

If you think that most of those who go camping survive on baked beans and two-minute noodles, you couldn't be further from the truth. There is nothing better than kicking back around a campfire with mates and tucking into a nice meal, and there are so many delicious options out there that will up your camping to the next level.

For us, the camping food that we eat has to meet at least one of the below items, and preferably two or three! We are happy to swap things around, but the food that you eat when camping shouldn't vary too significantly from when you are at home.

*Cooking bacon and eggs in the morning.*

## Easy to make

Cooking when camping is more difficult. There's no denying it. As a result of this, what you cook needs to be easy. This means quick to prepare, minimal dishes, and something that doesn't have you struggling to find a million ingredients and get them ready in a difficult way.

*An easy brekkie - bacon, onion and tomato on toast.*

## Tasty to eat

There's literally no reason to eat food that doesn't taste good. I'm positive that food eaten when camping tastes better than at home anyway, so you are already off to a good start. Find food that you enjoy, and if you can balance it against being healthy and easy too, you have the ultimate solution.

*Cooking cheesy potato bake over the fire.*

## Healthy for your body

We refuse to eat significant quantities of highly processed foods, and those that are super unhealthy. Of course, it's all about balance, and having a cup of two-minute noodles once in a blue moon after a long day outside is perfectly acceptable in our eyes.

If you are camping long term, you do have to be a bit clever with what you buy and how you store it so it lasts as fresh fruit and vegetables aren't always an option, but there are always reasonably healthy choices out there.

*A healthy platter makes for a great lunch.*

## Picking what to eat

Going off the above, we are happy to spend a bit more time preparing healthy and tasty food, or if we are in a hurry, we might sacrifice a bit of the healthiness for an early bedtime, or an incredibly tasty meal. Sometimes we are in a hurry, and other times we have hours up our sleeves.

## So, what do we like to eat?

There's a huge number of meals that we eat when camping, and we are constantly adding to the list through ideas of others and experimentation. For now, though, let's split it into the three meals of the day:

  
*A big breakfast with the lot.*

## Breakfast

I've never been much of a fan of breakfast, and unless I am working or we need to get moving I'll usually delay it for a few hours, and have brunch. That said, if you miss it you will regret it, so we always eat something.

  
*Yogurt, cereal and fresh fruit is a great start to the day.*

We enjoy toast with the usual spreads (or spaghetti or baked beans occasionally), cereal with fresh fruit (or canned) and yoghurt, or oats. Some mornings we will have fruit toast with butter and cinnamon sugar, or bacon and eggs on toast. Every now and again we love canned fruit and fresh custard, or we do a big fry up of tomatoes, hash browns, mushrooms, sausages, bacon and eggs. Pancakes and damper are also a fairly common meal choice.

  
*A classic bacon and egg roll is perfect for breakfast.*

Breakfast for us usually falls into two categories; we are either in a rush to eat something and get moving (to explore the area, or to travel to a new place) or we have a lazy morning and are happy to have a long, or delayed breakfast. Doing a big fry up over the fire, for instance, is not something you'd do if you wanted to get moving quickly!

We always have hot drinks for breakfast too, with tea and coffee the usual options but occasionally a hot chocolate, or juice.

  
*Keep it simple and easy with spaghetti on toast.*

## Lunch

Majority of the time lunch for us is a quick meal on the go. More often than not it's out of the back of our 4WD, and we carry all the 'day use' food in our fridge and drawers. If we have fresh bread, we will use it for sandwiches. Once that is gone, our most common meal is wraps.

The trick to having these is to take food that is delicious and takes it to the next level. We take a heap of spreads, including homemade pickles, chilli sauce, mayonnaise, fresh chunks of meat, nice cheese, plenty of tasty salad and anything else that we feel like in the moment.

  
*Keeping condiments on hand takes lunches to the next level.*

A wrap that is done with a good homemade sauce or pickle is absolutely fantastic, coupled with a few slices of beef done at home in the slow cooker is the best way to fill me up! Occasionally, if we are having a lazy day around camp we will do something different over the fire, or have a hot meal over the stove but it's usually few and far between.

One of the more common lunches we find ourselves eating these days when camping is a platter, made up of lots of little nibbles. The kids love it, it's healthy and super easy to make. We cut up carrot, cucumber, capsicum, apples, peaches, mangoes, cheese, and sausages and have it with a few crackers, breadsticks and dips. These look amazing, and tastes great too, and can be shared among a big group of people easily, with everyone contributing a bit. Occasionally we have rice crackers, two-minute noodles and toast with spaghetti, or salad, but wraps are by far the most common choice these days.

*Keep it simple and healthy by making a lunch platter.*

## Dinner

Our camping dinners usually fall into two categories; quick and easy, or long and easy. We rarely do anything for dinner that is complicated and difficult, as with two young kids it's not the time you want to be messing around!

*Meat with veg is a staple meal for us.*

We have a heap of fast meals that we are able to do for those days when we get back to camp late or are absolutely dead tired or simply just can't be bothered. These meals often have items prepared at home, and usually take minimal work to get ready. We love taking frozen soup from home (which just involves doubling the recipe at home and freezing it) and then warming it up in a saucepan and having it with some fresh bread or damper.

We take a lot of quick, tasty meat that can be coupled with mash potato or vegetables and knocked out in under 20 minutes. Pasta is a staple part of our diet, coupled with easy sauces (or we pre-make the sauce at home). It only takes a few minutes to cook pasta, add the sauce and you have a simple, tasty and healthy meal ready to go. It helps that our two kids love pasta too!

*Soft tacos are a great dinner option.*

We are happy to have sausages in a bun, steak, skewers and often eat fish and crayfish when we are camping near the coast. In fact, if we are getting regular seafood, we will eat it at least 3-4 times a week.

Tacos, burritos, nachos, potato salad, satay chicken, cold meat and salad and scrambled eggs also often get a whirl. Canned pineapple and beetroot are common sides for us too, as they last forever and taste pretty good (and don't need refrigeration).

*We catch fish on the road and make fresh fish and chips.*

## Preparing at home

If I can give you one tip, it's to do some preparation at home. Marinate your meat and vacuum pack it, make up pasta sauces, get some frozen soup packed and do what you can at home. It makes cooking when camping so much easier.

A chicken that's been cooked and split into chunks, along with potato salad and anything else you can quickly knock up is the perfect meal on the first night that you arrive, with literally zero preparation required.



*With a bit of prep at home, you can have a quick meal.*

The other thing we do at home is make sure we have a variety of meals available, and enough food to cover the distance we are travelling with some extra. We don't plan what we are going to eat each day, but just the meals for the whole trip, and then at each meal we decide what to grab out (except dinner, which is usually pulled out around lunchtime to defrost as required!)



*Preparation allows for quicker meals at the campsite.*

## Cooking on the fire or BBQ

A lot of people take Webers or barbeques with them when camping these days, and they are the perfect way to do a roast, or basically anything you'd normally do in the oven at home. We've used one a bit, and love it.

If you don't have a Weber, get a camp oven and cook over the fire. You can have some truly amazing meals with one of these, and it's a lot of fun too. Things like roasts, stews, ribs, potato bakes and anything else you would normally do in an oven are brilliant.



*A roast chook is a treat for us cooked in the Weber.*

## Foods that keep well

If you are spending a fair bit of time in between supplies, you will have to spend some time learning what foods keep well, and how to make them last. Things like bread, lettuce, soft fruit and cucumber don't always keep well unless you take good care of them.



Preparing pulled pork in the camp oven.

## Enjoy yourself

Sometimes, cooking is a chore and not something you really enjoy, but when camping there is the opportunity to have a bit of fun whilst doing it. This is especially the case if you are doing something different, cooking on the fire or making something very tasty. We like to make food a big part of camping, and if you do it well, it makes the whole experience so much better.

**What are your favourite camping meals, and do you have any hacks to make it easier, tastier, and healthier?**