



ADVENTURE CAMPING

What's a Guider to do? The girls want to adventure camp and/or trip.

November 18-20, 2016

Choose your camp stove

The most important consideration when purchasing a stove is where and how you plan to use it. If you're going ultra-light and ultra-high your requirements are different from someone who wants to make three-course meals. Are you going to use your stove 1-3 times a year on weekends or for multiple and longer trips, summer only or winter also?

White gas (Camp fuel, Naptha)

A popular choice, white gas stoves are generally inexpensive to operate, come in lightweight models, and burn very efficiently. It's volatile, evaporates quickly and leaves little residue. It's a good choice for extremely cold conditions and high altitude camps. These stoves, however, are relatively complicated to operate and can require a fair amount of maintenance.

LPG canisters

Canister stoves burn compressed gas, often combinations of butane, isobutane and propane. Most canister stoves are easy to use and require relatively little maintenance. The fuel comes in pressurized metal canisters, common in most parts of the industrialized world. Cold temperatures affect the performance of LPG stoves. Canisters can't be refilled (but they can be recycled). You have to carry empty canisters out and dispose of correctly. It can be difficult to gauge the amount of fuel left inside, so you could end up carrying extra fuel.

Propane

The containers used for propane tend to be quite heavy, so propane stoves are best suited to base camps and car camping sites. This is the fuel used for most double-burner stoves, excellent for cooking fancy meals and for big groups. You can use an adapter to attach a tank you already use for a barbeque. You will have to dispose of canisters when done.

Alcohol

These stoves use the same burners found in fondue makers. They burn methyl hydrate (also called alcohol, marine stove fuel, antifreeze or methanol). The system is not pressurized, making these stoves fairly safe and silent. The fuel is common in North America and can be found in hardware stores and some gas stations. Used in Europe. Alcohol doesn't burn very hot, so these stoves are good for groups of up to 4.

Kerosene

This fuel burns as hot as white gas and readily available where other fuel is not. Its strong odour clings and will eventually permeate your entire pack. If spilled, it leaves a greasy stain that is difficult to remove. When cooking with kerosene, keep pots tightly covered to prevent fumes and soot from getting in. Kerosene also requires a separate priming agent.



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Dual or multi-fuel

Stoves that burn more than one type of fuel are more expensive than others models. Most dual-fuel stoves are designed for white gas and kerosene. Multi-fuel stoves are capable of burning white gas, kerosene and liquid petroleum as well as diesel and aviation fuel. It can be challenging to keep a stove clean and running well if you're switching fuels often, as some types of gas produce soot and build up that can clog a stove.

Wood

Some very modern stoves run on this traditional source of fuel. The advantage is that if you are in a place where wood is plentiful, you don't have to carry fuel, although you may need a small amount of fire starter. You will have to pay attention to fire bans and fire safety and you may have to work quite hard to get your stove going if it's been raining steadily. It's best not to use wood if you are in a fragile environment, in the alpine or above the tree line. Wood smoke will make your cookware sooty, so these stoves can be messy to pack and travel with.

Travel with camp stoves

Transporting stoves and fuel by air is regulated by aviation organizations and most fuels are not permitted aboard aircraft. As each airline and ferry company will have a specific procedure for washing and certifying empty fuel bottles, it's best to check with them before you travel.

Stove designs

Once you've decided on the type of fuel that suits your needs, take a look at the design and performance of some specific models.

Cooking

- Heat adjustments are useful if you plan to do more than boil water and eat rehydrated food.
- Stoves with small integrated pots won't suit cooking for large groups or melting snow.
- Micro-stoves and alcohol stoves are much more efficient when used for small groups.

Fuel

- Some fuel types can be difficult to find when you travel abroad or when you're in a remote location.
- Pressurized fuel canisters often have shipping restrictions and many airlines and ferry services limit the types of fuel and containers you can bring.
- Carrying fuel for several days can add considerable weight to your pack.
- Carrying several canisters or bottles also takes up space in your pack.



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Stability and use

- Can your stove be set up on uneven ground? Will a large pot make it tippy?
- Some stoves need to cool completely before you can pack them or re-light them, which might be an issue if you're trying to move fast.

Maintenance

- Most stoves can be maintained in the field, but you may need to carry replacement parts and some tools.
- Very small parts are also surprisingly easy to lose when you're outdoors.

Some stove prices October 2016

MSR Dragonfly burns white gas, all season \$158 fuel bottle \$20-24, MEC fuel \$18-20 4 litres
Canadian Tire will take a variety of pots/fry pans and outback oven

MSR whisperlite burns white gas, not great in deep winter, \$99 fuel bottle \$20-24, MEC fuel \$18-20 4 litres
Canadian Tire will take a variety of pots/fry pans and outback oven

Trangia small with pots burns methol Alcohol, works best when temps above freezing \$115 MEC

Trangia 25-2 UL Cookset with kettle for 3-4 people burns methol alcohol, works best when temps above freezing bottle \$21-24 Canadian Outdoor Equipment.com fuel \$10-12 for 4 litres Canadian Tire

Primus Classic burns LPG canister mixed fuel, all seasons \$21, each small fuel canister \$6.50 MEC
** pick up as shipping is costly "hazardous" Takes a variety of pots and fry pans.