



Nine Great **Tips for a** **Diet Friendly** **Vacation**



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Should You Diet While on Vacation?

If you are following a weight loss plan and things are going really well, you may be tempted to commit to following those diet rules even during your vacation.



Get Real!

When vacation reality peeks in, calorie counting goes out.

Then you might go “off the diet” and on the “anything goes” plan.

Better to be realistic to begin with and make a plan that embraces vacation mentality – including: relaxing, enjoying the locale, and having a break from your regular routine.

How can you do that and yet not gain weight or slip back into unhealthy habits? By not insisting on following your regular diet rules and instead picking and choosing from these nine tips for a diet friendly vacation.

One

Allow unique vacation food.

If it's vital to the vacation experience, then have it ...

- ... Lobster in Maine
- ... S'mores around the campfire
- ... Uncle Frank's Bar-B-Q.

Be careful though. Having lobster does not mean having a salad with croutons and full fat dressing; S'mores do not need to be followed by Cheez-Its, and Uncle Frank's Bar-B-Q need not be accompanied by fries. Be generous but discerning.

TWO

Don't eat junk.

Choose to pass on anything that you can get from a vending machine. You can have that crap anytime, anywhere. It is not vacation food.

THREE

Focus on five.

By choosing five servings of fruits and vegetables each day, your no-gain diet will fall into place. You'll likely be having some fruit for breakfast and a healthy portion of vegetables for lunch.

FOUR

Grocery shop with the locals.

Even if you are not going to be doing any cooking you can often find healthful, ready-to-eat choices in almost any grocery store as a great alternative to fast food lunches. If you explore a bit, you can find stores that can actually add to your memorable vacation experience. Look for a Whole Foods or Trader Joe's if you are in an American city. Many small towns still have their own charming groceries. You can also look for a natural food store or food co-op for fun. Don't overlook roadside stands.

FIVE

Pack your snacks.

A cooler full of grapes, oranges, carrots, celery, apples, pudding, yogurt, drinks, especially if traveling by car or settling into a specific hotel for a couple of days. Replenish as you go.

SIX

Walk. Walk. Walk.

Many dieters have fallen off the wagon during vacation without gaining weight because of the amount of extra calories they burned in the course of getting from here to there. Make an effort.



SEVEN

Have breakfast early and easy.

Make a simple rule for vacation breakfasts and stick with it. Depending on your taste, choose cereal, oatmeal or fruit. Don't start your day with white flour and sugar, especially not the free pastries and waffles at the hotel breakfast bar. There is nothing special there, and it will set off your sugar cravings for the day.

EIGHT

Keep lunch simple.

If there is not an interesting local option, just keep it simple and save your calories for dinner. I often go for a salad with some lean protein. If you are in the States, there's a Subway restaurant offering something reasonable on nearly every corner.

NINE

Make it a one-indulgence dinner.

Give yourself the choice of wine, bread, full-fat entree or dessert, but you don't need every extravagance at every dinner.



Pick your tips

As I write this, I'm getting ready to leave for Bonaire, an island north of Venezuela. Yippee! Because we are going to be biking, snorkeling, scuba diving and maybe even wind surfing (in addition to reading brain candy fiction), I'm not going to have to worry too much about weight gain.

However, I don't want to go off the deep end and over-indulge in gluttonous, unhealthy eating either. (It's been known to happen; being a wellness coach does not give me a magic shield from temptation.)

So as I'm choosing my diet guidelines, the only one that seems unrealistic for my upcoming adventure is number nine. Yes, I might have more than one indulgence at dinner. I hear they have amazing Dutch bread on the island and I know I'm going to enjoy the fresh fish, so I'll just have absolutely whatever I want at dinner as long as I stick with guidelines one through eight.

Do NOT be overly strict with yourself or you will throw your hands in the air and throw in the towel. Be realistic as you choose your guidelines.

Name Your Diet

I'm going to name my Bonaire vacation diet Sandra's "One Through Eight Equals No Nine Diet". It's fun to name your diet so that you can plant your thoughts and intentions a little deeper in your brain. I've been on the "Spa Diet Vacation" (eating only lovely things they would feed me at a luxury spa) and the "The Absolutely No Exercise Vacation Diet" (lie around on a chaise lounge and read all day.)

Your Assignment

Circle the guidelines that you've chosen:

1. Allow unique vacation food, without going overboard.
2. Don't eat junk.
3. Focus on five.
4. Grocery shop with the locals.
5. Pack your snacks.
6. Walk. Walk. Walk.
7. Have breakfast early and easy.
8. Keep lunch simple.
9. Make it a one-indulgence dinner.

Name your diet:

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