



December 22, 2019 (continued)

Alternative Cooking

Here is a list of my favorite alternative cooking methods in order of preference. You will notice that there is not a campfire here.

1. Small butane stove and a thermal cooking bag—Not expensive. You can be completely set up for daily use with a 3-month supply for under \$100. I can use a minimum of fuel from the butane stove to heat my food (as little as 3-minute boil), put my pan in the thermal cooking bag, and it will continue to cook. It uses clean and adjustable heat. The cans of fuel are easy to store. It is easily transportable, including food, while cooking in the bag. The stove can be used in a garage with the door open or even in the house with the doors and windows open for a short time instead of requiring you to be outside in bad weather. The cooking bag can be left for hours with little chance of problems and no chance of the food burning. Using containers like canning jars, allows for baking as well. If I use containers to cook in with hot water around them I have water to use for washing dishes or having warm drinks after the meal is eaten. No smell of smoke or fire to use. *Disadvantages—must store fuel for the stove.
*Thermal bag is a slow cooker, so it takes time. Requires a learning curve. Temperature of the room the thermal bag is in can reduce time it can be left if cold.
2. Camp Stove—This is the most like cooking on a regular stove. It is fairly clean and quick. Can be used with a thermal cooking bag. It is good to have for canning things from the freezer. *Disadvantages—harder to store adequate fuel, not easily transportable, should be used outdoors.
3. Rocket Stove—There are commercial rocket stoves and even home-made ones (using bricks or other materials.) These require small pieces of fuel that are easy to find as yard debris such as sticks and pine cones which are easy to find and use. The commercial stoves have handles and can be transported. You can cook basically just like you would on a stove. You can use with a thermal cooking bag to conserve energy.
*Disadvantages—takes a little while to get going, must be done outdoors, and you will smell like smoke. It is also a bit dirty—your pans will be black when you are done.
4. Dutch Oven—You can make any dish you would make in an oven with this. It is very versatile. You can start it and leave it without having to stand over it all the while. It takes small amounts of fuel. Charcoal is the main fuel and it is easier than many things to store. These are heavy, but transportable.
*Disadvantages—must care for cast iron, used outside, starting requires fire and smelling like smoke, must store fuel.
5. Sun Oven—This requires no fuel at all. No smoke or other smells on you or with food. Can be used all day. Not heavy, but big to transport, Disadvantages—must be tended, to get a commercial one is an investment. Must be used in sunlight and rotated to follow the sun. Outside temperature can affect length of cooking time.
6. Apple Box Oven—Works like an oven. Cheap to use and build, so not a big investment to have just in case. Things will crisp and brown, Can use for 30 minutes without adding more charcoal *Disadvantages—must use outside on heat-safe surface, food tastes slightly of charcoal, not durable long term, store foil, foil tape, and charcoal to use.
7. Volcano stove/grill—Good for grilling and has accessories like wok, skillet, Dutch oven, and baking hood; can use 3 kinds of fuel, can be transported *Disadvantages—must be used outside, heavy, an investment, has a lot of pieces, baking will taste like fuel.
8. Buddy Burner/Hobo Stove from #10 can—Cheap, and not a large commitment, simple enough for older child to use, if built right heat can be regulated. Disadvantages—requires outside use on fire-safe area, requires a can of fuel or charcoal, only cooks small amounts directly on top of the can like a little grill.