

River Lunches

The following is a compilation from members of the Carolina Canoe Club and others. Thank you for your contributions. They are great! If someone has something to add, send it to me & I'll add it to the list: firstbackpacker@yahoo.com See you on the water (especially at WOR). Dave Ramsey

DEFINITION: "River Lunches" are lunch time meals that are compact (for easy storage in a small boat such as a kayak) and require no refrigeration or heating and require no utensils other than occasionally a knife, fork, or spoon or "spreader".

A few comments of my own – Dave Ramsey:

- Pack lunch in Ziploc and use it for trash.
- To spread stuff, I take a 5/8" x 7" "craft stick" (called "Craft Paddles" at Wal-Mart). Use then throw it in the Ziploc with rest of trash.
- ALWAYS remember a plastic spoon (or 2) for items requiring a spoon – it's real messy if fingers or tongue is used exclusively.
- Like Jones Wayne (below), I like Boyardee Ravoli with the pull-off lid. I also like Hormel's Sweet & Sour Chicken & Dinty Moore Beef Stew with the pull-off lid. (Hormel has several other good ones too.)
- I always add a dessert such as Jello Pudding Cup or cookies like ginger snaps.
- Several items I love (not together): Edam cheese; Peter Pan Honey Roast peanut Butter; Pizza like Chris Nudi (below), but without chicken or sausage and not frozen; Quiznos Angus Beef sandwich will last till noon; Lunchables Pizza, the all cheese kind (without meat); Pickled egg; Slim Jims & cheese.

"Martin, R.M. (Robert)" Robert.Martin@Diosynth-RTP.com:

Usually I eat a big breakfast before paddling. I take enough food with me to stay the hunger until the take out. A typical lunch for me on the river is a Snickers bar, fruit cup, Vienna Sausages, and a diet coke. It's simple and can be bought in any convenience store. I then gorge myself the first chance I get after winding up shuttle.

"Paul Scrutton" paul.scrutton@gmail.com:

I was using those 'Tuna-Lunch-Kit things' for a while. They seemed like a reasonable solution for lunch. I'm now back to power-bars/granola bars, preferably with the silver foil wrap that makes them waterproof and easy to store in your PFD pocket, so you don't actually need to get out of your boat to have lunch.

"Marc Harkness" mharkness@capstrat.com:

The freshest available whole-wheat flour tortillas are a great start for any sort of river meal. I like to spread a bit of mango chutney or rhubarb/strawberry preserves on the inside, and then fill them with strips of chicken (lightly floured and browned) and julienned squash and zucchini, and perhaps some baby spinach or sprouts and shaved Parmesan. Some good Dijon mustard. Mayo if you're feeling adventurous. Cut it in half, roll it up in cellophane, bag it, and you have something that travels well in a small drybag.

Pack a Nalgene of some pliant white wine, say a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, and some breakdown plastic stemware for yourself and your mates, and there is a fine noontime river repast. String quartet - optional.

"Gary Gurkin" garyg@icobol.com:

Nathans' grilled over an open fire. (or, if you absolutely must be a Philistine, Beefmaster's) Or, if you want to molest some mollusks, grilled oysters.

"david blumberg" padlnjones@mindspring.com:

Reply to Gary Gurkin above: try Hebrew Nationals...

"Greg Runyon" shreddogr@yahoo.com:

First, my river lunch is dependent on the size breakfast I have had and how long/difficult the river run, and how long the drive is to the put-in/take out. I like to have a pretty large and good breakfast with lots of protein and carbs, and strong coffee. This usually gives me the energy and focus to paddle most of a day, even without lunch.

However, with longer days, less breakfast, or more difficult river. I prefer a relatively light lunch since I found out that I am sluggish after a big lunch. My optimum lunch is a two-layer peanut butter sandwich (no concerns about storage), a bottle of protein drink (Strawberry Boost is preferred) and one can of "Red Bull". Then, I am good to go. Sometimes I will also have a protein bar. I like "Marathon" made by Snickers.

"greg joyner" billgregoryproductions@yahoo.com:

I like to bring boiled eggs in a baggie, and grapefruit already cut into bite size pieces. Make sure you save your baggies for your empty shells. - energy food and healthy.

"Doug Sprouse" dsprouse@tlc-nc.org:

Last weekend we talked about bringing the leftover oatmeal in a Ziploc, but not really sure how that would do in the drybag. Usually I'll take some sort of energy bar and fruit of some sort, better if it is the kind that will hold up a bit. Bananas don't work so well. Apples, oranges, grapefruit, that sort of stuff.

If I plan ahead, bagel sandwiches with your choice of in-betweens hold up pretty well. I do also like to bring tortillas, and some sort of filling in a Tupperware. You can pre-mix your beans, salsa, cheese, whatever.

"Charles & Nancy Brabec" thebrabecs@earthlink.net:

I've brought peaches and tomatoes in a Rubbermaid container that almost exactly fits the item and had success. I've also put strawberries in rectangular containers. As a diabetic I've learned that I have to have plenty of protein plus fat. So I make salami sandwiches on low carb tortillas. Lean ham or turkey doesn't work. And, add whatever fresh fruit is available. - Nancy

"Bowman, Everett" ebowman@rbh.com:

Ingenuously packaged in a sanitary, waterproof, biodegradable wrapping, bananas are an excellent and nutritious choice, so long as no one sits on them during the shuttle.

"Larry Ausley" lausley@gmail.com:

I'd add two words: Beanie Weenies!

"Nelson Highley" nhighley@earthlink.net:

I'm surprised that no one has mentioned those peanut butter on cheese crackers - the snack that keeps half the business community going. They need to be waterproofed somehow but they are good even after being sat upon during the shuttle! And, they go well with bananas.

Back in the 70's a group of us would try and do a blackwater run every New Year's Day and it was our practice to provide a fairly elaborate lunch for it. One year we had three small backpacking type stoves along. We took along steaks frozen in dry ice so that they had all morning to thaw. (Don't try this with chicken - steak ages, chicken spoils.) The meal included soup, salad, steak, rolls and fruit for dessert. We toasted the New Year with sparkling fruit juice in genuine polycarbonate Champaign glasses. (Yes, we actually had a checkered table cloth too.)

"Jim Mead" Jim.Mead@ncmail.net:

Easy Cheese - no refrigeration needed, keeps forever, and comes in a crush proof aerosol can. I prefer the sharp cheddar. It's usually in the grocery store aisle with chips and crackers. Only drawback is that if it gets too cold the can won't extrude cheese, but warming it under your paddling gear for a few minutes usually works. Bring a couple of bagels in a ziplock, apply the Easy Cheese, and you're set.

Clif bars are also good (especially the fudge brownie, apricot and peanut butter crunch) and pack a lot of calories in a small package. Chocolate Pop Tarts are a guilty pleasure snack on the morning trip to the put in.

The small travel size bottles of waterless hand cleaner are handy to have. If I can't wash my hands, I try to hold food with the zip lock or sandwich bag.

Fruit - I go with apples. Peaches and bananas squash too easily. Oranges require too much handling with grimy hands to peel. Pack out cores and peels in a ziplock.

"Nancy Hight" <dinniepup@yahoo.com>:

SpaghettiOs®

Low fat, high carbs, fair amount of protein, flip-top tops that fit back into the can when you are done, tasty hot or cold.

"Each delicious serving of these tender little O's provides a serving of vegetables, a serving of grains AND at least SIX essential vitamins and minerals."

"Brian Carver" bcarver@mindspring.com:

http://www.taquitos.net/snacks.php?page_code=25

This is a must read if you insist on bringing any snacks on the river. Of course I found the review of Sepasang Naga Squid Cracker to be delight!

When I went on the grand canyon, we were outfitted with Canyon REO and they did a wonderful job and setting up lunches. Everyday we would have sandwiches, fruit and some kind of Gatoraid. Then after all that they would have cookies or snacks. One of the snacks, I came away with is roasted Taquitos brand Corn Nuts. I found it's a hearty snack they you could through into a PFD eat on the fly and don't care if you drop part of it. The birds will eat them!

I just found them CORN NUTS!

http://www.taquitos.net/snacks.php?snack_code=1355

"Jones Wayne" WayneJones@brownandjones.com:

I always take Chef Boyardee Ravioli or similar with the pull-off lid and a fruit cup. It is indestructible and I can handle eating it cold. People do look at me funny at times. I wash the remainders out in the river and put it all back in my small dry bag. The downside is that my dry bag has been stained permanently red and smells strangely of a combination of sunscreen (which I keep there, too) and tomato sauce. **Don't forget to pack a spoon.**

"j s" trout_bobber@yahoo.com:

Smoked Gouda Cheese, Pepperoni, Swiss cheese, Atkins Bar

"Owens, Diane" DOwens@unch.unc.edu:

I like cheese, Triscuits and some homemade trail mix consisting of dehydrated fruit and nuts. Particularly the string cheese can withstand not being refrigerated for a day. Other cheeses do as well, but they get a little greasy. Cured meat like salami and pepperoni, work well, too, because of the high salt content.

"Langlinais, Gene" Gene.Langlinais@earthtech.com:

PBJ on Cinnamon raisin bread Ummmmmm!

"Chris Nudi" chrisnudi@yahoo.com:

Freeze pizza in plastic bags the night before and by lunch time your pizza is ready - not hot, but any food tastes great on the river, pizza better than most - lots of people eat it cold.

"Marilyn Gist" Margist@aol.com:

One of my favorite river lunches at WOR was in 1994 on the Nantahala. While running the shuttle, we stopped midway to leave a large whole watermelon tied in a net hidden in the (cold) little creek that joins the Nantahala on river right just at the surfing spot beach. The surfing spot is on river left, can't remember the "official" name of that spot, but any cold creek would do. Someone carried a large knife in their boat carefully wrapped in cardboard. It was Carolina Canoe Club

a warm day and we thoroughly enjoyed the fresh, cold watermelon midway down the river!! So did everyone else who was there or stopped by at the time, as it was a whole lot of watermelon!!

Another day, two of the women in our group were too pregnant to paddle, so they met us at Ferebee with hand-churned homemade peach ice cream. WOW!!

Other than that, my favorite on the river lunch is a bagel with cream cheese. Don't really want anything too heavy while paddling hard, and it makes me less nervous about refrigeration than carrying meat cold cuts in a sandwich. I do generally freeze my water in an old Gatorade bottle (a small one) the night before, and keep that in my small insulated lunch box to keep stuff cold. It's melted enough to give me a still cold drink by lunchtime but has kept my lunch cool in the process. Just leave a little room in the bottle for expansion before you throw it in the freezer. Can't do that at WOR of course unless you are renting a cabin with a freezer, so I try to fill up that Gatorade bottle with ice from the cooler instead.

"Jim Wei - J&J Computer Service" jim@jnjcomputerservice.com:

Powergels, small enough to carry in the pfd pocket, and easy to eat enough to munch one down in an eddy while waiting for the group to run down. I hardly ever stop for lunch on rivers.

"Tiffany Mozingo" tiffgringa@gmail.com:

I use an Everything bagel and make a Salami and Swiss sandwich with an apple.

In the winter, a small thermos of soup, or hot cider is great.

"Mary and Jack Hebrank" hebrank@juno.com:

A bagel with cream cheese and a large apple, preferably followed by a homemade brownie. I have a very high metabolic rate. If I don't stop to eat I'll be missing moves and missing rolls long before the takeout. - Mary

"Gil Williams" gilrw@portbridge.com:

Peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a trail mix of M&Ms and your favorite nuts and stuff.

"Larry Stewart" love2kayak@gmail.com:

On the shorter trips I bring a snickers marathon bar or 2, some beef jerky and plenty of water or Gatorade.

On longer trips a good ole MRE (Meal, Ready to Eat) that can be bought in army surplus stores and online does a great job ... full of calories, protein, and has a heater pack so you can hot food!