

What to Pack for Your Caravan Holiday

By Ian Molloy

Deciding what to pack and what not to pack, no matter what sort of a holiday you have, is a fine art. This can be compounded if you are planning several months on the road. Spend some time thinking about what you **must have** and what you only think you must have. Make lists and ask family and friends who have undertaken similar trips. The old saying "less is better" is generally useful advice for travellers. Having said that, you should not deprive yourself of something that is going to make your trip more enjoyable.

FOOD

It is often difficult working out what to pack for food. This can actually be fairly simple, just aim for a balanced diet like you would have at home. After all, your food likes and dislikes will not change. If you always have the following non-perishable items, you will always have the makings of a meal or a snack on hand:

- Coffee
- Tea
- Dried herbs
- Cereals
- Condiments
- Rice
- Pasta
- Legumes
- Oil and vinegar
- Salt and pepper
- A small range of canned goods

Remember, you will be meeting other people on the road and will probably invite them to your caravan for a meal, snack or at least a cuppa and biscuit - make sure you have something on hand for them.

One big tip - Do not attempt to carry enough food to last your whole trip unless you are only going for a very short time - shop as you go. Supermarkets right around Australia carry the same basic grocery items, although certain gourmet items now standard in metropolitan stores may be hard to get in some country areas.

Prices are also reasonably stable across the country except for fresh fruit and vegetables. The unavailability, particularly in remote areas, can force the prices of fresh produce to vary significantly. One way around this is to look out for the regional in-season produce offered at roadside stalls. In many coastal towns fresh fish can be bought off the wharf or from a beachside kiosk. Other produce is available in some regions so keep your eye out for producers selling olives, oil, honey, cheeses, fruit & vegetables, game and prepared meats and, of course, local wines.

Note:

Whether you are packing most food items or shopping as you travel, avoid items with flimsy packaging. Lightweight plastic bottles of cooking oil are notorious for splitting and leaking. Choose glass or metal containers, and store in a plastic tub for extra protection.

There are restrictions on the movement of fruit, vegetables and some foodstuffs, such as honey, across some State borders, so check this out.

COOKING EQUIPMENT

Most caravans and motorhomes have your normal stove and also a microwave oven so a limited selection of plastic cooking bowls is a good investment in what to pack for your microwave. They usually pack inside each other, do not rattle or break and are not expensive. Your normal pots and pans and oven dish are obviously required for your normal stove cooking. A kettle and a toaster are essential, as is a frying pan. A good idea for a frying pan is to have a cast-iron one; this can then be used on an open fire if you wish. Then it depends on your meals, you may wish to include a wok which is extremely handy for cooking a range of things.

Kitchen utensils should include tongs, an egg lifter, a cutting board, bottle and can openers, one or two good quality knives, a wooden spoon, measuring jug and an ovenproof holder. An all-purpose barbecue tool is essential for outside cooking.

Don't forget your crockery and cutlery. Try to avoid travelling with fragile, easily breakable pieces. Unbreakable crockery and drinking vessels are readily available. Inexpensive plastic storage containers with secure lids will come in handy for storing biscuits and loose food.

Again remember the saying "less is best" - if you are unsure about what to pack if you need a particular item, leave it at home.

CLOTHING

Depending on where you are going and how long for will obviously dictate what to pack for clothing. Travellers heading north will need lightweight clothing and something warm for those cold nights. Travellers heading south will need a range of warm and cool weather items. If you are travelling to the snow or very cold areas, thermal underwear is worth considering. If you are planning to do any bushwalking, check out the extremely light but very warm clothes made from high-tech synthetic fabrics available at specialist camping stores.

Regardless of where you are going, always pack something lightweight with long sleeves to wear around dusk when the mosquitoes arrive.

I will include your camera here; it must be kept handy at all times. You can not predict when that magical shot will appear - perhaps a wedge-tailed eagle sitting on the side of the road eating the dead road-kill - kangaroo? Sunhats and sunglasses are essential. I also **strongly** recommend you carry a rain-jacket and even an umbrella. You may have to set up your caravan in the rain and walk (run?) to the toilet.

What to pack for footwear is important. You should include a pair of lightweight casual shoes or sandals for general daily wear; a sturdier pair of shoes for walking, for when it rains or for

cold weather; and a pair of rubber thongs or plastic sandals for wearing to public shower blocks. Make sure you have a very comfortable pair of shoes for when you are driving.

NOTE: Credit cards can be lost or stolen so always carry a second credit card issued by another bank. Keep this second credit card in a safe place - not with your other cards - and use it only in emergencies - that is **Emergencies Only!**

SENIORS DISCOUNTS

Many businesses across Australia offer discounts to senior citizens and old-age pensioners. Make a point of asking, as these discounts may not be advertised. Many shows and sightseeing/tours also offer senior discounts. Each State and Territory government issues a card to eligible seniors entitling them to discounts on a range of products and services - including some government services. Seniors cards are not means tested and most are accepted Australia wide.

This is the twelfth page of 23 with related information about making the most of your caravan holiday. Check our website at www.crikey-adventure-tours.com/caravan-holiday.html for the other articles.

Ian Molloy is the owner of Crikey Adventure Tours.

Visit his website www.crikey-adventure-tours.com for more information about this article and other related topics. He not only has his tour business operating from Peth in Western Australia, but his site is full of very helpful information.

Some of these includes tips on motorcycle holidays www.crikey-adventure-tours.com/motorcycle-holiday.html, driving cross-country, caravanning and generally lots of tips about having a "camping" holiday.

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