

What Astronauts Eat



Lunchtime on the International Space Station (NASA photo)

Attached is the [16-day rotating menu](#) used by Dr. Robert Thirsk while he was on board the International Space Station for 187 days in 2009. Notice the legend that describes the FORMAT of the various foods.

- 1 Which day would be your favorite day in the 16-day cycling of the menu. Provide reasons for your choice.
- 2 Why do you think that many of the foods are either irradiated or thermostabilized? Why don't they just put the food in the refrigerator?
- 3 Why do you think astronauts on board the International Space Station would really be welcoming when a shuttle from the USA or flight from Russia arrives with fresh fruit and vegetables?



- 4 Take a day and analyze the menu for the day in terms of the nutritional value of the food for the astronauts. Although the menu does not provide amounts, indicate whether or not the menu is in line with the requirements of the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015 – 2020](#).
- 5 Identify any foods with which you are NOT familiar and research to find about that food, how it is prepared and the nutritional value for astronauts.
- 6 Which day's menu would be closest to a menu that you might experience at home? If none of the day's menus are close to those you might experience, suggest reasons for this difference.
- 7 You will notice that the "daily menu" is not broken up into specific meals. Suggest reasons why this might be the case.