



Vacation Eating Strategies

Do you worry about gaining weight on vacation? Vacations can present endless opportunities to eat. With a little planning ahead, you can enjoy yourself without the excess.

Set realistic expectations. Vacations are a time to relax and to indulge ourselves - a little. For instance, I often enjoy sweets and cocktails more often when I am on vacation; but that means just a little more, not a lot more. Instead of taking an all-or-none approach, just loosen up a little.

Rethink traditions. If you are in the habit of stocking up with cookies, brownies, candy, chips and other snacks on vacation, stop and evaluate. What is most important? Is it the food, or is it being together as a family and enjoying the setting? When the food is overly generous, how can you trim back? Can you keep a few favorites and substitute others with healthier alternatives?

Go easy on cocktail hour. I am more likely to have a cocktail on vacation than I am when at home. If I'm not paying attention, it can be easy to drink and eat too much. Alcohol and snacks go together, each making you want more of the other. Avoid overindulging by setting limits ahead of time.

Preplan restaurant meals. If you are eating out every night, it helps to have a strategy in mind before you look at the menu. Go easy on bread, chips and appetizers. Skip the dessert most nights or share one. Go all-out on occasion, but not every night. Find ways to get more fruits, vegetables and whole grains, even if it means a trip to the grocery store.

Be active. A big bonus about vacations is that physical activity is usually built in. If you are traveling to cities, you are probably doing a lot of walking to see the sights. When you are camping or staying in cabins or resorts, there are lots of opportunities for hikes or walks. Take advantage of the chance to exercise in a new and beautiful location.



Cool Whole Grain Salads

The hot days of summer are made for cool salads. They are an ideal food for entertaining because they can be made ahead of time. They are great for everyday, too, because they keep well. Make a big salad and enjoy it for a couple of days!

I especially enjoy making whole grain salads that are essentially a meal-in-a-bowl. Start with a base of brown rice, whole wheat pasta, quinoa, whole wheat couscous or beans.

Add a variety of chopped vegetables and fruits. Make it an entrée by including some protein in the form of left-over chicken, chicken sausage, prawns, nuts, beans or lentils, feta cheese, or whatever you have on hand.

My favorite dressing is a balsamic vinaigrette (the recipe is on my website, on the Nutrition page). Sometimes I just use lime juice, lemon juice, or light seasoned rice vinegar.

Vegetables to use: I always add some thinly sliced (or finely chopped) red onion. Other than that, I use whatever is in season. Red, yellow and green bell peppers are good, as are radishes, corn, snow peas, raw beets (red or golden) or turnips, cucumber, spinach, red or green cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, jicama, tomatoes, sundried tomatoes, olives, artichoke hearts - you get the idea! Recently I roasted asparagus, tomatoes and garlic (chopped and tossed with olive oil) - and added it to quinoa.

Fruits to use: try apples, pears, orange sections, strawberries, other berries, persimmon, pomegranates. Dried fruits are also good, like currents, cranberries, apricots or dried blueberries.

Farm Boxes: Local and Seasonal

This month marks the beginning of the Tierra Vegetable weekly farm boxes, and will be the second summer that I've subscribed. Farm boxes, also called CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), are a way to get fresh, local produce and to support local farmers.

I became inspired when I heard my dietitian-friend Chris Bekins talk about the new vegetables she was discovering from her farm box experience. Chris was right! There were vegetables I'd never heard of, along with cooking instructions and recipes. I also learned new ways to enjoy familiar vegetables. Farm boxes expand your vegetable repertoire!

Subscribing to a farm box is a wonderful way to be part of the local food scene and to eat really healthy food. If it feels like just too much produce for you (and it is a lot!), consider sharing a box with another family. Use the following website to locate a CSA near you: localharvest.org/csa/.

Want Support? *Many of my clients know what to eat but want support with actually doing it. It helps to have someone help you choose a strategy and stay focused. With coaching you can actually change how you think about food and eating. Call me to discuss what would work best for you.*

Kathy Nichols: Life Coach & Registered Dietitian

Are you ready to stop dieting and looking for a way of eating that is sustainable, enjoyable and healthy?

Discover Wellness from the Inside Out!

