



Dinner Recipe: Beans + Rice with Fritos & Cheese

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

This meal is my favorite. It goes on every single backpacking trip. I never get tired of it. Clients love this recipe. Need more convincing to try it?

Key Stats

- Recommended meal weight: 5.7 oz
- Total calories: 668
- Calories per ounce: 117

It's rare that someone struggles to finish this meal. But if you have a smaller appetite, use less beans and rice (but keep the ratio). To increase calorie count or caloric density, add more Fritos.

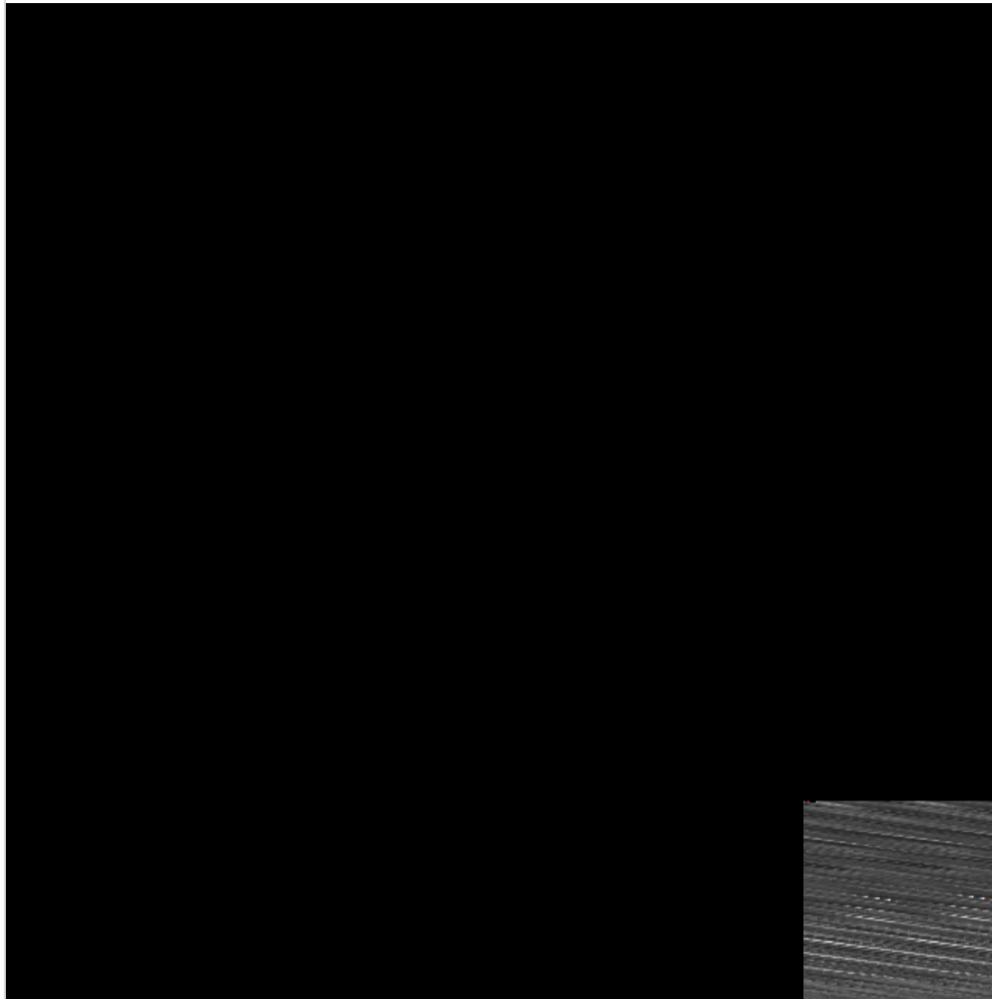
Backpacking dinner recipe: Beans & Rice with Fritos & Cheese





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This year I asked clients to rate each breakfast and dinner recipe. I always knew that the "Beans & Rice with Fritos & Cheese" was a winner, but I started to question its hype versus the reality. But, no, it's really that good. Out of 107 responses, 85 said it was "awesome" and 22 described it as "solid." Not a single person thought it should be replaced. That gives it a class-leading score of 2.79/3.0.

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I just re-posted this recipe online. Use my profile link.

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The meal calls for only four ingredients, plus some taco seasoning. It doesn't need more salt or pepper, but you're welcome to add red pepper flakes. Only the beans are difficult to find locally; they're best purchased online.

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Ingredients

The four main ingredients are essential. The rice, Fritos, and cheese are widely available. The beans are best found online; in a pinch, I have used a seasoned bean dip from the Whole Foods bulk section.

Assuming the beans are plain, the Taco seasoning is critical. Most people skip salt and pepper, but may add red pepper flakes to inject some heat.

Backpacing Recipes & Ingredients : Beans & Rice

Ingredient	Ounces	Calories per oz	Comments	Allergy info	Where to buy	Buy online now
Instant beans	2.0	112	Whole or refried, vegetarian or not	Soy	Online, some bulk sections	Santa Fe Bean Co
Instant rice	1.5	103	Common brand, Minute	-	Grocery, Costco, online	Minute White Rice
Cheese	1.0	110	Rec'd extra sharp cheddar	Dairy	Grocery	Buy locally
Fritos	1.0	160	Unflavored has just 3 ingredients	Corn	Grocery, online	Fritos Scoops
Taco seasoning	0.2	93	Mix of chili, garlic, cumin & more	Maybe gluten	Grocery, Costco, online	McCormick
Universal spice kit	0.0	0	Salt, pepper, red pepper flakes	-	Grocery, Costco, online	1-oz HDPE bottles
Totals	5.7	117	-	-	-	-

Beans & Rice

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Meal ingredients



Clockwise from cheese in upper right: Cheese, taco seasoning, rice, refried beans, and Fritos



Recommended packaging system. For solo hikers, the left three bags. For groups, everything to the right of the bag of Fritos.

At-home preparation

For groups, I do the following:

- Each group member is given one 2.5-oz snack bag of beans and rice mixture
- Fritos and cheese are kept together, and divided proportionally in the field
- Meals are individually seasoned with the taco seasoning and group spice kit

When solo, I vary between two approaches. If I plan to have this meal several times on the same trip (or the same leg of a thru-hike), I have a pre-spiced snack bag of beans and rice for each meal, and my supply of Fritos and cheese is kept together but preferably somehow delineated so that I don't steal tomorrow's calories for tonight's dinner, e.g. divide the block of cheese equally but keep it all together. Alternatively, if I plan to have this meal just once, I will use up to three bags (beans/rice, cheese, Fritos) but I've also combined everything into one bag before. It works out okay since the ingredients are fairly easy to separate in the field.

Cooking instructions

For many reasons, [I make all of my meals soupy](#). This simplifies some the cooking:

1. Add at least 12 oz of water to my stove pot.
2. Pour in beans, rice, taco seasoning, and any other spices at anytime.
3. Cook, ideally to a simmer for about 60 seconds, stirring to avoid boil-over.
4. Cut cheese into dice-sized pieces and add to meal.
5. Add Fritos just before consumption. If added too early, they will soften.

For perfect at-home consistency, use 10 oz (300 ml) of water. To prevent burning, do not add beans, rice, and taco seasoning until water is boiling.



A soupy version of Beans & Rice. With enough water, it becomes more of a tortilla soup. For more conventional consistency, use only 10 oz (300 ml) of water.

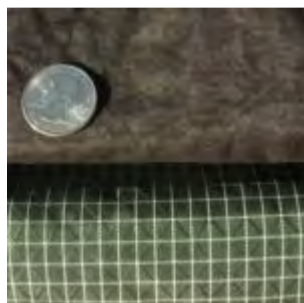
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Item	Example	Vol	Cost
acfl	Granola + powdered whole milk	5.0	1.20
acfl 2	Chocolate candy	3.0	1.50
acfl 3	Chocolate bar	3.0	1.50
acfl 4	Jelly	3.0	1.50
acfl 5	Protein bar	3.0	1.50
acfl 6	Trail mix	3.0	1.50
acfl 7	Salty snacks	3.0	1.50
acfl 8	Chocolate pieces	2.0	1.50
acfl 9	Protein powder with creamer	5.0	1.50
total		11.0	1.50

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