

Last supper of Oetzi the Iceman

Scientists have revealed that the last meal of the frozen hunter who died 5,300 years ago in the Alps was well-balanced but also alarmingly high in fat

Oetzi: found in 1991
on frozen glacier



Reconstruction

Lost organ: Latest investigation based on contents of stomach – only discovered recently as it was misplaced under rib cage during mummification

■ **High-fat diet:** Fat content found to be 50% of total – much higher than 10% average in modern diet

DNA analysis indicates Oetzi ate both muscle and fat of **ibex** – species of wild goat that lives in European Alps – as well as **red deer**

High-fat diet may have given Iceman energy he needed to survive long trek at high altitude



500 microns*

Wheat grain spikelet found in stomach

■ **Carbohydrates:** Plant fragments come mainly from **einkorn** – early form of domesticated wheat

Traces of toxic **bracken** may have been swallowed unintentionally or as medicine for parasites previously found in gut

Male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*)

*micron = one millionth of a metre

Sources: Current Biology, Eurac Research Institute for Mummy Studies

Pictures: Marco Samadelli/Eurac/South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology via AP, Current Biology, Getty Images, Kenraiz, Frederik Vandaele © GRAPHIC NEWS