

SLMM - Food Advice for First-Time Competitors

Planning your food for the Saunders Lakeland Mountain Marathon can be part of the fun—especially if you keep it simple, tasty, and practical. Your key considerations should be:

- **Nutrition** – fuel your body well for both days.
- **Morale** – something hot and comforting can lift your spirits.
- **Practicality** – keep it quick to prepare and light to carry.

Most competitors use a **Jetboil or similar stove**, and a **100g gas cartridge** is usually sufficient for two people. You'll start after breakfast on Saturday and finish by Sunday lunchtime, when a meal is provided. So, your food plan only needs to cover:

- Saturday lunch
- Snacks for both days
- Saturday evening meal
- Sunday breakfast

You're free to carry as much or as little as you like (beyond your sealed emergency rations), but here's what we've learned through years of trial and error:

General Tips

- **Supermarket, not sports shop** – Plan your meals around everyday food. You'll get more for your money and often more enjoyment, too.
 - **Take enough** – A few extra grams of food won't slow you down as much as running out of energy will.
 - **Don't use gels** – They're expensive, sticky, and generate annoying litter. Try **Jelly Babies, Haribo, or dried dates** instead: just as effective, much cleaner, and easier to manage.
 - **Skip freeze-dried meals** – They're pricey, often unpalatable, slow to rehydrate, and typically high in fat rather than the carbs you need to replenish energy. For example, **noodles cost about 1/10th the price**, are quicker to prepare, and just as filling.
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Important Cooking Advice

Only boil water in your stove. Jetboil-type systems concentrate heat intensely at the base, so heating anything else (milk, soup, food) will burn quickly and ruin both your meal and your pot.

Meal Ideas from Our Own Packs

Carb base (easy to prepare with just boiling water):

- Instant noodles (cheap, light, fast)
- Couscous
- Instant mashed potato

Flavour add-ins:

- Instant soup packets
- Miso paste or sachets
- Stock cubes

Protein:

- Cashew or pine nuts
- Cheese
- Hot-smoked salmon flakes
- Dried soya mince

Electrolytes:

Bring small plastic bags with electrolyte powder to add to your water bottles—essential for recovery and maintaining hydration.



Breakfast and Hot Drinks

DIY Instant Porridge:

Make your own blend using:

- Superfast oats
- Milk powder
- Sugar
- Dried fruit

Pack it in a **foil ziplock bag with a flat bottom**—you can pour hot water straight in, stir, and eat from the bag.

Hot drinks matter:

- Don't forget **coffee and tea**. They're light to carry and can give you a real psychological boost.
- **Avoid using your mug for soup**—soupy tea is nobody's idea of a good time!



Rubbish and Kit Tips

- **Cut down packaging:** Combine ingredients at home and decant into reusable bags.
- **Bring a rubbish bag:** You must carry out all your waste.

- **Ziplock bags** can also be used for water storage at camp—just don't take more than you need.
 - **Pot Noodle pots** make excellent mugs: they're lightweight, strong, and good for reusing across the weekend.
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Final Thought

Good food can make or break your Saunders experience. Keep it simple, take enough, and bring meals that you'll look forward to eating. Your stomach—and your team morale—will thank you.