

David Cassidy writes

personally to you



about the carefree days when he takes a small tent, a sleeping bag and some fruit and goes up into the mountains . . .

Hello, luvs!

I keep saying thanks for your letters from overseas, and at the risk of repeating myself in my olde age, I'm going to say it again! It's really great to hear from all of you.

I guess I must have been writing a lot about camping in my columns for FAB 208, because quite a few of your letters have mentioned this favorite pastime of mine, and asked me more about it.

I'm more than happy to tell you all I know about the subject, and will, if I don't get off the track as usual and start talking about something that has nothing to do with sleeping out under the stars.

To me, the first rule of camping is to go far enough from the city, or high enough into the mountains, so that you won't have two zillion other campers right next to you. I'm not anti-social, but I like to get out in the country to see the country, not my next door neighbors. I've honestly been at campsites that were busier than a big apartment house, and that I don't dig.

Once a nice place is found for your camper or car or station-wagon or whatever, what I like to do next is get even closer to nature. The only way to do that is start walking. If you plan to hike for any distance, or any period of time longer than a few hours, it's best to take what everyone is now referring to as a back-

pack.

This is my favorite kind of camping. When I start walking into areas where a car can't possibly go and even a horse or pack mule would have a hard time, something good comes into my head and well . . . I can't explain it. It's just a beautiful experience.

I like to back-pack for a day and night at least, and maybe even two days. That's the longest I've gone out so far, mainly because I don't have too much time.

When I do go out, I try to keep the pack as light as I can, but a lot of times I get carried away some more and do things like drag along my guitar. That really weighs me down, but it's another beautiful experience. Sitting by a campfire, off somewhere close to nature with a good friend or two (or sometimes by myself), playing my guitar and singing is my idea of really relaxing and really communicating with whatever it is that created this planet.

Usually, I back-pack a light, two-man tent which is nylon and weighs only about two pounds and can be scrunched up into a small space. I take a sleeping bag, too, but the tent really comes in handy if it decides to rain (or snow).

For food, I mostly take dehydrated soups, instant breakfasts that can be mixed with water and powdered milk, instant oatmeal and as much fruit as I can jam into the pack. For

eating and cooking utensils I use a mess kit, which comes complete with knife and fork.

I've found it's best to take along a couple of complete changes of clothes, even if you're just going out overnight. Anything can happen on the trail (oh brother, listen to that) and usually does, like maybe finding yourself in a downpour, or falling into a stream.

I also like to take along an air mattress if I can possibly carry it with all the other stuff I'm already trying to pack. Sleeping on the ground is really great, but a few ounces of air between it and you can't really hurt, now can it? Not like sleeping right on a nice big rock, anyway.

Well, that's about all I can think of for this instalment which is good because that's all there is room for on the page! It's about to overflow, too, like my back-pack generally does!

Love,

