

Survival Kitchen and Cooking Equipment

By Joseph Parish

When preparing for an upcoming survival training exercise people tend to pack up the first aid kit, the various bug out bags, and a host of other nice to have's and necessities, however, the one thing they usually do not dwell upon too much is the cooking equipment and supplies that will be needed in the field. This usually proves to be one of the leading mistakes logged into their exercise journals.

The first Bug out I attended was an eye opener. Here I was making instant coffee and had a well-equipped bug out vehicle while another family in a tent no less was drinking fresh brewed coffee. I thought immediately that something was amiss with this picture. The family with the tent had brought a "Melitta Coffee Maker" with them. Needless to say, for my next exercise I had a Melitta also.

During Y2K I had wised up considerable and my store of rations included shrimp, lobster and a variety of unusual but palatable delicacies all in cans. My supply of spices to perk up the flavor of all the emergency foods had increased. This time I felt I was ready for the challenge. I apparently had not learned my lesson as well as I had thought for, once again, I concentrated more upon the food portion of the supplies than the equipment used to prepare it.

Many people believe that when in an emergency situation you do not require a lot of cooking equipment and for the average person that may very well be so, however, due to the nature of a survivalist, we should duly be expected to be one notch above the average. A Dutch oven is generally considered sufficient for the emergency kitchen and can be used to cook just about everything including bread. A small skillet is useful, as is a coffee pot.

Should you have a generator with you that provides you the advantage of electricity. Many of your household appliances can be used in this case however I would caution you to ensure that the wattage does not exceed your generator output. Additional options may include portable mini grills, grates which sit atop the fire, as well as metal tripods from which to hang kettles.

Lightweight kitchen equipment has been gaining in popularity; however, I personally do not feel that they last as long. Being in an emergency situation can put a lot of stress on your equipment so take this under full consideration.

Waterproof matches are a necessity as without fire there will be no food. I have covered in a previous article the making of reliable and economical waterproof matches. I prefer not only to maintain a small supply of waterproof matches on hand, but also a good quantity of inexpensive plastic lighters and a few of the more popular "Clicker" types.

If you do not have a means of cooking in your bug out vehicle, be sure to take into consideration the weather conditions. Should the area be extremely windy you may have to forgo starting an outdoor fire.

Myself, I am what I call a "12-volt Survivalist". Although I have the means to cook using propane, in my repertoire of 12-volt cooking supplies I have a small pizza oven, coffee pot, 2-quart cooking pot and the future shall bring a frying pan. My BOV is aptly equipped to handle my cooking appliances. In conclusion, I would like to remind everyone not to take the cooking too fleetingly as it is one of those survival necessities and a rather important one at that.