

## Cooking in the Airstream

It's great to know that when you pull out of your driveway (or wherever it's parked) with your Airstream following close behind you're ready for a new adventure! Did you remember to pack everything? Well, unless you are going to boondock for an extended period of time, you can always find what you need along the way. But for me it's always more relaxing to know that my Airstream's pantry, fridge and freezer are well stocked with easy-to-heat-and-eat delicious meals before leaving. After all, unless you really love to cook while you're camping (and I do! but just not for every meal) it pays to plan ahead and have a lot of what you'll need ready to pull out and heat on the grill, the microwave or the stove.



I like to start the trip with several containers of homemade soup and other dishes the freezer. My favorites include

- Chicken noodle soup
- Chili
- Minestrone
- Clam chowder
- Beef stew
- Sloppy joe mix
- Pulled pork in BBQ sauce

to name a few. Additionally, we can't leave home without it (ice cream and cones) as well as frozen bagels, bread for french toast, frozen veggies, maybe some steaks or chicken breasts or pork chops, hamburger buns, etc.

### My Favorite Take-Alongs



**Air Fryer** - Since I have two air fryers in my kitchen, you know there's got to be at least one (small) **air fryer** in the Airstream. It travels nicely in the shower where it seems to suffer no damage even on rough roads. Air fryers have become ubiquitous and come in many shapes and sizes and are quite inexpensive. I use mine for so many things. It's easy to use and cooks quicker than waiting for an oven to heat up, uses much less fat than conventional cooking and is easy to clean. It's great for "frying" french fries, sweet potato fries, steaks, chops, fish fillets, "stir-fried" veggies, making croutons and toasting nuts just to name a few of the things I like best made in my air fryer. At home I often have both of them in service at the same time - one for salmon fillets and another for sweet potato fries or zucchini wedges or asparagus spears ... the list is endless.

**Toaster** - We travel with a small and very inexpensive toaster. I like my bagels toasted! Then bring on the cream cheese! The toaster also travels well in the bottom of the shower.



An **Instant Pot** is another of my must-have kitchen appliances. It's the small version (three quart) but it's big enough to heat soups, make porridge and hard boil eggs. I have forgotten how long to boil eggs on the stove since I have used my Instant Pot for so long and the eggs come out perfect and peel easily. I don't use it as often as the other two items so it's in a more difficult to reach storage spot but I can get it if I need it.



It's not a **French press** (it's an **AeroPress!**) and it makes a sweet little espresso or cuppa just one cup at a time. It takes up almost no space at all and is quick and easy to use.



**Countertop Ice Maker** - If you are going on an extended trip and you like ice, purchasing a countertop ice maker is something you might consider. We sure could have used one last summer on the *Nuts for Ruts Caravan* in August and September. It was over 100 degrees many days and we went through a lot of ice. If we'd been anywhere near a place to buy one, an ice maker would have been a real treat. If you don't have room inside your kitchen area, it can be set up on a portable tray outside your Airstream. I got by using an ice cube tray but had to do a lot of shuffling around of frozen items to make room for the tray.

## **Quick meals**

When you've had a long and exhausting day of travel, whitewater rafting, biking, hiking or are just tired off your feet after lazing in the sunshine in a comfy chair with a good book, here's a quick and easy dinner which I discovered quite by accident.

### **Vicki's Lazy Chili Salad**

This is a one-dish recipe that can be created quickly with little effort and not much clean up time: One can of chili (whatever brand you like) large enough to serve two (or more cans if you're feeding more folks), chopped lettuce, tomatoes, some grated cheese, sour cream, taco sauce and maybe some Doritos or whatever you have. The list is up to you and whatever comes to hand. Open the can and spoon it into two microwave-safe bowls. While it's heating, chop up enough lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, etc., and top the heated chili. And that's all there is to that one!

### **Mile Highs**

This is an ancient recipe going back to when I had no silver in my hair. It's another easy one to prepare, especially if you have a can of refried beans, some ground beef already fried, crumbled and seasoned with some kind of Mexican seasoning (taco, chili, etc.)

Chop and place in small bowls:

Lettuce

Tomatoes

Onions

Red peppers

Jalapeños (or not)

Grated cheese

Sliced black olives

Sour cream

Dressing (can be taco sauce or salad dressing depending on your preference)

Tortilla chips (or tostado flats or taco shells)

You can either start with the chips (crushed makes it easier to eat) and then layer the ground beef and other ingredients a "mile high."

Eat and enjoy!

You already have lots of favorite recipes. Many are easy to convert for cooking and preparing in your Airstream but just know that you will enjoy picking up lots of tips and tricks and recipes from your fellow Airstreamers as you come to rallies and enjoy cooking in your Airstream.