

Simple Real Food Camping Menu

Instant Pot Edition

The only appliances this menu uses are an Instant Pot, an electric griddle, and an open fire and roasting sticks for the hotdogs and marshmallows!

Besides the pancake batter, hot dog buns, and smores, this menu is gluten-free and egg-free. Easily adapt it to be dairy-free by using coconut oil in place of butter and adjusting your toppings.

Serves 4 people

Breakfasts

Pancakes:

- [1 batch of this pancake batter](#)
(already mixed in a large jar and stored in the cooler)
- 1 stick butter
- Maple syrup, to taste

Make the pancakes on the electric griddle (alternatively, use a cast iron griddle over the fire). Serve with butter and maple syrup.

Optional side items: fried eggs, bacon, sliced fruit

Oatmeal:

- 4 cups old-fashioned oats
- 6 2/3 cups water

- ½ tsp salt
- Maple syrup, to taste
- Butter, to taste

Stir oats, water, and salt into the Instant Pot. Seal the lid and set it to manual setting for 8 minutes. Press Start. You can let the pressure release naturally or release it manually after it rests for 5 minutes after cooking. Serve with butter and maple syrup.

Optional side items: fried eggs, bacon, sliced fruit

Lunches

Leftovers - since check-in time at campsites is normally in the afternoon, you should have leftovers for every lunch on your trip!

Dinners

Hot dogs, Salad:

While hot dogs are not healthy, they are our favorite, traditional camp food we cook over the fire. In an attempt to be slightly healthier, we use uncured beef hot dogs or chicken sausage.

- Hot dogs
- Buns
- Ketchup*
- Mustard*
- [Salad](#) (already prepared and in a freezer bag)
- [Salad dressing](#)

**Use those ketchup and mustard packets you've been hoarding from restaurants! Or pack them in travel-size leak-proof toiletry bottles to save space in your cooler.*

Cook the hot dogs on skewers over an open fire. Serve the salad straight out of the bag or use the clean Instant Pot inner pot as a salad bowl.

(In case of rain, you can pan fry the hot dogs on the griddle!)

Taco Bowls:

- 1 batch [Cumin Beans](#) (prepared ahead of time and frozen)
- 1-2 pounds [seasoned beef](#) (browned and frozen ahead of time)
- 1 head lettuce, shredded
- 1 jar salsa
- 1 pint sour cream
- 2 cups cheese, shredded
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1 bag tortilla chips
- Optional: diced bell pepper, cilantro, olives

Heat the beans and beef in the Instant Pot. I prefer to cook mine ahead of time and freeze them so I only have to reheat them the day of. Serve everything else buffet-style in paper bowls and let everyone make their taco bowls as desired. Save leftovers for lunches and chili tomorrow.

Chili:

- 2 Tbsp butter
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 1 onion, diced
- Leftover seasoned beef
- Leftover pinto beans
- Diced tomatoes - two 14-oz cans
- Hot sauce (optional)
- Shredded cheese
- Sour cream
- Tortilla chips

Make this the day after Taco Bowls. Set Instant Pot to saute for 10 minutes. Melt the butter in the Instant Pot and saute the onion and bell pepper until soft. Pour the leftover beef, beans, and tomatoes in the Instant Pot. Cook on manual setting for 4 minutes. Let pressure release naturally. Top as desired. (Budget-friendly tip: Use lentils instead of beef - [like in this recipe!](#))

Snacks

Fruit:

Apples and oranges make great camping snacks because they don't need to be refrigerated and they don't bruise easily.

GORP:

Good Ol' Raisins and Peanuts

Smores:

You have to, okay? You're camping.

- Marshmallows
- Dark chocolate*
- Graham crackers

**I use 70% or 85% dark chocolate from Aldi for our smores. It makes the ultra sweet smores less overwhelming.*

Misc

- 6 gallons of water (for cooking and drinking)
- Firewood (for hot dogs and smores) (You can usually purchase this at a gas station near the campsite)

Do/Make Ahead

- ❑ Freeze water (1 gal for each cooler.
This makes a giant ice pack and when it thaws, you can drink the water)
- ❑ Make homemade hot dog buns
(optional for us real food over-achievers)
- ❑ [Brown, season, and freeze the ground beef](#)
- ❑ [Cook and freeze the Cumin Beans](#) (or use canned refried or pinto beans)
- ❑ [Chop and prepare the salad in gallon-size freezer bags](#) (or use bagged salad)
- ❑ [Mix the pancake batter in a half-gallon jar or plastic container with a tight-fitting lid](#)