

Six Healthy Eating Strategies While on the Fly

It's important to have a game plan for sticking to healthy eating when on the go. If you're part of the holiday travel crowd, take heed of these strategies to keep your diet from taking a nose dive.

By **Matthew Kadey**

WITH THE HOLIDAYS GEARING UP there are a few guarantees: mall traffic, line-ups at liquor stores and travelling. Whether you're driving to the in-laws or boarding a flight to a far-flung sunny location as part of the rising tide of running tourism, travelling can throw a wrench into your diet. Partake too often in calorie-heavy meals and snacks while on the road and you risk bringing home a few extra pounds as souvenirs from your holiday. And here's the bad news: A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* determined that you're not likely to shed holiday weight gain once you pack it on. That's why it's important to have a game plan for sticking to your healthy eating plan when on the go. If you're part of the holiday travel crowd, take heed of these strategies to keep your diet from taking a nose dive.

Plan Ahead

Too many restaurant meals of oversized portions when travelling can leave you far from race weight. If your travel plans include eating out often, consider doing some pre-trip planning to locate restaurant options along your travel route or close to where you are staying at your end destination that offer healthier options so you don't end up looking down at a plate of gooey pizza. There are now a number of mobile apps and websites that make it easier for runners to eat better on the road and in airports.

Come Prepared

Instead of relying on the nutritionally corrupt offerings at gas stations, convenience stores, vending machines or overpriced airport bakeries to quell a rumbling stomach, pack your own arsenal of healthy snacks. Ideas for fill-you-up goodies that are transportable include nut butter packs, dried fruit, nuts, whole-food energy bars, whole-grain crackers or rice cakes, trail mix, apple chips, sliced fruit and baby carrots. For the most part, you'll have no trouble getting these non-liquid items through airport security if they are well sealed. Or, spend an evening before your trip to rustle up some homemade snack foods to keep you well fuelled and provide a little reminder of home.

Sky-High

Airplane food isn't likely to be the culinary highlight of your trip. There's a way to upgrade your fare. If you're travelling on a flight that actually serves meals, consider requesting vegetarian ahead of time. Even if you are not a vegetarian, often these meals are a lot fresher tasting than their lacklustre counterparts that feature a sorry looking piece of meat. There is a better chance you'll get more vegetables, legumes and dietary fibre. Besides, you can bask in the glory of being served before your fellow hungry travellers.

Market Power

When on the ground do some recon to locate any local farmer's markets. Not only will you likely find some regional delights that might be hard to come by at home, but this is the best place to score a bounty of edibles like artisanal whole grain breads and organic fruit that can keep you running strong. If you have access to a kitchen when away, why not load up on the makings of nutrient-dense meals such as vegetables and seafood. In North America, localharvest.org has an extensive listing of markets and even farms willing to sell their foods directly to hungry runners.



RECIPE Jerky Popcorn Trail Mix

This riff on trail mix provides the ultimate on-the-go snack satisfaction.

Makes 12 Servings

Ingredients

- 5 cups unsalted popped popcorn
- 3 to 4 ounces meat jerky, chopped
- ½ cup unsalted roasted almonds
- ½ cup unsalted roasted cashews
- ½ cup unsalted pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup dried cherries or dried blueberries
- ½ cup dried apricots, sliced
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- ½ cup dark chocolate chunks or chips

Directions

Place all of the ingredients in a large container and toss to combine. Pour mix into a zip-top bag for transport.

NUTRITION INFORMATION (per serving)

Calories 194
Fat 8 g
Saturated . . . 4 g
Carbohydrates . 22 g
Sodium 151 mg
Protein 8 g
Fibre 5 g



SNACK ATTACK

These Canadian-made store-bought options make it easier to stay well-fed while on the road.

Three Farmers Roasted Chickpeas \$15/3 bags; threefarmers.ca

Available in barbecue and balsamic and black pepper, these crunchy legumes deliver laudable amounts of fibre and protein. Plus, their baked with up-and-coming Saskatchewan produced camelina oil.

Cocoa Camino Chocolate-Covered Roasted Almonds \$6; camino.ca

They taste sinful, but these treats are made with just Fair Trade dark chocolate and nutrient-dense almonds.

Taste of Nature Bars \$2; tasteofnature.ca

These gluten-free whole food bars feature organic nuts, seeds and dried fruits to keep hunger at bay.

Food Stylist: Susan Benson Cohen



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