

SEA KAYAK



Plockton

Camping Notes

Sleeping Stuff

If you get cold easily, this is a good system that works well for warmth and practicality:

- If it's really warm, use a lighter weight synthetic sleeping bag. For any other weather (even Scottish summer!) a 4 season sleeping bag.
- Sleeping mats. Use an inflatable style mat such as the Alpkit Numo or Alpkit Dumo
- Coupled with a foam mattress such as Decathlon folding mattress or the Exped Flexmat.

This might seem like overkill, but here's the rationale:

- If the inflatable one pops, you still have a mattress
- You can sit on the foam one when cooking (it folds into a block so it's better for your back).
- You can stretch on it outside your tent at the start or the end of the day.
- Z-rest ones work well because you fold them rather than roll them so they're easy to sit on as a block or lay flat in your boat.

Cooking notes and Meal ideas

Stoves

For one person a "Jetboil" type stove is really good with a converter so that you can use a frying pan on it. These are incredibly efficient, pack away small and are large enough to cook pasta or rice for one.

For two people use a gas stove with a remote canister. These are more stable than the ones that screw straight onto the top of the gas. A good option for two people is one Jetboil and one remote canister stove. This allows cups of tea to be made while someone else is cooking; or you can cook your pasta/ rice/noodles/etc in the Jetboil, while you make your sauce on your other one.

Trangias are great if you have one and are used to using them, but it takes a wee bit of getting used to cooking with methylated spirits.

Gas

Most stoves currently on the market use a screw thread, but make sure to check exactly what type you need. There are still some canisters (usually blue) that are compatible with a different type of stove.

How much gas do I need? Two medium cylinders (240g) would last two people, with plenty to spare, on a three day expedition if they were full at the start.

If you can't remember if you used a cylinder before, or you're not sure how much gas you have left, you check them. A full gas cylinder will be almost completely submerged in water with the threaded nipple just above the surface of the water. An empty cylinder will try and float high and dry. A half full cylinder will float half in half out the water.

If you're cooking on your own it's a good idea to bring two cylinders for a trip. One that you may be trying to use up and one new one. This also means you have a back up in case something happens to one of them.

Don't forget to bring lighters (at least three). Put them in different places so that a) you can always find one and b) if one gets wet it doesn't matter.

Pots and pans

If you plan on buying new pans for expedition sea kayaking, steer clear of camping pots and pans! This is because they're designed to be as light as possible but it can make them a nightmare to cook with, as they are so thin and small.

A cheap non-stick frying pan along with a cheap non-stick pot with a lid can be much easier. Also, buy a cheap chopping board and cut it so that it fits in the base of the pan, do the same with a wooden spoon and a spatula and you have an easily packable kitchen set up. A 24cm frying pan will fit into most boat hatches – if in doubt measure the hatch diameter (this would fit in any Sea Kayak Plockton boat).

Expedition catering

Ali spends quite a lot of time living from a sea kayak or back pack and believes it's possible to have really good wholesome food on expedition with a bit of thought on what you're going to bring and how you're going to pack it.

Food packing notes:

- Portion out the correct amount of food for any meal. Spend a bit of time at home breaking down things like rice or pasta into the amount of food you will eat in one sitting. A ziplock bag with the correct amount of pasta in it for dinner saves a lot of faff in camp.
- Pre-chop your vegetables if you're worried about space (5 days or more)
- Eggs can be left in their box and put into a ziplock bag. This can then be wedged up towards the skeg box at the stern of the kayak where they shouldn't get crushed. You can also break eggs into a small bottle and just pour out when need them.
- Make a Tupperware brew kit: teas, hot chocolate, cuppa soups, a spoon, lighter.
- Tea: if you're a big tea drinker, consider how many tea bags per day you would use and add 50%. The extra allows for spillages or generosity. An example per day could be: 2 normal tea bags; 1 hot chocolate; 3 peppermint tea; 1 cuppa soup.
- Coffee: coffee bags are good or buy a mug with a built in coffee press. Aeropress make a travel coffee maker, but are quite bulky. Keep your coffee in a screw top Tupperware container.
- Milk: UHT milk keeps pretty well but the cartons have a tendency to leak, so consider decanting into a plastic bottle; two small cartons of milk will keep better than one large one and will be easier to pack; Sweet and condensed milk can be nice in coffee when you're camping, can be stored in a small bottle, and it keeps indefinitely; Powdered milk is OK but often ends up lumpy no matter what you do.
- A bottle of whisky / port / wine / your favourite tippie can be wedged up in the nose of the kayak or down the side of the dry bags to compliment any of your meals (but perhaps not breakfast!).
- How much space is there in a kayak? The sea kayaks in the Sea Kayak Plockton fleet have about 150 litres of space in the hatches. This should be more than enough space to fit everything in if packed correctly.

Useful sundries

- A wee bottle of olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- Chilli sauce / tabasco
- Ketchup (if having bacon rolls)
- A few extra ziplock bags
- Bin bag
- Sharp knife with sheath

Meal Ideas

Breakfast

- Porridge (this is where your non stick pan is going to come into its own. Don't cook proper porridge in your jet boil - it will stick!). You

can get porridge pots and wee bags of instant porridge but they won't give you as much energy as proper porridge. Add some nuts, seeds, dried fruit for more taste and energy.

- Pancakes. Make them from scratch, buy a pancake shaker (check whether you need to add milk or water) or buy precooked ones that you can heat up in the frying pan. Add fruit, honey, peanut butter, jam, bacon or eggs, depending on how hearty a breakfast you're going for.
- Eggs in a tortilla/chapatti/pita/flat bread. Add cheese or avocado for something extra.
- Bacon rolls / pitas.

Lunch

- Pre-make your sandwiches or bring the ingredients to make them. Flat breads work really well for sea kayaking as they don't get squished and keep really well. many them also come in a re-sealable bag that also makes life easier.
- Tinned fish (there's lots of great flavours out there now).
- Foil packers of tuna mayo etc.
- Chees (pre-sliced cheese make things easier if you're going to make sandwiches).
- Primula spread.
- Nuts.
- Dried fruit.
- Snack bars.
- Oatcakes.
- Soreen loaf.

Use a small Tupperware. A pack of oatcakes, a tin of mackerel / block of cheese / chunk of chorizo, some nuts and dried fruit, a couple of snack bars and of course, some Sea Kayak Plockton flapack seems to be about the right amount of food for the on the water part of the day,

Dinner

It's great to have one dinner that's fairly quick and simple to make in case you are tired when you get to camp, but in reality, most things are fairly quick. The last couple of suggestions might take a little more care and attention. The ingredients for all of these are roughly what I would take for a party of two.

- Stuffed pasta / gnocchi pesto, with vegetables, chorizo and cheese. pack of stuffed pasts / gnocchi per person (some gnocchi packs are meant for four people so just one would do!).
 - 1 jar pesto or sauce (bring a spare ziplock if you don't plan on using all the pesto as the jars leak).
 - Whatever veg (peppers, courgette, etc), chorizo and cheese you fancy.
- Curry / Chilli and rice. There's no reason you can't make a curry from scratch in camp or make it at home and freeze it into a

Tuppaware to bring with you. (This method has been used for a homemade sauce and eaten on the fourth night of camp before).

- If using tins, use 1 tin per person.
 - If using boil in the bag rice (which is great) 1 bag will be a very big portion for one person or a small / medium size portion for two.
 - For chilli, we recommend Stag Chilli.
- Salmon and couscous. The lemon and coriander or chilli and garlic couscous packets are favourites. Plain couscous needs a lot of herbs and spices. This is very easy and very tasty and perfect for a hot day.
 - 1 pack of couscous per person.
 - Hot smoked salmon fillet per person.
 - Any added veg you fancy - mange tout / red pepper works well with this dish
- Haggis, rösti and beans (may be an acquired taste!):
 - 1 tin haggis or a similar sized haggis. The vegetarian ones are very good too.
 - 1 tin baked beans.
 - 1 rösti or Spanish tortilla. These can be found ready made in many supermarkets and just need to be heated in a frying pan.
- Steak and potatoes:
 - 1 steak per person, pre-seasoned and in a double ziplock bag.
 - 1 or 2 tins potatoes (can be chopped and fried) or a small bag of Smash.
 - Greens: green beans and / or kale keep well.
- Sausage stew and bannock:
 - Pack of 6 sausages.
 - 1 tin chopped tomatoes.
 - 1 small onion, 1 medium carrot.
 - 1 ziplock back with 200g self-raising flour, 1 tbsp baking powder, whatever herbs and spices you like.
 - To make bannock, add water to the contents of the ziplock bag to make a dough. Flatten dough to about 2cm and leave to rest for a few minutes. Cook on a low heat in the saucepan (lid on) turning occasionally.
- Stir Fry. You can buy pre-chopped stir fry veg or bring your own and chop it in camp. It's nice to add in something like smoked mackerel (keeps really well) or chorizo.
 - A bag of pre-chopped stir fry veg or one onion, one pepper, one carrot, one bag of mange tout.
 - One pack of smoked mackerel (or some chorizo)
 - Two packets of stir in sauce of your choice.
 - One boil in the bag rice or one and half next of noodles per person. Straight to wok noodles (like Hokkein) work well.

- Fajitas:
 - 1 tin mixed beans.
 - 1 tube tomato paste.
 - 1 small onion, 1 pepper (and any other veg you fancy).
 - 1 avocado and some cheese.
 - 4 tortillas.

- Omelette with veg and cheese (chorizo too)
 - 6 eggs
 - Whatever veg and cheese you want
 - Chorizo

Don't forget dessert!

Custard and cake or a cheese board would be top of our list, but a nice bar of quality dark chocolate is essential!