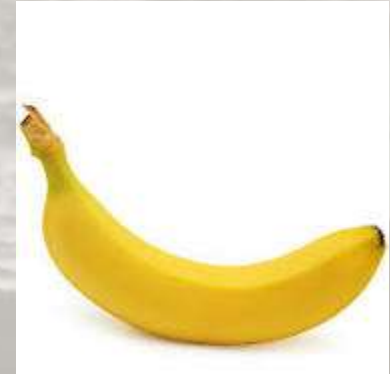


## 2. Ghee (clarified butter)

- Butter squared, rich nutrition, strong flavor
  - Condensed (water and milk solids removed)
  - High smoke point oil 482 ° (F)
  - No spoil or refrigeration
  - Spread, hand moisturizer, first aid
  - Health benefits
  - Rich, Buttery Taste
- 
- Other high smoke points oils (400 degrees F and higher) include corn, canola, grapeseed, peanut, safflower, and sunflower oils.



### 3. Freeze-dried, dehydrated, or fresh?



- Process (sublimation)
- Moisture
- Nutrition
- Preparation
- Cost
- Weight
- Shelf life

# 4. Fry Bread



## Basic Recipe

2 ½ cup self-rising flour

1 tsp. Baking soda

½ tsp. salt

1 cup water (add later)



<http://cachelake.com>  
[info@cachelake.com](mailto:info@cachelake.com)

Thank you for the donations



# 5. Powdered Milk

Nutrition Facts / Datos de Nutrición	
Serving Size / Tamaño por Porción ¼ cup / taza (30 g)	
Makes 1 cup prepared / Hace 1 taza (8 fl.oz. / 240mL) preparada	
Servings Per Container / Porciones por Envase about / aprox. 53	
Amount Per Serving / Cantidad por Porción	
Calories / Calorías 160	Calories from Fat / Calorías de Grasa 80
Total Fat / Grasa Total	9 g
Saturated Fat / Grasa Saturada	5 g
Trans Fat / Grasa Trans	0 g
Cholesterol / Colesterol	30 mg
Sodium / Sodio	105 mg
Total Carbohydrate / Carbohidrato Total	11 g
Dietary Fiber / Fibra Dietética	0 g
Sugars / Azúcares	11 g
Protein / Proteínas	7 g
% Daily Value* / % Valor Diario*	
Protein / Proteínas 46%	Vitamin / Vitamina A 20%
Vitamin / Vitamina C 20%	Calcium / Calcio 30%
Iron / Hierro 30%	Vitamin / Vitamina D 25%
Zinc / Zinc 20%	
* Percent Daily Values are for children less than 4 years of age	
* Los porcentajes de Valores Diarios son para niños menores de 4 años	



- Drink
- Coffee
- Desserts

# 6. Condiment Packets



# 7. Quick cooking pasta



Cook, finish and serve in one pan



One pan preparation



No waiting for water to boil



No draining required



# 8. Powdered Peanut Butter



	Traditional	Powdered
Serving size	2 tbsp	2 tbsp
Calories	190	50
Saturated fat/sugar	3 grams/3 grams	0 grams/1 gram
Price/pound	\$0.20/ounce	\$1.00/ounce
	Convenient, heavy	Mix with water, light

## 8. Go International with Herbs and Spices

**Spanish:** cumin seeds, Jalapeno and chili peppers, fresh coriander, lime, saffron, aniseed, cumin, almonds, garlic

**Italian:** oregano, basil, flat leaf parsley, sage, bay leaf, garlic

**Asian:** lemongrass, ginger, fish sauce, basil, mint, cilantro, garlic, miso, soy sauce, wasabi, sesame seeds: lemongrass, Thai basil, lime, cilantro, chilies, coconut, Hoisin sauce

**Indian:** cumin, cardamom, turmeric, coriander seeds, chilies, garlic

**North Africa:** cinnamon, clove, cumin seeds, ginger, cardamom, nutmeg, parsley

**Lebanese:** mint, parsley, tahini, lemon

**European:** caraway seeds, juniper, dill, fennel, paprika, garlic, onions



SPANISH



INDIAN



ITALIAN



LEBANESE

Sweet, Savory, Hot



Add some veggies!

# 9. Foil Packets



**CANS  
GLASS**



# 10. Pecorina Romano

- Half the price of parmigiano reggiano, made with sheep's milk
- No refrigeration
- Grate it over pastas, pizzas, risotto, salads and minestrone soup
- Eat with walnuts/almonds, dried and fresh fruit, crackers
- Add to scrambled eggs, oatmeal garnish, pancakes, vegetables, onion soup, pasta, and rice dishes.



Hard/dry cheeses= no spoilage



# 11. Baking Powder

Multiple Uses:

- Gives food a lift
- Meat tenderizer
- Browning agent



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## **Books:**

- Callan K & Howard M. 2013 The New Trailside Cookbook. Firefly Books
- Jacobsen C. 1998. Camping's Top Secrets (2nd ed.) The Globe Pequot Press





**Nutty Pasta for the  
Backcountry**

**"The Middle Way —  
Minimalist Cooking"**

**Pizza to Go?  
Why Not!**

**Bagels-From the Deli to  
Your Belly**

**Simply Delicious  
Dumplings**

**Peanut Butter and Jelly  
Sandwich Go Wild**

**More Ways to Make  
Pizza in Camp**

**Home-Cooked Meals in  
Camp? Why Not?**

**Bruschetta?  
You Betcha!**

**The Joy of Not  
Cooking**

**New Takes on  
Journey Cakes**



# Trail Bytes

From: ChefGlenn@BackpackingChef.com

November 2019

- Recipes
- Equipment
- Ideas
- Monthly updates

## How to Turn Dehydrated Meals into Soup



BackpackingChef.com  
*Recipes for Adventure*



# Buy in Bulk

Freeze dried foods

[www.thereadystore.com](http://www.thereadystore.com)

Albion, NY



Bulk dried meat (poultry, beef, ham, sausage crumbles, pork, pizza toppings, flavored beef and pork, and fish & seafood. Camping / Backpacking Meals

Harmony House

<https://www.harmonyhousefoods.com/>





# Worth the Read

## Four elements of good food

- Salt enhances flavor (sea salt)



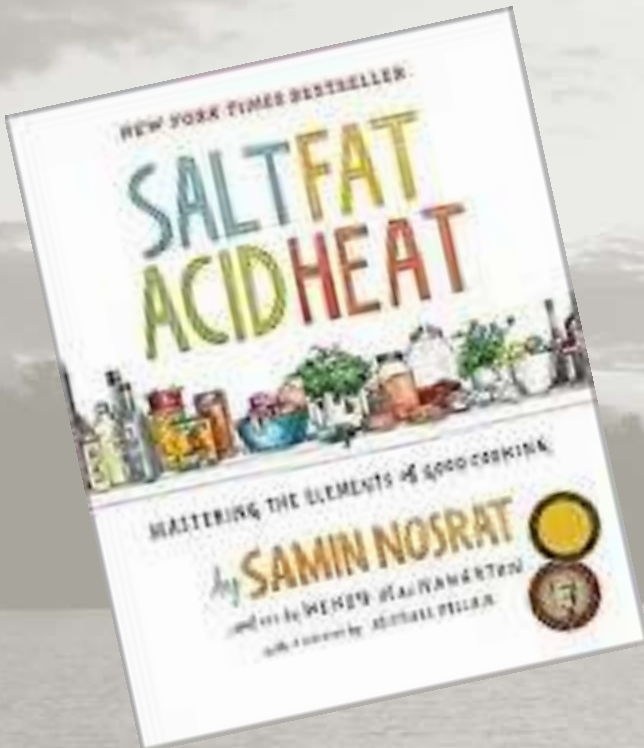
- Fat delivers flavor and generates texture



- Acid balances flavor (vinegar, citrus)



- Heat determines the texture of food



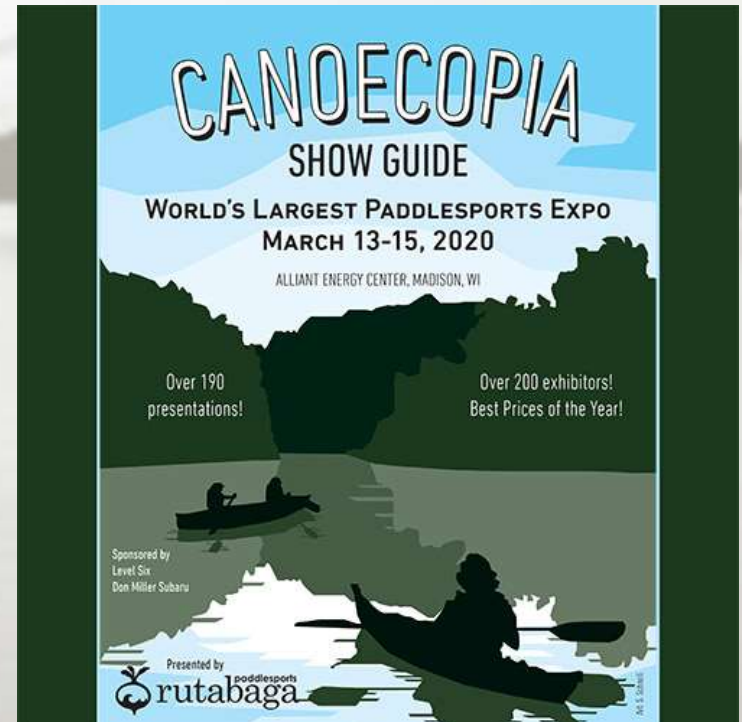
# Paddling Shows



April 24-26, 2020 (70<sup>th</sup> bi annual)

University of Minnesota

<http://www.outdooradventureexpo.com/>





"A NEW ADVENTURE  
IS COMING UP  
AND IM SURE IT WILL  
BE A GOOD ONE" -S.O.





# Leap into the season!

