

Food – A Compilation of What Riders Eat at Competitions

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Okay, gang, here are the ride food recommendations I received. Thanks to all who wrote in! I picked up some great ideas in compiling this list; hope it helps others too. (Remember, I'm an historian & computer nerd, not a nutritionist, and I'm just repeating what I was told, so usual disclaimers apply)

First, food tips:

- Eat whatever you usually eat, i.e. if you typically have bacon & eggs for breakfast, don't have cold cereal & milk before the ride. If you never snack at home, start snacking a week or so before the ride. Nothing upsets a tummy like the unusual.
- Follow the same rules you use for your horse -- try it on a training ride first! Especially things like Power Bars, Gu, etc., which are not "normal foods."
- Pay special attention to sweet & salty -- if you're not used to eating sugary foods, the Gu and such may make you really sick, or give you a sugar high or headache. Salty foods will make you thirsty, so make sure you have plenty of water along.
- Make sure you drink plenty of water at all times, but especially when eating salted nuts and things like Power Bars and Gu. It's usually best to avoid fizzy drinks, as the gas can cause serious upset and even severe pain in certain cases.
- Think about packaging: plastic wrappers and such need to be brought out. Two sandwiches stuffed into one Ziploc-type bag means less trash, plus you can put other waste into the bag to carry out.

Night before Ride - NO "hotter than fire" enchiladas, instead try pasta w/salad & bread, pizza, BBQ, chili, steaks & baked potato

Morning before Ride - Pop tarts, cold milk, instant oatmeal or other hot cereal, cold cereal w/milk, yogurt, fresh fruit (bananas, melon) Pancakes, scrambled eggs, grilled bagel w/butter or cream cheese, chocolate-flavored Instant Breakfast made with warm milk (add 1tsp instant coffee for cappuccino taste and caffeine boost), toast with honey or Vegemite muffins.

During Ride/Vet Checks - "Meal in a can" like Ensure, Slim Fast, Carnation Breakfast Drink, etc., pop tarts, applesauce mixed with mandarin oranges, granola bar, oranges & grapefruit are easy to carry, but leave sticky hands, Balance complete nutritional food bar - cheaper at Wal-Mart, beef jerky, licorice, peanuts/cashews/honey-roasted peanuts (salt helps in `lyting yourself) Gu, Power Gel (REI carries a nifty little goo bottle & holster that you can Velcro to the saddle pommel -- holds several goo packets, so no wrappers to mess with on the trail), Power Bar (hard to eat, especially when cold) Cliff bar (espress-chocolate cookie, peanut butter, chocolate chip peanut), carrots, apples, peanut butter & jelly sandwich, peanut butter & honey sandwich, saltine crackers & cheese, Ritz crackers w/peanut butter (Ritz bits won't crumble in the cante bag), Thermo-T, Cytomax, fruit cup, raisins, other dried fruit, tortillas, Fruit Dinosaurs, cinnamon raisin bagels w/strawberry cream cheese -- fits nicely in an Easy Boot! (but wrap it in plastic to avoid hoof taste - YUK), pasta salad, cheese sandwich, Melba toast, hard sourdough pretzels go well in a fanny pack, cookies, M&Ms, potato chips, Fritos, Cheetos, (fruits high in potassium) cantaloupe, watermelon, grapes (you can freeze these to carry on the trail), trail mix, Cheerios, Rice Krispy Treats, mints/hard candies are good for dry throat. If you can keep things chilled, tuna salad sandwich, yogurt, pasta salad (no high-fat sauces, as they stick to the roof of your mouth when cold), chilled fruit.

Drink LOTS of water, Gatorade and other `lyte drinks, homemade `lyte drink (Kool-Aid w/60% recommended sugar and add about 3/4 tsp horse electrolytes for 1/2 gallon of drink), Mannatech energy drink, UltraFuel (especially grape flavor doesn't taste salty), Kool-Aid, lemonade, cold milk, juice, hot soup in a thermos
Hot Chocolate mix & other powdered drink mixes.