

Food Tips for Gold Duke of Edinburgh Hikes

Intro

So you're hiking 8 hours with that heavy pack in rough country and you got a soaking earlier. Instead of your usual 2500kcal a day, you're using up about 4500-5000 kcal. You need decent grub and lots of it, without carrying the weight. You can't order a pizza from grid reference 123456 (no signal and no shops within 10 miles) so it's down to you. And if you don't eat properly you just won't make 20 kms tomorrow. So what are the options?

SOME DO'S

1. Small quantities of herbs, garlic, curry powder, vegetable stock etc. can be carried in film tubes and can improve flavours, also Tabasco, and olive oil boost flavours.
2. Concentrate on dried foods, and light packaging (eg, tuna in sachets), bulked out with pasta or boil in the bag rice.
3. Plan to cook in groups of two or three, eating the same food, so it can be cooked together and save gas. A 220 gm canister can be made to last a couple of people for three days.
4. Use high gas to bring to boil, then minimum gas to sustain a simmer, to conserve fuel.
5. Take a nylon scouring pad and a little detergent (in a small shampoo bottle), for cleaning.
6. Have something special to look forward to, like grandma's fruitcake, or a lump of stilton or camembert (but camembert and stilton pong a bit after four days or so).
7. Read the label on the food in the supermarket, you want the max. possible kcalories per 100 gm, there is a big range!
8. **If you are a hopeless cook, look at the dried food packs and sachet foods at the end of this note.**

SOME DON'T S

1. Avoid tinned food, heavy packaging, and moist (heavy) food.
2. Fatty foods, eg bacon & sausages create difficult washing up and are less digestible than cereals.
3. Fresh fruit & vegetables (eg, apples) are high in water content, i.e. heavy and low in calories.
4. Pot noodles etc. are bulky and not very nutritious. If you must use them, try them at home and decant contents into polythene bags, sealed, to save on packaging. Use double portions.
5. If you want a sachet food, just take the one (to keep weight down), and eat it on the first day, to get rid of heavy stuff first. Use with boil in the bag rice. There are several types: eg, Sainsburys "Two minute meals" or "Look What we Found!", the "Two minute meals" are a small sachet of 200 gms, use two for one person. ASDA have "Ye Olde Oak" Chicken Tikka Massala 575 gm (double portion) for £2.47. with 211kcal/100gm. Wayfarers camping food is also good.

BREAKFASTS

Kellogg's breakfast bars/ cereal bars

MUST have a hot drink as the food is not hot. These bars save washing up and are quick, but you need about three for a decent breakfast.

Oatso Simple

One 38 gm sachet requires a cup of milk. If using dried milk, this is about 1.5 rounded tablespoonfuls. AT HOME, measure out portions of dried milk powder and carry it in a small food bag, eg sandwich bag. Mix in hot water & milk powder on site. N.B. portion size is modest, maybe have two or three.

Alpen or hot muesli

PREPARE AT HOME:

Pour a large portion of Alpen into a cereal bowl. Add 1.5 rounded tablespoons of dried milk powder. Carefully pour the cereal & milk powder into a sandwich bag. At the campsite, pour the contents into a bowl and just add hot water. Suggest each portion should be separately bagged up. Have a few sachets of sugar handy in case taste gets boring.

Orange Juice

As a substitute take a few of the large fizzy vitamin tablets (in a film tube), suggest:

Redoxin	massive amounts of Vitamin C
Berocca	massive amounts of everything.

Consider hot chocolate instead of tea or coffee, as they have no calories and dehydrate you. The most calorific hot chocolate is Cadburys, 120 kcal/ portion, Galaxy 115kcal, Horlicks 114 kcal.

SNACKS

Keep a minimum of three chocolate & cereal bars handy in pockets, have 2 or 3 mid morning and 2 or 3 mid afternoon, you are expending energy, replace it. Have a variety. Good stuff for snacks: chocolate, cereal bars, dried frit and nuts, malt loaf, flapjack, fig rolls, jaffa cakes, jelly babies.

LUNCH SUGGESTIONS

Pita bread: does not crush in rucksack, stays fresh., also tortillas.

Oatcakes: are resistant to breaking when kept in box.

Primula cheese spread: one tube does 3-4 lunches for one person, stores well. Alternatively use camembert, though it might get a bit "high" after three days. Pepperoni is very calorific and stores well. Peanuts are very calorific, also dried fruit. Vegetable pates in tubes, variety at Holland & Barrett.

Crisps: use Pringles, in a tube. One tube does about 3-4 lunches for one person. Beef Jerky (Jack Links, available at Whistle-stop, delicatessen (main line stations), variety of flavours, some very tasty.

Sainsburys also has beef jerky. Flapjack, & caramel shortbread slice, filling & high energy, for lunches.

Lunch: 2 pepperoni (264 kcal), 6 oatcakes (342 kcal), qtr tube primula(120kcal) 666 kcals

Fruit & nut chocolate 200 gm 1000 kcals

EVENING MEAL

Have a big feed, cuppa soup, main course and maybe a pudding. (Most of these use sachets of tuna, light and easy to use, pepperoni, or very small tins of ham or chicken roll might work instead).

Ravioli or Tortellini etc. (very easy, serves one)

(There are several fresh pastas in pouches with various fillings, eg ham & mushroom.)

Portion of fresh ravioli or tortellini 250 gms

Pesto sauce (ideally, in a tube) (Morrisons)

Alternative, use tomato puree or vegetable puree (mostly tomato).

Option, add either a sachet of ground parmesan cheese or a sachet of tuna.

The pasta comes with different fillings, eg, spinach and ham, so it is quite balanced.

Boil the pasta for a few minutes as per packet instructions (some are just 2 mins.), strain it. Add pesto or other puree to taste. Add optional parmesan or tuna.

Lazy stew (extremely easy)

Portion of pasta

Packet soup, ideally minestrone, golden vegetable, spring vegetable etc.

Portion of tuna, ham, or chicken

Cook the pasta, when it is nearly cooked add the soup to be a thickener and to provide some flavour and vegetables. Then add the tuna or meat for the last 3-5 minutes.

Tuna with peppers & rice (easy, serves one)

Tuna in a sachet, John West, 85 gm,(Sainsburys & Morrisons).

Whitworths dried peppers, 50 gm, (Sainsburys)

1 vegetable stock cube,

Herbs to taste (parsley etc, or Herbes de Provence)

1 portion boil in the bag rice, 125 gms (alternatively, pasta).

Start soaking the peppers before you cook your cuppa soup, use just enough water to soak. Boil water and add the bag of rice. Heat up the pan of peppers and add the vegetable stock, keep swapping the two pans over on the stove. After a few minutes, add the sachet of tuna to the peppers. Keep swapping the pans and checking, try to ensure the pepper/ tuna mix is not too watery. When the rice is ready, EAT. This makes one large portion.

Octopus casserole (similar to above, easy, serves one)

First, catch your octopus. Alternatively, use a small tin of squid (Sainsbury's), strain off the salt water. OK, could use tuna, ham or chicken.

Whitworths dried country vegetables 50 gm. (instead of peppers) (Sainsbury)

Add a vegetable stock cube. Optional, add a few sun dried tomatoes.

Optional, use pasta, eg, fruesli, instead of rice.

Preparation similar to above. This makes one large portion. (Actually, it is not THAT good).

Merchant Gourmet do more exotic vegetables at higher cost. Their Arabbiaata contains a lot of chillies and the Caponata contains a surfeit of garlic; I like garlic and chillies, but you can have too much, if using these ones, pick some of it out, at home, or blow your head off (have done this).

Black Bit Stew

Choose any of the above recipes and follow carefully, adding lots of herbs.

Turn the gas up to maximum, go and see your mates and have a good chat about the state of your feet, how rubbish they are at putting up their tent, or the football/ rugby. Make sure you are at least 30 minutes.....et voila!...Your pan is now full of black bits, and you may even have a hole in the bottom.

Tuna Provençal (serves one, a little complicated, but worth the effort)

Portion of pasta.

Tuna in a sachet, John West, 85 gm,(Sainsburys & Morrisons).

Alternatively, use a very small, 125 gm tin of tuna in olive oil.

Whitworths dried onions, (Sainsburys), alternatively, take one small onion, and chop it small.

Garlic, ideally fresh, in film canister, optional, dried garlic.

Olive oil, in a small plastic bottle (eg, hotel shampoo portion).

Tomato puree in a tube.

Herbes de Provence, or your favourite herbs (in a film canister).

Optional, dried mushrooms (Whitworths, Sainsbury).

If using dried onion, re-hydrate it in a little hot water first. Start cooking pasta in a separate pan. If using dried onion, strain it but save the water in a cup for adding back later. Fry the onion in olive oil with the herbs & garlic. (Olive oil is calorific, nutritious and good for the heart, so you can splash it on). After a few minutes, add the tuna and tomato puree and add back some of the water strained from the onion and/or from the pasta. If using mushrooms, they need re-hydrating, and adding in late in the cooking. Stir frequently. Swap pans over from time to time. When the pasta is ready, stain and serve with the tuna mix. Can be cooked in a one-man Trangia.

Trail Magazine January 2001 verdict: " tasty and filling... a fabulous combination of ingredients and flavours!" (aw...shucks).

Option would be to try a small tin of ham or chicken roll if you don't like tuna.

Leak & Potato Soup

100g potato flakes (a large mugful), OR one 88gm packet of Smash

1 leak

1heaped desert spoon of milk powder

1 tablespoon olive oil (or a film tube)

1 vegetable stock cube OR some vegetable bouillon

Garlic powder, salt and pepper

2.5 mugs of water

Chop the leak finely and fry in the oil for 3-4 mins, until soft but not brown, then set it aside. Put the water in the pan and heat, add the stock or vegetable bouillon. (Boil the water if source is suspect). Stir in the potato flakes, and milk powder plus garlic, then add the leak. Stir it up with the salt and pepper and cook on low heat for five minutes, stirring regularly.

(thanks to Andy Beer and Roy Halpin and to Trail Magazine for publishing this).

Cous Cous

Needs soaking, an alternative to rice & pasta, could presumably mix in tuna, dried vegetables etc

Trail Magazine evening meals:

Risotto, fry onion, red pepper and garlic, mix boiled rice with sweet corn and onion mix, sprinkle with grated cheese;

Mushroom noodles, boil packet mushroom soup with noodles, serve with oatcakes and cheese;

Nutty rice pilaff, fry onion and garlic, add to cooked rice, add salted nuts, raisins and a few chopped dried apricots.

PUDDINGS:

Custard, one sachet makes two portions. Just add water. Add the following to create variety:

Sultanas and a little cinnamon (in a film tube), Other dried fruit, eg, apple rings, apricots, N.B. some may benefit from pre-soaking.. Golden syrup cake (Sainsbury's, Safeway).

N.B. most packet puddings require milk, maybe experiment with milk powder

Nant y Moch Pudding

1 sachet instant custard,

2 small packets of cranberries

2 small packets of chocolate buttons (or a lump of chocolate).

Set cranberries to soak in a small amount of hot water. Remove cranberries from water but save the water, add more hot water (as custard instructions) and the custard powder. Add back the cranberries to the custard, add in the chocolate buttons, stir it all up. Yummie!

SO YOU'RE A RUBBISH COOK, OR JUST CAN'T BE BOTHERED, TRY THESE:

"Pack & Go", one day menus of dried food, you get breakfast an energy drink, hot choc, flapjack and a two course evening meal, 2400 kcals., 650gms, 7 menus, £9.95 each (15% discount on 7 packs). Need to add lunch & soup, suggest replace the flapjack with better. (*have tried all their food and it's all good, they actually dare to give it some flavour.*) Available Be-Well Nutritional Products Ltd 01778 560868, www.be-well.co.uk. I have used these on numerous occasions, so has Sir Ranulf Fiennes. A seven menu value pack is £59.20 (April 2009). Also www.outdoorsgrub.co.uk

Mountain House, have not tried it but good reviews, American brand, query slightly more costly. Recommended: Potato & Salmon in Dill Sauce, excellent, (110 gm, 609 kcal) also Sweet & Sour Chicken (112 gm, 521 kcal). Custard with Apple (110gm, 521 kcal). Available from www.outdoorsgrub.co.uk or www.dboutdoor.com

Adventure Food, have not tried it, good reviews, large portions, low in additives, recommended: Rice Satay (150gm, 607kcal) also Pasta cheese with Ham(140gm, 567kcal) . www.outdoorsgrub.co.uk

Reiter dried meals (Snow & Rock) and Trekking-Mahlzeiten dried meals www.expeditionfoods.com are OK, the ones above are better.

Expedition Foods do Duke of Ed day ration packs for £11.50 which is expensive.

Ainsley Harriott cup soups, these are the best of the cuppa soups, yummee!

Vesta beef curry, (Sainsbury) a bit glutinous but quite good, large portion, but replace the rice with boil in the bag. Needs about 25 minutes to cook, maybe try pre-soaking the curry mix (584 kcals). Try also paella, or beef risotto (454 kcals). As at September 2010, these are available at Poundland in Redhill, for £1, bargain!

"Sachet meals" Some Easy Meals (not dried food)

These are prepared meals stored in a plastic sachet and with a long life, needing no refrigeration. They can even be cooked in the sachets, in a pan of hot water, along with a boil in the bag rice, instant massed potato, e.g. Smash, or pasta.

Sainburys "2 minute meals" are packed in sachets, quite good, but small portions at 200 gms, use two portions and add rice. The chicken korma is the most calorific, **155Kcal per 100g**. The Chicken Tikka has 137 Kcals/100gm, Balti is 130kcal/100 gm. They also do chile and other meals but calorie content is much less. Cost is £1.39, occasionally half price at £0.69. Two packets makes plus rice makes one large meal.

"Ye Olde Oak" Chicken Tikka Massala, in a sachet, 575 gm (double portion) for £2.47, with **211kcal/100gm** and 11.2% protein. Available at ASDA.

"Look What We Found!" natural prepared meals. The Gloucester Old Spot Pork Meatballs in sauce are the most calorific at 132 kcals per 100 gm. One pack is 300 gm. Available Sainburys, £2.49-£2.99 per pack.

Smash instant mash potato: 336 kcal/100 gm as sold. A pack is 88gm, i.e. 296 kcal, and makes two good portions.

Most of these could be bulked out with rice (boil in the bag), smash potato or pasta.

Wayfarer's food, add a portion of rice/ pasta, to bulk it out, it's mostly pretty good, especially the Chocolate pudding, which is a campsite classic.

Tyne Brand chilli con carne is OK, avoid their chicken curry. Use boil in the bag rice with these.