

GOURMET GUNNERS



Napoleon said 'an army marches on its stomach' and fellow Frenchman Arsène Wenger certainly needs his troops to be well fuelled if they are to fire on all cylinders for the first team. Each month we ask an Arsenal star to spill the beans on all their foody thoughts. on the menu this month is midfielder

ALEX OXLADE-CHAMBERLAIN



Spaghetti bolognese – first name on the team-sheet



What would you say is your favourite food?

Anything involving pasta

What is your favourite restaurant – either to visit regularly or as a treat?

Va Pensiero, in Radlett.

What is the first thing you'll look for on a menu?

Probably spaghetti bolognese or chicken milanese.

Tell us the perfect person for you to go to a restaurant with.

A big group of friends.

What's the main cuisine in your home city?

We have all sorts here nowadays! You see a lot of sushi around these days and I really like that.

What do you like to eat for breakfast?

Porridge.

...and a late night snack?

Some cereal.

Did you have school dinners?
I did.

How do you like to eat your eggs?

I'm not fussy! Poached, scrambled, fried – and I like soldiers as well!

What do you like on toast?

Jam or nutella.



Eggs to make the Ox strong

Sweet snack



COLLINS GEMS



COFFEE AND COCONUTS!

With the current hot weather, hydration is of prime importance when exercising. Here are two common myths that I want to dispel:

CAFFEINE WILL DEHYDRATE YOU.

Caffeine occurs naturally in diets through tea, coffee, chocolate and soft drinks, and has long been thought to have a diuretic effect (increasing urine losses). However this effect is actually only very small in habitual caffeine users. Caffeine can also have a positive effect in certain situations, making exercise feel easier – so there's no reason to avoid your usual tea or coffee before training.

Take home message: It typically takes 45 minutes for caffeine to 'peak' in the blood, so time your intake accordingly beforehand.



COCONUT WATER IS THE BEST DRINK TO STAY HYDRATED?

2012 saw the emergence of the natural 'super-hydrating' coconut water, that the celebrities – such as Rihanna and Madonna – are guzzling, but is it suitable for hydrating during exercise? The answer is, not really. It is high in the electrolyte, potassium, but contains far less sodium than home-made or commercial sports drinks. Sodium is the important factor in absorbing and retaining fluid following sweat loss.

Take home message: for training sessions under one hour, drinking water is generally fine. For training sessions longer than this, a sports drink (containing, carbohydrate, sodium and water) will assist hydration and help to refuel the muscles.



Favourite three vegetables?

Broccoli, carrots and tomatoes, if we can call them a vegetable!

Your favourite cold drink?

Apple Tango.



...and hot drink?

A latte.



What's your secret vice?

McDonald's!

Tell us what you have for Christmas dinner?

Everything! Turkey, chicken, beef, lamb, potatoes, Yorkshire pudding, gravy, carrots, a bit of horseradish, cranberry sauce, stuffing. Perfect!!

Which of your team-mates has the strangest taste in food?

I'll say Carl Jenkinson, just because he's really fussy and won't eat a lot.

What dish do you cook the best?

Spag bol, definitely.

Finally, when you go for lunch at the training ground, tell us three things you hope Rob the Chef has on the menu that day?

His rack of lamb is superb, so definitely that – and after that I'll say his spag bol and his chicken escalopes.



Rob's rack