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Is Your Diet Taking a Vacation? 5 Tips to Stay Healthy While You Travel powered by BlogBurst

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FROM BLOG: **Inutrition Tidbits** - Fun and practical diet tips from the largest online nutrition community run by Registered Dietitians - HealthCastle.com

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If you've ever returned home from a vacation only to find that the pants you left in your closet seem to have shrunk while you were away, chances are you and your diet both took some time off! We've probably all used the excuse "I'm on vacation!" to justify a diet break, or at least another scoop of ice cream. But facing the consequences when you return home can be discouraging and throw you off track.



Striking a balance between enjoying all the wonderful foods presented to you on your vacation and maintaining your diet goals can seem a daunting task, so we've chosen the 5 best tips to help you manage your vacation diet.

5 Tips for a Healthy Vacation Diet

1. **Pack a snack:** When you're traveling, always keep a healthy snack on hand. The best combinations contain a little protein and a **high fiber** carbohydrate to keep you feeling full as long as possible. A trusty PB&J on whole wheat tucked in your carry-on bag will keep you cruising by the **trans-fat-filled** (and expensive!) cinnamon buns in the airport. Unsalted nuts, fruits, and whole grain crackers are great for the car, and are real aces for keeping your stomach from rumbling while you're searching for lunch from somewhere healthier than the ubiquitous fast food place.
2. **You don't have to clean your plate:** Desserts seem to materialize after every meal on vacation. And to make it worse, all the meals are little richer, and snacks are a little more frequent. But just because the food is there doesn't mean you have to eat it all. Slow down and consider what you're eating. The **Food Guide Pyramid** suggests an allowance of 100-300 discretionary calories (depending on your activity level). Think of these calories as your "fun" calories to be used for treats. Before you snack, decide whether you're truly hungry or just mindlessly noshing. Keep your discretionary calories in check by splitting your dessert with a friend. Make the healthiest choices when you can, and take small portions when the meal choices are high calorie and out of your control.
3. **Your shoes are made for walking:** Ask about safe walking routes around your hotel, then lace up your shoes and get going! There's no better way than walking to see and really experience the area you're visiting. Plus, it's handy for burning off some of last night's dinner, too.
4. **Sipping calories:** A couple of Margaritas by the pool may seem like the perfect vacation indulgence. They're cool, tangy, and refreshing... but you'll probably be stunned to learn that they contain as many calories as eight fast food tacos. Calories in sugary alcoholic drinks add up very quickly, so limit yourself to one drink occasionally. **Beer and wine** are lower calorie choices, so they're your best bet if you're drinking alcohol.
5. **But when in Rome...** You are, after all, on vacation. Enjoy yourself in moderation. Stop and consider the choices you make. Pralines in New Orleans and key lime pie in the Florida Keys are special treats to savor. Candy from the hotel mini bar tastes exactly the same as it does back home. Choose wisely.

The Bottom Line

Be mindful about the choices you make on vacation. Vacation literally means to take a break - so it's important to relax a bit from the way you normally function. Enjoy special foods and have a drink - but don't overdo it. Remember: if you keep your diet on track, but splurge responsibly while on vacation, you won't have to battle with a closet full of too-tight clothes when you get home!

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