

# Dinner Recipe: Backcountry Chili

[Food & nutrition](#) / [Andrew Skurka](#)

A near weekly dinner at home for Amanda and me during the colder months is chili. It's particularly gratifying to make with DIY elk meat and homegrown peppers and tomatoes.

It seemed like my chili recipe could be converted for backcountry use, and I asked David last spring to develop a recipe. On its maiden trip, the reactions were excellent: "If it had Fritos, I'd score it higher than [Beans & Rice](#)," said one multi-time alumnus. If you've tried that dish, you know that's high praise!

Based on 84 client evaluations in 2019, this chili recipe scored a 2.55/3.0, putting it in a close fourth-place behind [Beans & Rice](#) (2.79), [Peanut Noodles](#) (2.58), and [Pesto Noodles](#) (2.57).

## Meal Stats:

- Recipe weight: 5.5 ounces
- Total calories: 512
- Calories/ounce: 93

## Ingredients



A few more specialty ingredients than some other recipes, but each makes a big difference in the final flavor.

## At-Home Preparation

For solo trips, you can mix everything together in a small bag, except the cheese — keep that in it's own bag. Cheese makes most meals better, and on longer trips I often pack a big block of it.

For groups, you can carry all the ingredients in a single bag and divide it in the field, or you can give each group member an individual ration (as we normally do). Again, hold out the cheese. The spices tend to settle towards the bottom of a bag, and shaking the bag helps to redistribute them.



Backcountry Chili

## Cooking Instructions

1. Bring about 12 ounces of water to a boil
2. Take the pot off the flame. Add in the chili mixture
3. You can let it sit, covered, to re-hydrate. It will take about 10 minutes. You can let it simmer too, stirring so as not to burn it.
4. Mix in the cheese
5. You can add a few extra ounces of water to the cooking process though to make things even easier.

As noted in my [Argument for Soups and Gruels](#) post, I tend to make meals for watery in the backcountry. Using up to 16 ounces of water will help make cleanup easier.

## Have questions about or an experience with this meal? Leave a comment.

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