

# Lets Go Camping

An Introduction To Camping

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## **Introduction**

Camping is described by some as “being very close to nature” and “the next thing closest to Heaven”. It takes away the hustle and bustle of city life and a much needed break from the monotonous state that we face daily in life. Nobody would like to miss the chance of going for camping and will grab the opportunity whether it is in their schooldays, scouts or as a family. Camping also gives the opportunity of getting to know each other better and is the place where new friendship is born. Camping is joy, camping is fun, camping is adventurous and camping is an experience to be cherished for a long time.

In light of that, It comes as no shock to hear that camping is one of the most popular recreational activities in the world, especially in the USA. It gives the everyday person the opportunity to get outdoors and really enjoy nature and all the experiences that come with it, even the wildlife!

Some people may even believe camping is too popular! When based on the ever increasing difficulty it is when trying to book a spot on a campsite, especially in the summer months as camp sites seem to become even more crowded. Camping however for some people has also

become a major tradition within their families and would be considered a great choice and much cheaper alternative to booking a holiday. Even being out a few miles into the great outdoors without cars and buildings and all that stuff can make you feel like you are in a whole different part of the world altogether!

While you are camping there are loads of activities which campers can enjoy including swimming, fishing, walking trails, hunting and even sunbathing in the summer months. But every camping trip has two main purposes which are enjoyment and relaxation. Regardless of the season or whether it's an individual expedition or a fun family outing, safety naturally is the most important thing prior to stepping out into the wilderness.

It is vital to not just be well-organized but also well-prepared before travelling outdoors and going camping. Being prepared makes all the difference between an enjoyable camping experience and one that can turn miserable pretty fast. The following tips in this ebook will most certainly help you prepare fully to go camping, get the most enjoyment and most importantly...be safe.

## Enjoy Camping All Year Round

*"The fire is the main comfort of the camp, whether in summer or winter, and is about as ample at one season as at another. It is as well for cheerfulness as for warmth and dryness".*

*~Henry David Thoreau*

The first part of the book will be introducing how camping is a different experience when done in all of the four seasons. It will be explaining what are the advantages and disadvantages of the different seasons and will also give you tips and secrets to make it a success no matter what season you are in

### Summer Camping

There is a strong trend that shows that camping is always peaking in popularity during the summer season. This peak in popularity comes down to a few important reasons;

Firstly, Not only are kids out of school for a couple of months with nothing to do but the weather is exceptional. You can participate in a lot of different activities during summer as

the weather pretty much allows you to do whatever pleases you. Whether it is playing golf or tennis, whether it is hiking or swimming, the summer months are the absolute best time to get outdoors and do these activities while camping.

Another advantage of camping in summer are the longer days. As the tilt of the earth brings more hours of sunshine during summer so are the days longer.

With the days being longer comes the benefit of being able to fit more in a day. So more time enjoying the different activities that come during the longer days, and even the nights are clear.

There is nothing much better than spending a summer night camping outdoors. There are so many advantages to camping in summer that you could fill a whole book about how good it is and why you should do it, so this guide will not go into depth about the reasons for camping in summer as you should already know why its so popular during summer.

**Unfortunately there are a few drawbacks when camping in summer.**

One of the more considerable ones is availability of sites. In summer, campsites and campgrounds are noticeably more difficult to reserve a spot which means that booking prior to leaving is vital to your overall camping experience.

Another drawback of summer camping is the heat inside a tent, If you were to step into a tent during the day in summer it would be sometimes over 100 degrees. Making it impossible to stay in for more than a few minutes.

When considering going camping in summer, It is important to be physically prepared for summer camping. Constant exposure to the sun can often lead to heatstroke, sunburn and even severe dehydration which means staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water is absolutely essential along with protecting yourself from the heat using sunscreen.

As an important rule:

**Remember the 3 S's**

*Slip, Slop, Slap*

Slip- Slip on a t-shirt. Remember to cover up during the times of 11am and 2pm as these are when the sun is at its strongest.

Slop- Slop on some sunscreen. Make sure to apply sunscreen to any exposed areas to avoid being sunburnt. Getting burnt by the sun is one of the more easier ways to develop melanoma skin cancer, so make sure to use sunscreen.

Slap- Slap on a hat. Always wear a hat to protect your head from the sun

Another piece of advise to consider is taking insect repellent. Insect repellent should be a part of your camping supplies as spending time outdoors means exposure to nature's pests, particularly mosquitoes.

**Here are some additional tips to make for a better summer camping experience:**

- Bring lots of water to stay hydrated.
- Try to avoid hiking and being overly active during extremely hot temperatures.
- Stay in the shade if possible and don't expose yourself to the sun for too long.

# Winter Camping

Camping in the winter requires the camper to have an amazing amount of courageousness based on the various conditions you are bound to face when camping in the great outdoors during winter, particularly the sometimes icy temperatures and unpredictable weather.

A good number of people still enjoy going camping when the weather is atrocious in the winter because of the added excitement of having to brave the rigorous winter weather, it becomes a so called "adrenaline rush" to be out in the wilderness when the weather is wild. It is called "Extreme Camping" and has grown in popularity over the years as people seek out more and more inventive ways to get fulfil the desire in their lives to be adventurous and live life on the edge .

If you do decide to go camping during the cold winter months, Here are a couple of ideas that might make those long, cold nights under the stars more bearable.

The first thing you should do is linked with the second thing, which is to buy a sleeping pad and a sleeping bag. I listed the pad first because no matter what awesome sleeping bag

you might buy, you're not going to be warm after the temperature drops below thirty since the ground will suck the warmth right out of you.

Even the greatest of sleeping bags need loft (the space inside the bag that holds in your heat, aided by the use of various insulation materials), and when the bag is being squashed beneath you, there is nothing to keep your hard-earned warmth inside.

*The sleeping pad should be the number one concern of cold-weather campers!*

Luckily, there are a couple of types to choose from. The first is the closed-cell kind made of foam, which can be rolled up or folded into a rectangle, depending on the style. You should carry one of these whenever you go hiking or camping, because not only do they do a great job in insulating you from the ground, but they can also have a variety of uses in backcountry emergencies.

The other type of sleeping pad is the inflatable type, and though it is more comfortable than the foam, it can also get punctured and be rendered completely useless. Most likely

this will happen the afternoon preceding the coldest night of your trip, but only if you forget the repair kit or duct tape.

The sleeping bag will reflect your budget's limitations, but usually you can buy yourself something that will work well enough, as long as you don't get too ambitious with the projected temperatures of your camping trip. What to look for in a sleeping bag will be explained in more detail in a subsequent chapter, so stay tuned, but for now, I'll assume you've got something that will do a reasonable job in keeping you warm.

I think that a lot of people make the mistake of not changing their clothing before they crawl into their icy sleeping bags. I don't just mean shirts and pants, but underwear and socks as well. It all has to be completely new, or else you'll find yourself shivering miserably well before sunrise. During the day, you sweat whether you realize it or not, and this moisture will rob you of your body heat as the night goes on and your temperature falls slightly with sleep.

Keep a separate change of clothing for sleepwear and allow it to dry out the following day so that it's completely dry for the next night of camping. Avoid cotton whenever possible!

If dry clothing, a decent sleeping bag and a sleeping pad don't do the trick, then it's time to move on to other options. When you are camping in temperatures around the mid-20's, A good tip would be to boil some water right before you go to bed and would make some hot chocolate in your thermos. That way, if you woke up cold, you would have a ready-made hot drink to sip, which would warm you right up and help you get back to sleep. The sugar did its part as well, and if you didn't feel like boiling water, you should just bring some hard candies and eat one whenever you start getting cold. It's amazing what a little sugar can do!

*When all else fails, you should heat up water and pour it into a sturdy water bottle.*

Don't use the flimsy plastic type of water bottle, as this will hurt a lot when the plastic melts! You should put your good water bottle into a wool sock and lay it next to your neck, or on your stomach. The heat can last for hours.

Something to remember when trying to stay warm on a cold night is that if you need to go to the bathroom, then go! It will actually warm you up, since your body is expending a lot of energy to keep urine warm, so no matter how little you want to get out of your sleeping bag into the biting air, just

do it and get it over with. You'll ultimately be more comfortable. This means that if you're going to have a warm drink, consume it an hour before you intend to go to bed. You'll decrease the chance that you'll have to make a midnight visit to the outhouse.

If things get really bad, and you feel like you'll never get warm, it's time to get drastic. I usually slog around with a fleece blanket and a silk sleeping bag liner to boost my sleeping bag's temperature rating. These serve two purposes. The first, and most obvious, is to provide more insulation to my sleeping bag, but I drape my sleeping bag with the fleece rather than having it inside with me. The reason for this is the same reason that you shouldn't try to go to sleep wearing every bit of clothing you brought with you. The more bulk you try to stuff into the bag, the more compressed the sleeping bag insulation will get and the less effective it will be in keeping you warm.

Do wear a hat, as a lot of heat is lost through your head.

**Now to the benefits of camping in winter**, one of the major benefits of camping in winter is the beautiful scenery, If you go camping in the mountains during winter, one of the highlights is the serenity of the snow capped mountains and the exceptional photographs that come with it. Some of

the most amazing scenic shots are during winter so be sure to take a lot of photos and wear your best smile!

Another benefit of camping in winter is there is less wildlife on the prowl and you should generally be safe when out in the wilderness. Although that doesn't mean you don't have to be careful, you should always remain cautious. The main things you don't have to worry too much about are seeing bears and the like as we all know the bigger animals like to stay in hibernation during the colder months

Lastly a major benefit of camping in the winter months is being able to book campgrounds without worrying too much about large crowds as is the case in warmer seasons.

Winter sports are also appealing as one can participate in fun activities including skating, skiing, snowboarding, tobogganing, tubing, and more.

Just like summer camping, winter camping requires a good amount of preparation. Here are some tips to help make your winter camping experience a safe one:

- Bring lots of water to stay hydrated. Dehydration is still possible in winter just as it is in the summer. It's a good habit to drink water even when not thirsty.

- Bring a good amount of clothes to stay warm and avoid frostbite. Rain gear is also a good idea for rainy conditions.
- Maintain a good diet and make sure to consider proper nutrition including complex carbohydrates to help you stay warm.

## Fall & Spring Camping

Camping is a year round, all-season adventure so there is no right or wrong time of year to go out into the wilderness and experience nature. More and more people are actually starting to book a spot in camping grounds during these transitional seasons because of the fact that campsites are rarely packed out and not overbooked as they commonly are in the summer season. The weather is also very mild neither too hot nor cold and the autumn season makes for splendid scenery with the changing of the colour and falling of the leaves.

Going camping in the spring season also has its benefits as the weather tends to normally stay calm and the blooming of flowers makes for a delightful view.

Also during these transitional months there are loads of activities to participate in that make your camping experience even better. Whatever you choose to do just make sure to be prepared for whatever may come your way and remember to have fun.

What also is appealing to many campers in the springtime are the birds and ducks making their way back, allowing for hunting not to mention that hiking is a lot easier than it might be in the summer or winter because there is little fear of frostbite or heatstroke.

With the exception of winter season, campers can also enjoy a barbeque outside which consists of any number of meals such as hotdogs and burgers.

As always, every season has its benefits and drawbacks but overall, the experience of being in the great outdoors camping is an adventure which millions of people crave and seek each year. Which is why camping, as either an individual experience or a family experience, is growing rapidly throughout the world!

# **Proper Equipment – Your Best Friend**

## **Choosing The Right Tent**

Buying a camping tent is really not as easy as you may think. You can't just pick one up at the local sporting goods store, without knowing exactly what you are buying and the major use of it. When you get out in the field with your tent and you end up freezing or overheating you'll then realize that you should have spent more time reviewing the options when purchasing your camping tent. Camping tents are rated for use in various seasons and some tents can keep you drier than others. If you are planning a trip to a snowy region in winter, it certainly wouldn't be recommended you drag out your 3-season tent you used for summer camping at the lake.

This chapter is a camping tent guide for helping you choose the right tent for the right conditions. These considerations will help you decide what kind of tent will be the best for your next adventure.

Tents come in a whole variety of different sizes and styles that can accommodate anywhere from a single person to a dozen people or even more. The tent that is most suitable and the best choice for you will obviously depend on your needs and your budget. Tents range hugely in price and functionality so, some of the main questions you must ask yourself before considering which tent to purchase while shopping for a tent might be:

- What will the total number of people be that will be joining you in your camping trip?
- Will you require a tent big enough to accommodate a large number of people?
- Are you comfortable with a single sleeping area or would you prefer separate compartments based on however many people will be joining you?
- Is your camping trip more hiking-based?
- Will you be carrying it on your back or travelling by vehicle?
- The size of the tent will be crucial if you plan on carrying it with you.

**Here are the main things to consider when buying a tent:**

# 1. Time of Year You're Going Camping

There are normally three types of camping classifications of tents and each mainly depend on the time of year that they will be utilized.

All-season tents or convertible tents - these are used predominantly year round but despite the name, these tents do not perform well in severe winter weather. The weight of the tent is generally not an issue.

The all-season camping tent is typically thought of in terms of a family or car tent. Most cabin tents are all-season tents. These are great for relaxed summer camping.

3-season - this type of tent works well for all the seasons but the harshest cold weather conditions like snow.

The 3-season camping tent is what I would consider the most versatile. Some of the smaller 2 person tents are great for hiking and some of the larger tents are great for family campouts. These are usually always a dome tent.

4-season – purpose built for extreme cold weather climates, but extremely hot during summer.

## 2. Staying Dry

While camping there is nothing worse than waking up in a pool of water or feeling a drip on your forehead at night. The main reason this calamity happens is the way tents are made these days, once you touch the fabric on the inside to the outside flysheet, the tent will start to leak, especially when it rains heavy, but even sometimes from the morning dew.

Hold on, you say I could just use a poncho as a rain fly and stay dry. You're right. You could pick up a poncho as well to drape over your shelter half. But out the door goes your ventilation! The point is, technology is a wonderful thing. Camping tents can be purchased that have a water-resistant coating that still allow for ventilation. Most camping tents have a waterproof rain fly that attaches to the tent poles and still allows for ventilation. And lastly, many camping tents have floors sewn in to the bottom.

### Easy Setup

Your camping tent should be easy to set up and take little time. At no time will this be more apparent to you than when it is raining or when it is dark.

So how do I know if the tent is easy to set up? A-frame and dome camping tents are generally easy to pitch. A cabin tent

is not necessarily easy. The following section will deal with the designs of tents.

Lastly, when you are ready to take your tent down, or strike camp, you will want it fold into a neat, compact, easy to store package.

### 3. Ventilation

A must for your camping tent is the need for adequate ventilation. A mark of a good camping tent that has good ventilation will have openings on all sides.

Most camping tents will have mesh screens on each side as well. This is to continue to have air flow though the tent even when you are trying to keep out the bugs or even debris if it is windy.

You'll want to choose a tent that has a large mesh opening if the bugs are annoying where you'll be camping.

## **Tent Styles**

The most common styles of tents are Frame tents, Dome tents, Ridge tents, Touring tents, Vis-à-vis tents, Hoop tents, and Geodesic tents.

Frame tents are generally popular because of the headroom and overall space provided. Some of the options come with separate sleeping compartments available and also comes

standard with a steel frame-structure so transporting the tent by car is far more convenient.

Dome tents- In the last 10 years dome tents have been dominating the market. As a matter of fact, the vast majority of tents available in stores these days are dome tents mainly because of their durability, ease of set-up and ease of transportation, thereby making it a popular choice among campers.

Ridge tents are triangular and quite sturdy, they offer plenty of head room however are not the most suitable in heavy winds because of lack of support. They tend to be the easiest and quickest to set up but are found lacking during not so good weather.

Touring tents are one of the rare which allow a person to stand straight up and even walk inside. Touring tents also have see-through windows with generally good ventilation.

Vis-à-vis tents offer different sleeping compartments and hoop tents which are sometimes called tunnel tents are popular amongst hikers and mountain-climbers because they are easy to carry and don't take up much room but are still very sturdy.

Geodesic tents are similar in structure to the popular dome tents and are actually even stronger, being able to resist heavier winds. They are normally more expensive also.

So now you have a bit of information on the different types of tents and the qualities and disadvantages to each. So when picking out a tent, do make sure to find one which is favourable to you based on the season you are camping in, the number of people that will be occupying it and also your budget. Weather can be unpredictable at best which means a tent which is within your budget that can handle wind and rain is your best bet.

## **Backpacks & Rucksacks**

One of the most important camping equipment is a Backpack or as sometimes called a Rucksack. A good backpack can free your hands and make you travel light by removing the load onto your shoulders and back, which is an effective way to keep your body comfortable under burden.

Therefore, the following detail will give you some basic guidelines on how to choose a good backpack for your trip.

This is probably not the most comprehensive guide but suitable for a beginner to start learning about how to choose them properly.

Firstly, identify your needs. Please also bear in mind that each individual has their own preference. Some people are minimalists, which means they usually only take something that is necessary for the trip, they don't like to take everything, especially the stuff that is not going to be used.

On the other hand some people may love to carry a lot of stuff for their trip, especially ones who love hiking and go for 2-5 day excursions for example. So it necessary for you to identify your own needs and identify which kind of backpack you need.

## How to purchase an ideal backpack

When choosing a backpack, pay enough attention to factors like material, size, loading type and major features.

### **Choosing The Right Material**

Some of the more popular materials such as cordura, ripstop nylon or nylon are the common ones to make good backpacks. When picking up a backpack, you have to check those easy-to-wear-out areas to see if measures of adding durability have taken to ensure a long-term use. The material of the hip belts indicates whether it is a good backpack. Thus, make sure the hip belts are properly-manufactured with comfortable material without compromising usability.

### **What type of backpack do you prefer?**

External-frame packs, internal-frame packs and day packs/rucksacks are the three typical camping bags much admired by most travellers and outdoor lovers.

For freshmen of hiking and camping, external-frame packs are considered to be the ideal choice as this kind of items is able to distribute heavy and unorganized load properly. What's more, an external-frame pack usually costs less than that of internal-frame. For those fanatics of outdoor activity, internal-frame packs designed with the purpose to keep the load close to your body for comfort and flexibility are the best choice. As frame less as they are, the day packs are suitable for light loads. Therefore they are often used in

short excursions and you may get one of them at lower price than that of the above-mentioned two types.

## **Choosing The Right Size**

The bigger your backpack is, the more it can hold. It seems as if the biggest ones are always the best. But the truth is, the larger your pack is, the more troublesome it may be as you may take more unnecessary items in it and more efforts are needed to carry it around. Therefore, a large size retards your movements.

## **What size backpack do you like?**

The size of a camping backpack matters a lot. The bigger your pack is, the more it can hold. Meanwhile, getting a bigger backpack means you have to sacrifice mobility for load capacity, because the larger your pack is, the more efforts are needed. Here are some guidelines for the pack capacity of different activities.

So to sum up, the best type of backpack is one which you would feel comfortable walking with if your camping trip requires a lot of walking. A backpack which is light and durable and also water-resistant is ideal but most

importantly, a well-fitting backpack which isn't a hindrance to your body is the most important factor. One thing to remember is that weight on your back should be distributed efficiently and evenly so the shoulder area carries 30% while the rest carries 70% or so.

## Sleeping Bags

An enjoyable camping trip will get ruined pretty quickly if you don't have a good nights sleep. That's the reason why having a quality sleeping bag to sleep in is essential if you want to be well rested, ready to face the day ahead and above all else have an enjoyable camping experience.

Just like tents and backpacks, there are a lots of different types of sleeping bags to choose from and finding the right one depends how much you are willing to spend and what you personally find comfortable. It's also important to note how you will be transporting the sleeping bag and whether you'll be packing it in your backpack during hikes.

# A General Guide To Sleeping Bags

If you're searching for the perfect sleeping bag that will meet all of your needs, forget about it!

There is no such thing. However in saying that, there is a bag out there that will keep you warm and happy through most of your camping escapades — a three-season mummy type with a temperature/comfort rating of around 15 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

A nice three-season bag should be able to get you through a cold evening when camping in spring or fall and not overheat you during a warm night in the middle of summer. If your preference is more towards winter camping, then opt for a bag rated to below 0 degrees Fahrenheit. Winter mountain climbing requires you to have a bag temperature rating of minus 15 to minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Mummy-shaped sleeping bags are the most efficient bag at keeping body warmth. However in some cases, some people find them tight. Also, another tip is to be sure that if you are buying bags to zip together, the zippers are compatible and you purchase both a left as well as a right zipper.

## Shapes

Sleeping bags come in both a rectangular shape and a mummy shape. The style which is right for you depends on your general way of sleeping. Some people may not give much regard to how they sleep but it can play a factor in terms of having a good night's sleep overall.

A mummy bag would be suitable for those who tend to curl up whereas those who like to sleep sprawled out would find the rectangular bag more comfortable. The mummy bag's smaller size also requires less energy for heating up and also has a hood which can be pulled tightly around the head area, creating additional warmth. The rectangular bag on the other hand contains more air space and ends closer to the chest area.

## Temperature & Insulation

A good sleeping bag will greatly help to maintain the warmth of your body through insulation, but the way the bag is constructed will decide how well it is insulated. It would suit you well to choose a bag with a temperature rating based on the conditions of the climate.

When choosing a bag, you should take into consideration not just the climate but also the types of activities you will be doing which can have an effect on your level of fatigue and metabolic rate among other things.

Down is known to be the best insulator because it is small and can be compressed quite easily. Unfortunately the disadvantage of a Down bag is that they lose their insulation-capabilities when wet but a well-maintained Down bag can last a very long time. On the other hand synthetic bags can remain well-insulated regardless of being wet but weigh quite a bit more and don't have the durability of Down bags.

## Things to consider when buying a sleeping bag

The majority of bags are constructed from nylon, polyester, or nylon blends inside and out. Sleeping bags with cotton insides, quilted rectangular shapes, and kids bags with cartoon characters printed on them, not surprisingly, are not recommended for backpacking or remotely serious for outdoor use.

When you purchase any sleeping bag, take a little time to really feel it out. Climb inside it, roll around in it, zip it up,

etc and then choose the one that seems to best meet your needs for space, warmth, and features along with the best price tag. Although you may be looked at funny when doing this it is actually worth all that to make sure what you are buying will do the job well.

All sleeping bags generally have similar features. Check out the following from “The guide to buying a sleeping bag for dummies”:

- A lining of taffeta or other soft non-cotton material is more comfy, warms quickly, and breathes supremely.
- A two-way zipper offers more ventilation and flexibility options. Be sure to buy a right- or a left-side zipper that is compatible with the other bag if you desire companionship.
- You want a *differential cut* — the inner lining is sewn smaller than the outer shell — which allows insulation to loft to its maximum. If there is more loft, there is more warmth.
- An insulated draft collar helps to seal in the warmth and keep out the cold around your neck and shoulders.

- Hook and loop tabs cover the zipper toggle by the hood, preventing unplanned unzippings whilst you slumber.
- A multisectioned or shaped hood cups the head naturally.
- Ample draft tube that hangs from the top of the bag and covers the zipper to seal out cold air.
- A windproof and water-resistant outer shell. DryLoft is the most downproof.
- Semirectangular cut for sleepers who toss and turn.  
Mummy-style bag for sleepers who manage to stay put.
- Dark coloured lining. This absorbs heat better and the sun's rays most efficiently should you need to dry out your bed.
- One last highly desirable option: a fleece-lined stuff sack.  
Turn it inside out for a comfy pillow when stuffed with a parka or your extra clothes

## Bags For Cold Nights

Sleeping bag designers generally agree that a cold weather bag must have the following features to keep the occupant really warm: zipper draft tubes and shoulder collars, hoods that cup the head and insulate without being claustrophobic, and a temperature rating of 0 Fahrenheit or below (in the winter it is far better to err on the side of warmth).

What insulation do designers prefer? Down, with a 650-power fill rating or above, is best for weight-to-warmth ratio and for longevity. The fill power of down indicates the amount of actual downy feather and quill. The lower the fill number, the more quill and less feather. The higher the number, the less quill and more feather.

*How big should a winter bag be? Buy it long.*

Most mountaineers recommend against regular-sized bags and opt for bags that offer at least an extra 8 to 10 inches of space at the foot after you are nestled comfortably inside. Those extra inches provide adequate space to store cameras, water, boots, and such items that you don't want to freeze. In addition, bags with a wider cut can offer more warmth because they give you room to add clothing without constricting the bag.

No matter what type of sleeping bag you choose, it's important to make sure it's the best choice for your sleeping needs. As long as you take care of your sleeping bag, much like your tent and backpack, it should last you a very long time.

# **What Can I Eat? - Camping Cuisine**

## The Camping Diet

Foods fit for camping tend to vary depending on the type of camping you will be doing. If you are headed to a camping ground with shops in the area, you will more than likely have a wider variety of foods available to you to choose from as opposed to camping out in the wilderness where you will need to pack enough food and be able to carry it with you to keep you going for the duration of your trip.

It's generally a good idea to carry light on a camping trip unless you're utilizing a caravan, however if you are doing a lot of hiking while camping then keeping pots and pans in your backpack isn't really a good idea. You will need to decide before you go whether or not you will be bringing fresh meats and poultry or bringing frozen foods and canned foods.

Another thing to consider is trying to bring only the necessary foods as opposed to processed foods. It's helpful to have a bit of knowledge of the quality foods the body requires to function at its best, especially on a camping trip where dealing with nature's unpredictable conditions can be

harsh on the body. What is essential to the body is a good source of carbohydrates in the morning like oats or muesli, to sustain it throughout the day. And at lunch a moderate amount of protein like tinned fish or chicken to help the body repair itself.

You can consider bringing foods from the 3 main food groups including meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, nuts, any type of fruits and vegetables, bread, cereal, pasta, milk, yogurt and cheese. These are basically the main foods inside the food pyramid which consists of what our bodies require to remain healthy and strong. These food ideas are general but you are fit to bring what you feel is necessary to keep your body energized and sufficient on your trip.

### Freeze-Dried Meals

Freeze-dried meals can be quite expensive but they really come in handy when needing a full balanced meal in the wilderness and a very popular choice amongst campers. They have a long shelf-life, are very light to carry, and can be prepared instantly with a little bit of hot water, not to mention it's a complete meal in a box.

Freeze-dried foods are mostly nutritious despite some misconceptions about them. They contain fresh ingredients and mostly they can taste as fresh as a home-cooked dinner. Obviously with freeze-dried foods, despite being stripped of its moisture and put into oxygen-proof and moisture-proof bags, it looks presentable enough and definitely healthy enough for a camper. Most foods can be freeze-dried but freeze-dried foods are a definite advantage for campers, especially in the wilderness where stoves and microwaves aren't close by. All it takes is a little heating and you have a decent meal.

# What To Do While Camping

If you are staying at a campground there are normally lots of different activities to fill your day. Whether it is sight-seeing, photography, exploring the wilderness or games such as petanque or croquet or even just playing catch. You can normally find something to do without getting bored. However, when the sun goes down it is not so easy to fill in your time with activities so the following section is all about activities to do when its dark

## The Classic Campfire

There is nothing more fun during a camping trip than sitting around a campfire with family and friends at night under the bright shining stars and toasting marshmallows or smores. Building a campfire is actually quite easy but it's absolutely vital to do so responsibly so as not to damage the natural environment or endanger other people.

### Location

It is especially important to find an area that is suitable for building a campfire. If camping in the great outdoors it can be a bit more difficult to find a suitable place as opposed to

an actual campsite. It's imperative to follow all the rules as laid out by park rangers and to pick a site which is not too close to forested area, particularly bushes that could easily be ignited, and also not too close to a rocky area. It's also necessary to make use of a fire ring if provided but in the case that it isn't, stones will do the trick to help contain ash.

## Firewood

When you've chosen the ideal spot set up your campfire, the next important thing to think about is gathering firewood. You can gather firewood from your natural surroundings and it's ideal to collect twigs and branches as tinder as well as kindling to get the fire started easy. If wood is not readily available in the area where you are camping, it's recommended that you bring firewood with you.

## Lighting the campfire

Building a campfire requires the builder to have a little bit of experience in truly getting it right but the whole process is relatively easy. A fire will burn properly with the aid of several pieces of wood along with air, and fuel. First thing needed is tinder which can be twigs, leaves, paper, wood shavings or pine needles. Followed by that is kindling which

is mainly smaller sticks and then ultimately firewood which is larger wood to help maintain the fire.

To construct the fire, simply lay the kindling over the tinder in a criss-cross pattern while ensuring not to build too many layers as fire requires air ventilation to burn. There should be a small amount of room at the very bottom (the base) in order to light the tinder. Once lit, simply adding firewood will help keep the fire burning.

Safety is important so it's wise to not leave the fire unattended nor allow inexperienced people or young children to maintain it. Fire should be handled responsibly which means only those who are experienced in creating and maintaining fire should be supervising it.

### Putting Your Fire Out

Making sure a fire is properly extinguished is extremely important. Firstly use water to snuff out the hot kindles and cover it with dirt/earth if need be. Carelessness could lead to spreading wildfires so make sure your fire has been put out completely.

## Story-telling

If you've ever been camping you will know that one of the main activities at night is storytelling by the campfire, in particular stories about your own camping-activities and retelling everyone what you enjoyed most about the day's experience. What adults seem to enjoy the most are the chances to live their youth again which is what really makes campfire activities and camping in general so much fun.

## Scary stories

Now this is one of the most popular campfire activities known to man! Old stories from folklore handed down through the generations and the majority of these stories still transfix kids even today. You could even argue that kids would prefer a good scary story above anything else and all it takes is a little imagination.

Even though they don't like to admit it, adults love a good ghost story as well but nothing beats a scary story that is set "while camping within the woods". This is where the story-teller becomes much more involved with the listener by laying out a fictional haunted back-story of the very camping grounds which they are camping in or even taking

it to a much more frightening level by referencing the crazed killer or maniacal person who lurks the camping grounds, preying on the innocent. Obviously some of these stories will not be suitable for kids but for adults, it is still entertaining. As always, everything is only limited by one's creativity and personality.

## Star-Gazing

When in the city it is not always easy to see the stars in the sky with all the bright lights around. So when camping there is ample opportunity for friends and family to fully unwind which means spreading out on the ground and staring up at the bright night sky and just soaking up the atmosphere and nature in general. This is an ancient activity almost as popular as story-telling. Normally people try to make their own observations of the stars in the sky but it's also a very good conversation piece among campers. With a little study-up, it can be the perfect time to educate kids on some basic astronomy and teach them about the major constellations.

## Board Games

With the ever changing technological world and advancement of things to occupy the mind, board games

have steadily declined in use and have taken a backseat to television and video games. However, no television or video-game console is needed in order to pass quality time while camping with family and friends. Board-game entertainment has been in existence for thousands of years in some form or another. There is no shortage of board games to choose from and can be played in any environment and especially night time. What makes board games so good is that anywhere up to even a dozen players can be involved. In the same vain, card games are popular also and are very easy to transport with you.

## Journal Writing

For some of the more regular campers or ones who like to record their daily-activities in general, keeping a journal is not only a nice way to pass the time at night but it's also great for those who like to look back often years later at their camping experiences and the highlights as well as photos taken along the way. Making a log of activities can sometimes be helpful to those who like to camp regularly since it's a way of keeping a record of things that might have been good or bad and can be improved upon on a future trip.

## Making Rules

A lot of things that occur while on a camping trip may not be anticipated beforehand. In nature, many things can occur at random which is why it's vital to be fully prepared for what may come your way, especially in the wilderness.

### Camping With Children

Here are a few ideas to help you have an enjoyable camping trip with children in tow. This isn't an all-inclusive list, but will help relieve the strain

**2 tents - 1 for playtime and 1 for sleeping.** It is advisable to put a bucket of easily washable toys with a few board books in the tent. It keeps children from sitting in the dirt and playing (although dirt inevitably gets tracked in, just make sure to sweep it out when cleaning out). Kids think it's so cool they get their own chilling spot. It is a real life saver when preparing meals as you know where they are and they aren't getting into trouble. The sleeping tent was only for changing clothes in and sleeping. Its unexplainable how good it feels sleeping without sand in your face.

**Bug Spray & Sunscreen** – Make sure not to leave it behind. It seems obvious, but its crucial to protect your little ones.

**Toasted Sandwich Maker** - you know the cast iron kind? Yep, grab some of those and you can make sandwiches, calzones, pies for dessert and more. I brought a can of biscuits and we used those buttery, flaky biscuits in the makers with cheese. Yummy! This reminds me that we also brought Cooking Spray to keep everything easy clean.

**Anti-Bacterial Wipes** - the hand soap is nice, but not for camping. Wipes are much more convenient and easier to use

**Keep Nap Times** – Try to keep your nap/sleep schedule as close to the same times as possible. Not worth it for you or them!

**Bikes** – Make sure to bring bikes and a child carrier. If the kids are especially hard to put to sleep for their afternoon nap, just take them for a short ride on the bike, and in no time they will be asleep.

**Swimming Suits, Life Jackets & Swim Hats.** Leave the nice stuff at home or for photos. Just pack what is absolutely necessary to protect them while swimming or sunbathing and make sure to always have life jackets on if on the water

## Supervision

It's an important factor to be somewhat familiar with what's located around you. Even sketching up a little map to help locate your track such as a large tree to serve as a reminder which can be used as a guide back to the camp should one get lost during a trek outside of the camping area.

It's also best for kids to be supervised by adults wherever they go if possible. But in some cases when this is not possible, it's best to divide the kids into groups with each child notifying each other of their whereabouts. Setting out the area and boundaries and making sure kids don't venture outside of that specific area is important.

Having a whistle can be an especially handy tool should one get lost. But most importantly, on each child should be a small-map which identifies the different areas of the grounds so that one can use as a gauge of their location in order to

make it back to the campsite is ideal. This is why it's important to scope the camping area before separating into groups or going out individually.

## **Getting To Your Location**

Camping can be a lot of fun once you arrive, but depending on where your location for camping is, you might also need to prepare in advance for a sometimes lengthy road-trip to the camping grounds. When in this situation children often become restless so providing entertainment in the car is a necessity in order to keep the journey peaceful en route to your destination.

### **Make Several Stops**

Being well prepared and stocked for a camping trip is one thing but being well equipped for a road trip is something else. Making a stop every few hours is necessary to avoid driver drowsiness and it also allows everybody in the car a much needed break from the monotonous rhythm to driving through the countryside. A long road trip can be draining both mentally and physically. As the driver you need your senses to be alert and watchful on the roads which is why it's a good idea to stay fresh and vigilant. Having several stops en route to the destination will benefit the driver even more so than the aflutter children in the backseat but all in all, taking consistent breaks is good for the moral of everybody.

## Navigating The Journey

Unless you're utilizing the modern day drivers best friend, a GPS device, having your passengers navigate during the journey is convenient and also much safer. Having children involved in the navigation from the start is also a wonderful way to teach them how to read a map which is perfect as they will gain experience and be more watchful, alert and responsible as they grow older.

## Leave Your Worries Behind And Enjoy The Trip!

Flying overseas or exploring new parts of the world is always exciting but it can also be a load on the finances. This is why camping is such a popular way to spend a vacation because it's not as expensive, it can also provide a great and rewarding experience for the entire family and can be a source of a lot of fun and great memories as you enjoy the world outside of the big cities.

What you have learned within this book is valuable advice and information for starting out camping and also lays down terrific guidelines on how to get the most out of your camping experience.

In light of this it is important to note that although this information has at times been focused heavily on do's and don'ts what is in essence the most important aspect to camping is to have fun first and foremost and to enjoy the whole camping experience and if it doesn't turn out well, remember what wasn't quite right and remember for next time so it doesn't happen again.

Camping is one of the biggest and most popular activities in the world and is still growing tremendously as a preferred pastime for millions of people.

If you still have yet to take the plunge and venture out into nature and enjoy the wildlife, ask yourself this question... what better time is there than now?