



## PROVISIONING TIPS FROM KARAYA

Provision based on your own food preferences at home- with the knowledge that substitutions may need to be made based on storage capacity, life of perishables, and sea conditions/preparation limitations. Below are some ideas for thinking about meals aboard and stocking your own boat. Obviously your provision list will not match what we stow on KARAYA because we all eat differently. Hopefully, some of our experiences will be helpful to you as you shop (e.g. Romaine lettuce keeps longer than other lettuces) and as you store your provisions (e.g. do not use valuable refrigerate space for tomatoes, green peppers, etc).

**One Dish Skillet Meals:** We prefer to make as many one-dish skillet dinner meals as possible when we travel/live on the boat for an extended period of time. Every skillet dinner we prepare is for at least two meals for us (four or more servings). We bag, label, and store leftovers in either the refrigerator or the freezer. Before going offshore we always prepare an extra large batch of chili (or similar dish) and refrigerate it in meal-sized portions to have ready for heating up while aboard and when we arrive at anchor.

We usually stock a few prepared frozen meals for those nights when we arrive after a long day's journey tired and hungry. We look for "stovetop preparation" ones that can be heated in a skillet like Shrimp Scampi or Chicken Parmegiana with Penne (Bertolli). If we are out of these frozen dinners, we "doctor up" some canned soup or stew which satisfies our hunger when we are beat.

We enjoy grilling on the boat, but have found that we do not do this as often while on long trips as we do on the Bay for a number of reasons (too late, too tired, grill-use not allowed on docks, etc.) Hopefully at anchor (or moored) in Maine we will be able to do this more.

**Eating Out:** When planning your meals and provisions inventory take into allowance how many times you might eat out in a week. We have found that we usually eat at restaurants about four times a week (either for lunch or dinner) while living on the boat. We eat aboard (a) after a hard day "traveling" (trying to cover long distances/day) or making an overnight passage; (b) are in remote areas either anchored or moored; or (c) are experiencing bad weather/ seas conditions. However, we love to come into a harbor (anchored, moored, or docked), go ashore for the next day and have a



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nice lunch out! Also, after a pleasant traveling day, we enjoy having dinner out, especially with our buddy boat friends.

**Snacks:** We take plenty of snacks and finger foods. For passage-making (overnight or rough days) we prepare small individual Ziploc bags of healthy and high energy snack foods (e.g. carrots, celery sticks, nuts, trail-mix, fruit, raisins, chocolate, etc.) and keep them in a handy location (usually the sink). We often prepare chunks of cheese and hard boiled eggs (refrigerated) before heading off shore as well.

**Getting started:** We start our grocery list based on meals and the ingredients needed for these meals (breakfast items, lunch items, dinner ingredients); snacks; and beverages. We try to figure out quantities based on consumption on a weekly rate for the two of us and then just multiply by the number of weeks we are planning to be aboard KARAYA. We have organized a food list and listed our needs under these headings:

- Staples: canned/bottled items, boxed/packaged items (non-refrigerated items)
- Beverages (non-refrigerated and refrigerated): non-alcoholic and alcoholic
- Snacks (non-refrigerated and refrigerated)
- Meats (frozen), Meals (frozen), Vegetables (frozen), Other (frozen)
- Dairy products, Lunch meats (refrigerated items)
- Fresh produce (refrigerated and non-refrigerated)

Besides food items, we also have a list of basic supplies (that we do not want to run out of) under the headings:

- Medications/first aid
- Toiletries/personal care
- Paper products/plastic bags
- Cleaning supplies
- Boat maintenance

We also estimate a weekly or monthly use-rate for these items as well.

We purchase the bulk of our provisions at SAM'S CLUB. We prefer the Salisbury location with a Walmart Super Grocery next door. We also shop at Vero Beach or Ft. Pierce in Florida before crossing over to the Bahamas. Besides the overall \$\$\$ savings, we like the quality of their meats, cheeses,



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and fresh produce. SAM'S is a good place to save on Ziploc bags (we recommend freezer-grade quart and gallon size, and some extra-large bags).

We use (and re-use) Ziploc bags on the boat for lots of reasons: organization, leftovers, freshness, dryness, bug-control, spill-control, snacks, etc.) AND anything that could possibly spill or ooze out in the refrigerator is always packed in a Ziploc bag! **NOTE:** "Any method that removes or prevents the entry of air as much as possible is the best method to use because air is what causes decay and bacterial growth". (Kathy Barron, SailNet Community article)

**NOTE:** We are careful not to bring corrugated cardboard boxes aboard our boat. We also take items out of cardboard packaging (e.g. soda/beer cans), repack them in Ziploc bags, and discard this material. One has no idea how long this packaging material sat in warehouses where cockroaches live and lay eggs.

**Bulk Shopping:** Due to boat storage space and configuration we steer away from HUGE containers (SAMS sells many items this way such as crackers, chips, mayonnaise, ketchup, detergent, etc.). Instead we opt for small or medium-sized containers of items (also sold at a savings at Walmart Super Grocery). For example, we prefer to store six small tubs of margarine in the refrigerator rather than two large ones. We store five in the bottom stacked into small spaces while keeping one handy on the top shelf. Also, the contents of small containers get used up more quickly with less chance of spoilage or staleness.

For laundry detergent, we keep one small container (e.g. 50 oz. Tide Liquid Detergent) handy for going to Laundromats and refill it as needed from a larger container (no more than 100 oz. because of storage limitations). This has worked great all the way to and from the Bahamas. **NOTE:** We get a pile of quarters-about \$30.00 worth) before we leave home and keep it in a change purse with the laundry detergent. These coins come in handy along the ICW. (You usually need to purchase tokens in the Bahamas).

We think about provisioning in three stages:

- (1) Non-perishables food and other basic supplies that can be bought and stored aboard weeks ahead of time.



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- (2) Freezer foods: meats that need to be repackaged and frozen at home before being loaded on the boat, frozen meals, and vegetable packages. We try to get this done about a week before we leave.
- (3) All other perishables (refrigerated items, bread, and fresh produce) bought and stored one to two days before departure.

**Non-Perishables / Basic Supplies:** About two to three weeks before our departure, we shop and load non-perishable items aboard KARAYA such as spices; canned goods; staples and bottled goods; beverages (except for refrigerated items); paper products/plastic bags; medications and toiletries, laundry detergent; cleaning supplies; and boat maintenance supplies (after taking stock of what's already on board).

**Storing Canned Goods:** We store a small assortment of staples in a handy locker in the galley that we replenish as needed from the salon. The bulk of the canned goods are stored in lockers behind our settee in sections: canned fruit; canned tomatoes (we use a lot of these), canned vegetables, canned meats/seafood, and canned soups/stews/sauces. We lay the cans down with labels up and within each section randomly arrange the cans. For example, in the fruits section cans of peaches, pears, pineapple, etc are placed in the bottom row, the middle row, and the top row. We DO NOT remove the paper labels and label the cans with permanent marker (as suggested in some boating books to control for coach roaches). We only do this if a label seems to be coming unglued.

**Storing Other Staples:** All bagged and boxed items we either (a) seal up in Ziploc bags (gallon-sized bags work great for crackers, cake mixes, etc.) or (b) pour the contents into plastic jars (tea bags, pasta, rice, cereal, flour, sugar, etc.) to keep fresh and bug-free. It's good to place a bay leaf in rice, flour, and pasta jars to keep out weevils. **NOTE:** Since we do not bake bread from scratch we do not take as much flour aboard as we did in earlier years.

In the lockers above the canned goods lockers we store these staples, along with bottled items (e.g. mayonnaise, ketchup, soy sauce, etc.) in medium-sized plastic bins. Using plastic bins makes for easy access (just pull them out), secure packing, and better organization.



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**Beverages:** Personal preference dictates the beverages stocked on different boats. We stock water (in plastic bottles), soda (in cans), orange juice (1/2 gallon cartons), and tea bags for daily consumption. We also have on board some coffee for guests and non-fat powdered milk packets (primarily for cereal and cooking). Milk made from powder tastes better after an overnight chilling in the refrigerator. We have packets of cocoa and cider mix for making hot drinks on cold days and nights. We also stock wine, hard liquor, beer, and tonic water.

**Storing Beverages:** We store all the bottled water, soda cans, and beer cans in gallon Ziploc bags (five to a bag) and plastic tonic bottles (two to a bag) under the floor boards. These drinks stay stable packed this way and they are easy to retrieve by the bagful. Glass liquor bottles are stored upright in a galley locker packed in tight to keep them from jostling. We put each wine bottle in a crew sock and store all the "protected" bottles in a compartment under a settee. So far we have never had any rolling, broken or spilled bottles or cans! All orange juice cartons are kept in the refrigerator, along with a small supply of water, soda, and beer that we refill from the bilge as needed.

**Perishables (Freezer)- Meats, Meals, Vegetables:** A week to two weeks before departure we buy fresh ground beef, beef cuts, steaks, boneless chicken, pork chops, Italian sausage, etc. and repackage these items in quantities suitable for one cooking (usually one pound for two meals for the two of us). We use either freezer Ziploc bags or a vacuum sealer (labeled and dated with permanent marker). We then freeze these packages in our home freezer for at least a few days before loading them in the boat's freezer. The meat freezes solidly quickly at home and there is less strain on the boat's freezer when we load already-frozen meat into it.

We also purchase a few frozen prepared meals and bags of frozen vegetables for making stews, pasta dishes, or stir-fry meals and load these aboard when we stock the meat in the boat freezer. Some meats and some veggies are stored on the lower shelf and some on the top shelf so that we do not have dig in the bottom of the freezer until the top shelf items are nearly used up. (This helps to conserve on energy, too).

We have had some success in getting FRESH fish, shrimp, scallops, and conch at local fish markets along the ICW (e.g. Wrightsville Beach, NC) and



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in the Bahamas. We have decided to work a little harder to get fresh seafood- especially lobster, on our upcoming trip to New England this summer.

**Perishables (Refrigerator)- Dairy Products, Orange Juice, and Lunch Meat):** We shop and stock KAYARA with all other perishable items one to two days before our departure. We have been able to stock refrigerated items such as eggs and egg substitute, and butter/margarine, various cheeses, yogurt, lunch meats, and orange juice for a month's time or longer. Packaged cheese (vs. fresh deli-style) can be stored for weeks before the seal is broken. We purchase vacuum-sealed lunch meat packages and pop a few in the freezer and one in the refrigerator to be used first.

We have discovered that eggs, butter/margarine, yogurt, and orange juice can be used for weeks past their "use by" dates when stored in the refrigerator. **NOTE:** We have never "sealed" eggs with a coating of petroleum jelly (as suggested in the boating books); instead we Ziploc bag the cartons or buy vacuum-sealed cartons of eggs (SAMS sell them this way.)

We purchase all our cheeses in vacuum-packed packages (for freshness) in block form (to conserve on space). We have had great success with Tropicana or Minute Maid fresh squeezed orange juice (not from concentrate) half gallon cartons keeping well. We look on the store shelf for the latest possible "use by" dates when shopping, too.

We store one package of each of the above items such as a juice carton, a carton of eggs, a tub of margarine, one package of lunch meat, etc. on the top shelf in our refrigerator and then all the "surplus" packages in the lower (harder to get to) shelf below (extra lunch meat in the freezer). We only have to dig in the bottom every 3-5 days to replenish the consumed items. We also conserve on energy because the refrigerator is not open as often for long periods of time.

**Perishables-Bread:** We have discovered that Pepperidge Farm Swirl Raisin Cinnamon Bread will keep for months by storing two wrapped loaves per gallon-sized Ziploc bag placed in our oven (our at-sea bread box) because of the preservatives in it. (There's a thought about the ingredients we put in our bodies.) Storing our bread this way saves on refrigerator/freezer space. Because raisin toast is a favorite with our breakfasts we make it



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quickly by browning the bread in a hot ungreased non-stick skillet one side at a time.

Because we have not been as lucky with wheat sandwich bread keeping very long, we usually limit buying this bread to two loaves at a time when we re-provision. Although we stock Brownie and cake mixes and bake these on occasion, we rarely make (from scratch) or bake bread on the boat like many "experienced" sailors do. Go for it if you enjoy that sort of thing!

**Perishables- Produce:** We wait to purchase fresh produce until a day or two before we depart- shopping for the freshest and firmest vegetables and fruits we can find.

**Un-refrigerated produce:** We store separately green peppers, onions, tomatoes (Roma tomatoes last longer than any other type of tomatoes), apples (Granny Smiths last a long time), oranges, and (sometimes) grapefruit in small baskets on a shelf in our back berth. We pack these items in quart-sized freezer Ziploc bags with a paper towel inserted in each bag (to help absorb moisture) for up to two/three weeks (onions can last longer). We check for over-ripening periodically and use immediately or discard spoiled items. Storing only a few items in each small bag helps to keep spoilage from spreading to too many other items. We keep another basket on the galley counter for items that last only a few days, such as bananas, so that we do not forget to eat them before they spoil.

We do not store the above-mentioned items in the refrigerator because they (1) take up too much valuable space, (2) do not need to be refrigerated, and (3) keep just as long not being refrigerated.

**Refrigerated produce:** Because the produce we keep in the refrigerator does not usually last more than a week to 10 days we get just a small supply of carrots (can last longer), celery, broccoli, Romaine lettuce (which we have found to last much longer than any other type of lettuce), blueberries (for blueberry pancakes) and seedless grapes. We package these items in Ziploc bags with a paper towel inserted (again, to help absorb moisture). We do not wash produce until time to use it.

**Re-Provisioning:** We try to stock ALL non-perishable items before we leave home and limit re-provisioning on our long trips to replacing ONLY perishables. We have often found ourselves in unfamiliar places trekking to



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grocery stores having limited selections and high prices. We also do not enjoy "lugging" heavy cans and bottles back to the dinghy or boat!

**Keeping Track:** After we figured out the food, beverages, medical, and cleaning and boat maintenance items we thought we might want to have aboard, we made a spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel. We can easily add and delete items AND calculate needs for any number of months. We also have made a diagram of the storage compartments on KARAYA, assigned a label to each area, and entered this information on the spreadsheet. Any changes that have to be made are easily accomplished once all the information is compiled on this spreadsheet. We TRY to keep track of consumed or depleted items by penciling in on the list as we go and then updating it when we get a chance.