

## Eating Hawker Food On Mount Everest? This Singaporean Guy Is Planning To Do Just That

Here's how 27 year old Jeremy Tong is going to tackle the tallest mountain in the world – with 60 packets of our favourite local dishes.

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"Chicken rice!" the young man exclaimed with a beaming smile and no hesitation, when asked on what he wished his final meal would be if he had it on the tallest mountain in the world.

If there's one thing Singaporean food and mountain climbing have in common, it's Jeremy Tong – one of Singapore's youngest mountain climbers who has a heart for adventure, and a loyal appetite for our favourite local dishes.

Having conquered 38 mountains in the past 12 years, the 27 year old foodie has experienced a lifetime's worth of mountain climbing. In the next two months, Jeremy, together with two friends, will be tackling Everest for his 40<sup>th</sup> mountain expedition, titled **PrimaTaste Everest For Cancer**. Partnering with Singapore Cancer Society, Jeremy will be climbing Mt Everest to raise funds for cancer treatment.

"This will not only be the tallest but the coldest mountain I've tackled so far," Jeremy adds, "especially at the summit, we're looking at about -40 to -50 degrees celsius up there."

But of course, this man won't be climbing his way up to glory with an empty stomach. Carrying with him throughout the 10-week expedition – are 60 packets of Prima Taste Ready Meals.

"I'll be bringing all the four flavours - Chicken Claypot, Nonya Sambal Chicken, Curry Chicken, and of course my favourite of the four, Beef Rendang," Jeremy said, "I'm saving one packet of Beef Rendang for the night right before I reach the summit!"

While bringing 60 packets of such meals may seem like a crazy idea, they aren't enough to last a whole 10 weeks – even if he eats only one meal a day.

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## THE GAME PLAN

Jeremy will be handling the climb in a staggered approach, having checkpoint camps that allow him to ration his food supply evenly as he ascends.

"We'll have a base camp that'll serve local Nepali dishes at first. As we ascend, we'll create camps that we'll transfer the food up to. We'll be eating the majority of the Prima Taste Ready Meals higher up the mountain than at base camp," he adds,

"but we'll be sneaking in some hainanese chicken rice about every week or so to keep us motivated at base camp – it'll remind us of the food back home!"

Jeremy first found out about the pre-prepared meals through eating one of them during one of his past expeditions.

"They looked like army rations but look nicer, much nicer," the climber explained, "once I ate one of these packets I thought 'wah, this is good stuff', so I decided to have these foods on Everest as well."

## WHAT'S FUELLING HIM

When it comes to their nutritional value, the packet contains dietary fibre, soluble fibre and prebiotics, 20% of wholegrain basmati rice and 5% multigrains. Together with no added preservatives, no MSG, and no artificial colouring, the meals carry the 'Healthier Choice' symbol.

Jaclyn Reuters, a dietician at Aptima Nutritions & Sports Consultants, notes that "they contain wholegrains and have a lower fat content than other ready meals", and that they are "nutritionally sound with sufficient amount of protein and carbs for one meal."

"The meals use basmati rice and multigrains which gives him longer lasting energy as it breaks down slowly. It can be part of his expedition diet as long as his other main meals, snacks and beverages are also lower in fat and high in carbohydrates," Jaclyn added.

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## **CARDIO, CARDIO, CARDIO**

Other than nutrition, the young climber also doesn't want his fitness to get in his way. He has been preparing for Everest ever since January 2016 last year, and it's been nothing short of vigorous, vigorous cardio.

"I train 5-7 times a week. I'll do 15-17km runs for one day, and the next I'll climb Bukit Timah Hill or HDB storeys with my training gear on to simulate mountain climbing conditions."

"I carry a bag that's 17kg worth of free weights and water bottles, together with 1.5kg weights on each ankle for the stair and hill climbs," Jeremy elaborates, "If we're looking at the real deal, it's gonna be filled with water bottles, jackets, my sleeping bag, and a lot of Prima Taste Ready Meals."

From the looks of his training and his confidence, ain't no mountain gonna be high enough for Jeremy Tong. We wish you the best, Jeremy. Do us and our chicken rice proud.

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