

## Travel

# Go wild with cuisine worthy of the great outdoors

By Megan McCrea  
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Kuju Coffee

Photo: Courtesy

Kuju Coffee packets come with their own pre-filled filter that fits over a cup or an insulated mug.

If the words “camp coffee” strike terror in your caffeine-craving, single-origin-loving soul, take heart — you’re not alone. Jeff and Justin Wiguna feel your pain. Two years ago, on a cold morning in Nevada’s Red Rock Canyon, the Eagle Scout brothers made instant coffee to warm up. As they sipped, gazing around at the stunning fire-red mountains, it hit them.

“It’s very uninspiring,” says Jeff, “drinking instant coffee in the great wild.”

In general, camping and the outdoors have never been associated with great cuisine — or even good cuisine — so much as food (and coffee) that screams

deprivation, suffering and roughing it. Fortunately, the Wigunas are part of a bigger trend toward roughing it in style — at least when it comes to sustenance.

The Wigunas worked on Kuju Coffee, a lightweight, high-quality camp coffee made possible by the Pocket PourOver, an origami-inspired filter that's only 3.8 inches by 4.8 inches, filled with flavorful Thai coffee beans.

Above-average coffee is a great start, especially if you've just crawled out of a mummy bag, but there are a few more steps to rocking the role of camp barista. The Wigunas recommend using 200-degree water for the best flavor extraction. (If you didn't bring a water thermometer, like the battery-free Taylor Instant Read, watch for the water on your camp stove to bubble, wait 30 seconds, then pour.) Another hack: When brewing, pour the water into the filter, let it drip halfway through the grounds, then pour again.

“That enables the grounds to sift around, and the coffee to drip though at a constant speed,” Wiguna says. Finally, bring along a vacuum-insulated mug, such as a Hydroflask or a Klean Kanteen, to keep the coffee hot while brewing.



Photo: Courtesy Kuju Coffee

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To complete the cafe experience, bring a battery-powered milk frother and whip the milk while heating it on the stove. Once the surface is covered with enough micro-foam, add it to your coffee for a cafe au lait.

Now that you've had a proper cup of coffee, turn to other pressing matters: namely, what your crew will eat for brunch, dinner and dessert — and how you'll make it outside.

You could, for instance, make fancy toast. Start by bringing bread that you love, whether that's challah or Acme pain levain, advises Elaine Johnson, Sunset magazine's senior food editor and editor of "Camp Sunset: A Modern Camper's Guide to the Great Outdoors." After all, Johnson says, "The easiest way to make good food in camp is to start with great ingredients."

You can toast the slices on your camp stove in a portable toaster, like GSI's stainless steel toaster, or in a cast iron pan. Then, you might create an assembly line where people can customize their toast.

"It's great for picky eaters," Johnson says, "a good way to keep everyone happy."

To spice up the butter station, premix batches of flavored butter (cinnamon-sugar, say, or pistachio-arugula) at home before the trip. To reduce the mess factor, put the flavored butter into Tovolo's silicone butter sleeve — a three-sided container with an open end for spreading. For avocado toast fans, set out accompaniments such as yogurt, cream cheese, smoked salmon and tomatoes, alongside spices such as shichimi togarashi and za'atar.

You might be hundreds of miles from Japantown, but that doesn't mean you can't eat great ramen in the woods. Visit Whole Foods before hitting the road, and you'll find an astonishing array of noodles — organic/kosher ramen, black rice ramen, millet and brown rice ramen, kelp noodles. The organic/kosher noodles will demolish any memories of crunchy, budget options; these smooth, substantial noodles hold the flavor of the broth.

You will also need a two-burner camp stove for ramen — to prep the broth and noodles in separate pots simultaneously. As with the toast, you can set out a

topping bar, then let folks trick out their soup with vegetables (bean sprouts, sliced green onions, oyster mushrooms), seasonings (sea salt, togarashi), seaweed (nori, wakame), pickled things (pickled ginger, kimchi) or, of course, the classic poached egg.

A day of adventuring deserves a sweet ending. You could stick with s'mores, or outdo yourself, again, with campfire fondue. Just bring heavy cream to a simmer on the stove, then mix it with bittersweet chocolate and spike with whiskey. Then, allow your crew to skewer their favorite sweets — marshmallows, cheesecake, strawberries and raspberries — and enrobe them in chocolate. Even roughing it, it turns out, can be sweet.

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## **Products**

**Kuju Pocket PourOver:** [www.kujucoffee.com](http://www.kujucoffee.com)

**Taylor Instant Read thermometer:** [www.surlatable.com](http://www.surlatable.com) (search “Taylor thermometer”)

**Hydroflask insulated bottle:** [www.hydroflask.com/coffee](http://www.hydroflask.com/coffee)

**Klean Kanteen insulated bottle:** [www.kleankanteen.com/collections/insulated-bottles](http://www.kleankanteen.com/collections/insulated-bottles)

**Battery-powered milk frother:** [www.surlatable.com](http://www.surlatable.com) (search “Aerolatte frother”)

**GSI stainless steel toaster:** [www.gsioutdoors.com/glacier-stainless-toaster.html](http://www.gsioutdoors.com/glacier-stainless-toaster.html)

**Tovolo silicone butter sleeve:** [www.surlatable.com](http://www.surlatable.com) (search “Tovolo butter sleeve”)

**Camp Chef two-burner stove:** [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com) (search “Camp Chef stove”)