

RECREATIONAL PACKING

There is no such thing as the “best way” to pack a horse or mule, but there are many good ways. If you can get your load on and get to your destination without any trouble or injury to you or your stock, then you are a good packer. REMEMBER, packing is an art form, and no two people will do it the same.

PRE-TRIP PLANNING AND PREPARATION:

Horse conditioning and personal fitness
Research on the area, regulations, trail difficulty, etc.
Stock training on restraints, equipment, highlines, etc.
Stock training on standing, trail conditions, etc.
Acquire maps, recent trail & feed conditions, etc.
Plan on taking the minimum number of stock necessary
Plan on minimum impact techniques and equipment
Brand and health inspections and travel permits for horses
Obtain necessary permits (grazing, campsites, fires, etc.)
Stock shod, wormed, and vaccinated
Transportation vehicles and trailers checked and serviced

UNPACKING OUR STOCK AND CAMP SET UP

Let's start with a loaded mule with boxes, H pack/top pack. Pack boxes, pack slings, Pack Bags, Mantled Packs. Unpack and show how we set up a camp. ie. small tent with typar or RV cloth out front, roll-up chairs/ground chairs, set up boxes/table, highline, gravity feed water system, solar shower, fire blanket or fire ring, shovel/potty seat, discuss size of fires, hobble or picket the mule.

EQUIPMENT LIST

Camp/Kitchen Gear

Stove
saver)
Propane (large & 2 small)
Lantern
Water filter/2-gallon jug
Dutch Oven (12" & 10")
Cook kit (pots/skillet)
Coffee pot
Utensils (eating/cooking)
Griddle
Duct tape
Fire starter/matches
Dish soap/rag/towels
Tarps (2 minimum)
Spices
Paper towels/wipes
Pepper spray
strips
Spare rope
Dish pan
Folding shovel
Roll-up table (optional)
Briquets
Radio (walkie talkie type)
Map of area
Axe & saw
Plates/bowls
Ziplock baggies
Garbage bag
Foil
Flour/cornmeal
Pam spray oil
Can opener

Personnel Gear

Tent

Sleeping bag
Sleeping pad
Water bottles
Toilet paper/wipes
Flashlight/batteries
Binoculars
Human first aid
Extra shoes
Bug spray
Sun screen
Overnight kit
Gloves
Camera
Hat (riding/ball cap)
Pistol

Chairs
Solar shower
Drinking cups
Spare clothes
Rain gear
Sun glasses
Knife/leatherman
Bath towel/swimsuit
Neckerchief
Compass
Chaps

Horse Gear

Highline (tree

Hobbles
Brush/curry comb
Fly spray/wipe
Downy sheets
Horse first aid
Spare halter
Spare lead rope
Spare cinch
Wool blanket
Easy boot
Shoeing gear
Small salt block
Mantie
Bailing twine
Spare leather

Saddle bags
Saddle pads
Saddle
Pack saddle
Pack boxes
Top pack
H pack
Bungee cords
Hoof pick
x
x

MEAL PLANNING

Audience Question: Can you tell us what meal you would like to bring into the backcountry?

DEVELOPING A LIGHT WEIGHT MEAL PLAN

Food choices are influenced by where you are going, for how long, price considerations, whose going with you, what folks like to eat, are there any dietary restrictions, how is the food being carried and stored, are there any fires restrictions, and how do you plan to cook it. Options can be Fresh Food, Frozen food, Canned Food, Dehydrated/Dried food, or some combination of each.

Lightweight food can be as simple as repackaging the food we bring to reduce weight and bulk.

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Trailhead Breakfast Sherri/Bernie	Breakfast Teri/Kathy	Breakfast Zach/Katie	Breakfast Gene/Sharon	Breakfast Bob	Breakfast Sherri/Bernie	Breakfast Teri/Kathy	Trailhead Zach/Katie
Trailhead Dinner Zach/Katie	Dinner Gene/Sharon	Dinner Bob	Dinner Sherri/Bernie	Dinner Teri/Kathy	Dinner Zach/Katie	Dinner Gene Sharon	Trailhead Bob	

- One mule carries a set of panniers and 5-day ice chests on each side for the week. (Hot season can use 10 lbs dry ice on one side – will evaporate in 2-3 days. Keep ice chests in shade and covered with blanket/mantie and open infrequently.)
- Meat is frozen or pre-cooked, and put in seal-a-meal bag. (Use good quality seal-a-meal or explosions occur above 8000 feet altitude at times.)
- Label meals by day and pack last day at bottom, moving up from there.
- Dry goods/non-perishables go into individual pack boxes.
- No glass; most canned goods re-sealed in seal-a-meal.
- Milk, tang, ice teas, lemonade, coffee, hot chocolate should all be dry/granulated type. (Condiments can go in pack boxes.)

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- Lunch provisions are on your own.

How about dehydrating a can of chili, stew or yogurt or exchanging a glass container for something plastic, a zip lock bag or a Seal a meal bag. (Have an example) Start with supermarket convenience food and combine them with home dried foods. You will add flavor to your backcountry meals and be amazed at the selection possibilities. Try a soup base, packaged rice, pasta or potato dish. You can even go international with Oriental, Mexican, and even Cajun cuisine. Snacks such as Jerky, trail mix, pepperoni, yogurt fruit roll ups...the possibilities are endless. For a little extra expense, there are commercially dried foods available at most outdoor stores and even grocery stores.

Dehydrated foods are ideal for backcountry packing, trailhead camping, hiking, and lunch for day trips. Dehydrated food weight is usually 1/4 the original weight. If dried properly, will keep well without refrigeration, is low in bulk, makes quick meal preparation easier, minimizes garbage and will keep 6 months to 1 year. A 7-day pack of meals for 2 people will weigh about 10 pounds, if everything has been dehydrated!! This same menu without dehydration would weigh in excess of 40lbs.

In food drying nothing is absolute, there are always variables. The only way to get better at drying is to *practice* and *experiment*.

Helpful Hints for Successful Dehydrating

- ◆ CHOOSING A DRYING METHOD: There are many different types of food dehydrators currently on the market. Best results are obtained with a dryer that has a fan *and* thermostat controlled heat. Using your home oven can be successful also, but without the fan it may take twice as long. Screen trays work best for vegetables, fruits, meats and solid trays help hold together soups, yogurts and sauces.
- ◆ USE FRESH, QUALITY FOODS
- ◆ CUT THE FOOD UNIFORMLY: Shred, slice, dice (1/4"to 3/8" thick work best).

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- ◆ **PRETREATING:** Blanching or pre-cooking vegetables will cut down on camp cooking time. Lean meats, poultry and fish can be fully cooked and then dried. Fruits should be dipped in lemon juice or orange juice to prevent browning.
- ◆ **STORAGE:** Place food in a moisture free sealed plastic baggie or boiling pouch. If the food is not going to be used right away, place the plastic bag in a canning jar, screw on the metal lid and store in a cool, dry, dark place 60 degrees F to below freezing.
- ◆ **REHYDRATING:** The time needed to rehydrate will vary depending on the altitude and temperature. To speed up the rehydrating process, cover the food with a layer of boiling water and let it soak from five to twenty minutes until it plumps up. Adding sugar or salt may hinder the initial rehydration process, so wait and add as the last step. (Have an Example)

CHOOSING A LIGHT WEIGHT MENU FOR YOUR ADVENTURE- Fresh, Frozen, Dehydrated, or a combination

Breakfast:

- ❖ Instant Breakfast (using prepared powdered milk)
- ❖ Granola Bars
- ❖ Instant oatmeal
- ❖ Tang instant orange juice (it's good hot or cold)
- ❖ Bagels w/cream cheese, top w/bacon bits or jelly
- ❖ Granola cereal (use prepared powdered milk)
- ❖ Dried eggs can be used a variety of different ways, but are usually better mixed with something like potatoes, meat or veggies. Prepared dry cheese sauce mix makes a great topping.
- ❖ Scrapple
- ❖ Biscuits w/Sausage Gravy
- ❖ Breakfast Burritos
- ❖ Potatoe Pancakes

Lunch-

- Cinnamon Banana sticks
- Fruit Leathers- Experiment *with adding different items:* applesauce, pineapple, strawberries, pumpkin pie mix, blueberries, coconut, nuts, raisins, spices, etc
- Jerky

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- Bagels & Cream Cheese- Bagels are hard to crush, so they travel well. Cream cheese is available in small single use packages. It just needs to be kept cool.
- Pita Bread w/salami and pepperoni- carry single packages of mustard, cream cheese or whatever you like. Provolone cheese is really good with this and seems to keep better than other sauces.
- Trail Mix-always a good standby
- Granola or fruit bars
- Mozzarella cheese sticks

Dinner-

- Clam Linguini with alfredo sauce
- Asian Beef Noodle soup
- Au gratin Potatoes with German Sausage
- Chicken with Stuffing
- Bow Tie pasta with chicken and broccoli
- Cheesy Tuna casserole
- Gumbo New Orleans style
- Creamy Seafood fettuccini
- Macaroni and Cheese with smoked Ham
- Red Curry Stew with Scallops
- Szechwan Beef with vegetables and rice
- Pork tenderloin
- Italian Sweet & Sour w/ chicken and/or sausage

Desserts- a good idea to get some of these started before dinner

- Wilderness pudding
- Rice cakes
- Banana Cream Pie
- Jell-O
- Chocolate Lover's tortilla
- S'mores

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Below is an example of an actual Light Weight menu used on a weeklong backcountry adventure. It was laminated to waterproof
Which meals do you think are dehydrated?

Day of the Week	Breakfast	Lunch Extravaganza	Dinner la Delights
Saturday	At Home	Bring something pre-made	Lasagna a la Deer Park Dutch oven meal- Trailhead
Sunday	Pita Pocket Breakfast	Pizza Tortillas	Cheesy Shells and Shrimp
Monday	Rice Pudding	Peanut Butter and Jelly Tortillas	Gumbo New Orleans Style
Tuesday	Cereal	Beef Sticks and Trail Mix	Chicken and Dumplings
Wednesday	Cereal	Jerky & Yog. Rollups	Red Curry Beef Stew
Thursday	Breakfast Cookies-	Beef Sticks, Cookies & Yog. Rollups	Thai Chicken with Peanut Sauce
Friday	Pancakes-	Jerky & Yog. Rollups	Crooked Creek Ravioli
Saturday	Pancakes-	Sunshine Trail Mix Bar	Chicken and Enchiladas Dutch oven meal- Trailhead
Sunday	Mt. Man Breakfast Dutch oven	On the Road	At home
X-tra Meal			Rice & Beans with cheese

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HAVING FUN

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