

The Great Olivier Newsletter

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Spring is here! Well, maybe... Here in southern Yukon (aka the soft north), the weight of the winter season has lifted. The long summer days are rapidly approaching and the sun keeps getting longer everyday. While you navigate the icy morning roads and the afternoon slush pools, here's some upcoming concert news, a killer backcountry dessert recipe, and tips on how to get the best out of your phone's GPS abilities.



Upcoming Concerts

I've got two great shows coming up in the next week. The first one, on March 26th, will be in Dawson City with singer Lorène Charmetant's jazz quintet. The show starts at 8pm at the KIAC Ballroom/Dënäkär Zho.

After that I'll be playing in Whitehorse on April 1st at the Heart of Riverdale premiering all new music with an all new band. I'm really excited about this show because I'll be performing my own music in front of a real audience for the first time in over 5 years. I wrote all the music during my Jenni House Residency in January and I put together a stellar six-piece band to perform the music.

The Best Way to Discover Music

I wanted to give a quick shoutout to my new favourite way to listen and discover new music. Bandcamp.com is the best platform to support musicians, but I just discovered an incredible feature on their site. They put out a weekly show called “Bandcamp Weekly” that features new music from artists of all genres. I cannot say this enough, these shows are phenomenal. The quality of the music, the flow of the playlists, the fantastic uniqueness of each artist... it really is the best music out there. If you're sick of hearing the same music come up on your computer generated spotify playlist, check out Bandcamp weekly. You won't regret it. Listen in your browser, or download the app to listen on your phone.

This week's show <https://bandcamp.com/?show=536>



Bannock Donuts

You will blow your own head off and permanently damage anyone's dessert expectations after tasting this recipe. It's off the hook. Bannock donuts!!!!

Adjust ratios to suit desired quantities. This recipe makes enough for 4-6 people.

- 1.5 cups white flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 TBS baking powder
- 1/2 cup sugar (optional, but highly recommended)
- Water

Pro Tip: Use a wooden spoon/chop sticks/metal fork when handling your hot bannock. The oil in the pan will melt most plastic camping utensils.

Step 1) Mix dry ingredients together in bowl. If you're going backpacking, you can pack all the ingredients pre-mixed in a ziplock.

Step 2) Add water. You want to add water until your mixture looks like runny cottage cheese. The tricky part is that you absolutely do NOT want to over-mix the dough. The more you mix the dough, the more you'll get gluten strands. This will make your finished donut chewy, and the inside the opposite of soft and fluffy. While mixing, don't fret about getting all the flour perfectly mixed in with the water. Just lightly and slowly stir the mixture until you get that cottage cheese/oatmeal consistency.



PRO TIP: If you're in the backcountry, put a little bit of dry mixture aside before adding the water. If you end up adding too much water, you'll have some backup flour mix to thicken it up.

Step 3) Fry it up baby! Pour enough vegetable oil or lard to cover the bottom of your pan with about 1cm of liquid. Turn your stove up to medium heat and wait until the oil is hot!

PRO TIP: Drop a tiny amount of your dough into the pan when you think it's ready. If it immediately sizzles and bubbles, the oil is hot enough. If nothing dramatic happens, let it heat up a little longer.

When the pan/pot is ready to go, carefully drop in spoonfuls of dough into the oil. The donuts will start sizzling, popping and dancing around. Keep a close eye and when the underside gets golden, flip them over. Careful though! The donuts can go from undercooked to burned very quickly.

If your oil starts smoking, turn the heat down.



Step 4) When your donut is ready, pick it up from the pan, let as much oil as possible drip off, and place on a paper towel sheet or some other kind of oil draining device.

You can stop here and eat some delicious fry bread, or continue to the next step for ultimate sugary goodness.

The sugar coating

Mix a bunch of sugar into a bowl or ziplock (like a 1/4 to 1/2 cup) with a pinch of cinnamon. Take a donut, dunk/coat both sides with the sugar, put aside, and count the seconds before someone devours this delicious dessert.

PRO-WARNINGS

- Be extremely careful when frying the donuts over a campfire or camp stove. If you spill the oil onto the open flame it will explode.
- Extra thought needs to be put into the disposing of frying oil when in the backcountry. I suggest carrying out any leftovers, or burning (carefully!!) the frying oil if you can have a campfire. Avoid pouring it into the ground or near any fresh water sources.
- The dough makes a heinous mess if you don't have access to a sink. Plan on mixing everything in a ziplock (don't even try to clean it).

Navigating with your Phone



Phones are ubiquitous. We take our phone computers with us to bed, to the bathroom, and outside to snap the perfect instagram shot. Apart from being a great procrastination tool, our phones have some very powerful navigation abilities that can take our outdoor adventuring to the next level.

Whether I'm guiding clients or going hiking with friends, my phone has become an essential tool while in the field. Here's some tips to help get you the most out of your Android, iPhone or Blackberry (RIP).

GPS Unit Vs Phone

I often get asked what kind of GPS device I recommend for exploring the outdoors. The truth is, I don't. Your phone has GPS capabilities that are just as accurate and fast as any GPS unit. A phone is more user friendly, has better mapping capabilities and often weighs less. So unless you've got a really specific reason for it (in which case you're probably not reading these tips), save yourself a couple hundred bucks and use your phone for navigation.

There's now a lot of great navigation apps out there and it's worth downloading a few different ones to see which one works best for you. Here's my hot take:

Gaia GPS:

This is my go-to app for professional guiding. It has a huge selection of maps, topos and satellite imagery as well as very good route planning tools. Many guides I work with swear by this app. The downside is that I wouldn't recommend the free version of the app as you can't use it offline. If you're up for paying 20-30\$/year, this is the app for you.

Viewranger / Outdooractive

Viewranger used to be my favourite free navigation app recommendation. I really enjoyed some of the measuring features and it has a very intuitive layout. Great for first time users! Viewranger has been discontinued and is now called Outdooractive, which I haven't used. If it's anything like Viewranger, I would definitely check it out.

Alltrails/Strava

I haven't used either of these apps, but I know many people who do and love them. Check them out and let me know what you think!

How to setup your phone

It's really important to properly setup your phone to maximize battery life. When done correctly, many phones will last days in the field.

Download everything you need before leaving the house. Make sure you've got all your maps, apps, and routes downloaded and ready to go.

Put your phone in airplane mode. Your GPS chip will still work when in airplane mode except now your phone will stop constantly trying to find a signal. This significantly lengthens your battery!

An important distinction here is that your GPS location is completely separate from your cellphone data. You don't need a data plan or any kind of cell tower connection for you to get your GPS location. Most phone GPS's will even work without a sim card.

Make sure that any battery saver modes are turned off. Sometimes the battery saver mode will deactivate your GPS signal when the screen gets turned off, which can lead to really weird and inaccurate GPS tracks.

Be aware that a big energy killer is your camera. It takes a lot of power to capture a picture so try to be frugal when taking instagram pics.

Experiment with your phone before you commit to a big trip. With my Pixel 3a phone, I can confidently get 3-4 days of GPS tracking on one battery charge. That being said, I don't use my phone for pictures and I turn off GPS tracking when I get to camp.

Finally, and most importantly, have a paper map backup in case your phone dies. Get good at reading maps because they aren't battery powered and you'll look way more badass when you stare and nod confidently at a map.

Happy Adventuring!