

Traveling: Tips for maintaining

I like to travel... a lot. I take quite a few trips every year, both alone and with my family, by car and by plane. One thing is constant: we always incorporate a strategy for maintaining our healthy eating habits on the road. More and more restaurants do offer fresh

fruit and vegetables, but they are not the norm, and iceberg lettuce and pale tomatoes get old after a while.

Social pressures are high, particularly when traveling for business or visiting family and friends. Special treats

surround us and tempt us to go with the flow until we return home. Sadly, it is often very difficult to get back on track after a week or two of indulgences. The cravings for old favorite unhealthy foods return with a vengeance and cause a downward spiral toward a less optimal state of well-being.

The easier path is to plan a food strategy and be prepared. The extra pounds others take home as a souvenir need not be part of reality when you choose your food carefully. The drained, exhausted feeling after a week or two away doesn't seem to plague those who plan for health on the road. Why overshadow the fun of the trip with the extra work of getting "back on track"?

Here are some tips for the healthy traveler.

The number one key to success: always carry food with you. Invest in a good cooler like a "three-day" cooler with wheels and handles that will actually keep food cool for three days.

Dehydrate kale, make fruit and vegetable leathers, and make an assortment of vegetable-dense dehydrated burgers and crackers.

How much to carry depends on the likelihood of passing orchards, farm stands or health food stores. Research your proposed route for places at which to replenish your supplies. If I am going through remote areas, I will often carry several



Bringing a RAW-FOOD diet on the road

by Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo, eLivingHealth.com

days' worth of fresh produce in a large cooler in the trunk. In the cooler, carry fresh vegetables, fruit, dips, nuts and seeds, nut butters and even sometimes nut milks. Dehydrate kale, make fruit and vegetable leathers, and make an assortment of vegetable-dense dehydrated burgers and crackers. Dehydrated cookies help the sweet lovers. Before leaving home, make a huge green smoothie to drink along the way in a thermos, and put serving-size containers in the cooler.

Bringing lentils and sprouting seeds, along with a nylon nut milk bag, is helpful since sprouting in a hotel is not difficult.

Carry a blender to make green smoothies and soups at hotels. The magic bullet-type travel blenders are small and easy to pack if you prefer not to carry, or don't have, a Vitamix or other high-speed blender. Many hotels offer refrigerators at no additional charge. When refrigerators are unavailable, pack a few bags of ice if needed from the ice machine for the food in the cooler.

Equipment taken depends on the length of the trip, the destination and how much room is in the vehicle. Ideal small tools to bring include a knife, cutting board, plastic forks and spoons, assortment of plastic containers to store food in, sealable bags, peelers and graters.

When in the same location for several days or more, it's often worth the extra cost to have the comfort of a condomin-

ium or a suite hotel. It is much easier to prepare food in a kitchen than it is to use the vanity in a standard hotel room.

When traveling by plane, bring small, insulated packs filled with cut vegetables, fruits, and pre-made salads and

entrees. With the liquid restrictions, now things like hummus and guacamole are sometimes confiscated as liquids. These items must be in individual containers 3.5 ounces or less and in a plastic bag; the bag of "liquids" will need to go through the security station as a separate item.

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Health Tips (continued)

Depending on the destination, it may be worth checking a large wheeled cooler as luggage. The contents could include a Vitamix and an assortment of hard-to-find staples like Nori sheets, raw nut butters and nuts and seeds, along with a folding camping knife and the small equipment described above. The blender can also be packed in a suitcase with clothes; just be sure to keep it well padded by the clothes.

There are many pre-made raw snack bars that travel well, and nuts and seeds can be carried in the suitcase. Fragile things like crackers and burgers should be carried on the plane in a backpack or other carry-on bag.

Bringing lentils and sprouting seeds, along with a nylon nut milk bag, is helpful since sprouting in a hotel is not difficult. This site has some detailed advice: www.sproutpeople.com/grow/print/travel.html.

When staying at the homes of friends and family, it helps to make dietary preferences known along with an offer to make enough food to share.

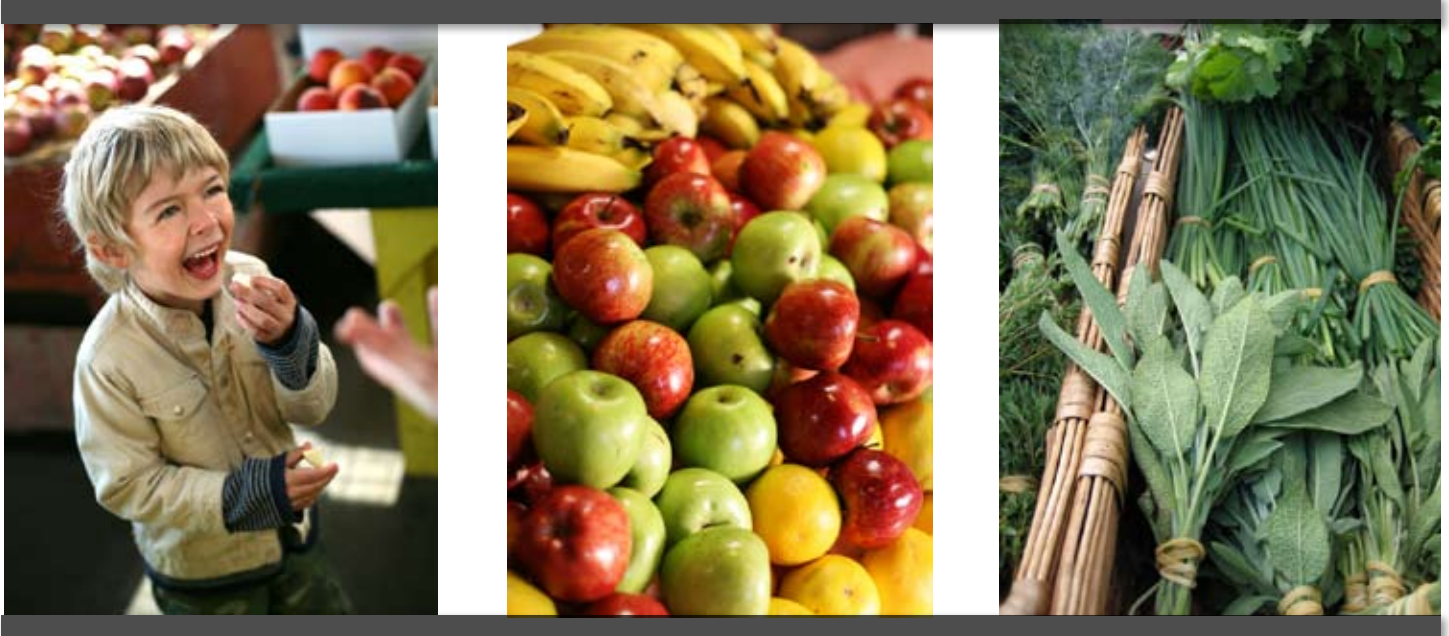
Bring a goody bag to restaurants with an avocado, raw nuts and seeds, dehydrated crackers and/or kale, along with sweets like raw fudge, brownies or a few dates. All of these can be made in advance and travel well without refrigeration. Most restaurants have salads on the menu, and I often carry a small bottle of homemade dressing or a cold pressed oil with which I ask for some lemons to make a dressing on the spot.

There are many travel success stories from those who have planned to remain healthy. On a recent four-day trip to a remote location in Colorado, my friend Christa maintained her diet while traveling on business. She flew into Denver with a colleague who was quite understanding of her "special" diet. An advance Google search helped

her find a health food store en route. She brought a number of dehydrated veggies, along with nuts and nut bars, pink salt and a few vegetables to eat on the way. She packed some of her most used kitchen supplies and bought fruits and vegetables when she landed, which she was able to put in the room's refrigerator since she had requested one.

Christa advises eating food plainer than usual to keep nerves calm while traveling and to bring at least one or two hearty items like Larabars, nut burgers, avocados or nut cheese.

It is definitely doable to eat healthfully on the road, and maintain at least a whole foods vegan diet, primarily or totally raw. If you are determined to maintain your health when you travel, you will find a way. Remember to keep it light and fun. Always make the best choice with what is available, and eat with appreciation and enjoyment. Bon voyage!



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