

How To Eat Clean, Even If You're Eating Out

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When you're traveling and eating most of your meals at restaurants, it can be hard to maintain a clean diet.

The best options for eating out are typically local (rather than chain stores) or family-run restaurants that serve healthy, organic options.

If trying new foods is challenging for you, use one of these motivators: good health, the fun of experiencing new cultures and cuisines, or the joy of celebrating with friends and family in a new way.

Restaurants, airports, and office cafeterias aren't usually meccas of good nutrition. Fortunately, many offer options that can have minimal negative impact. Try these guidelines:

- Look for restaurants that offer vegetarian, farm-to-table, or locally grown ingredients, or choose family-run ethnic spots.
- If organic isn't on the menu, order entrees made with lamb, wild-caught fish, goat or sheep dairy products, or vegetables.
- Limit yourself to 1 cup of cooked rice, no matter what type of fare or restaurant.

- For reduced- or no-gluten options, look for Thai, Vietnamese, Chinese, Indian, Mexican/South American, or Middle Eastern (limit the bread) meals.
- Choose healthier fast-food options, such as vegetable burritos, fish tacos, mushroom quesadillas, falafel sandwiches/platters, lamb gyros, shish-kebobs, wraps, soups, quiches, yogurt with toppings, or salads with vegetables and protein.
- At Asian establishments, ask for no MSG, avoid fried items, and get dishes loaded with veggies (tempura doesn't count!).

Here are some options to look out for when dining out:

Mexican

At a Mexican cantina, switch from refried to black beans, avoid sour cream and cheese, choose fish over chicken or beef, add veggies to burritos and tacos, and pass on tortilla chips or have only a few (I know: Yeah, right!).

Italian

In Italian places, start with the vegetable antipasti, go gluten-free with risotto or entrees with veggies and meat or fish, or choose low-gluten items like gnocchi or eggplant parmigiana.

Burgers

At burger joints, skip the bun (or use lettuce, tortilla, or pita instead); bag the fries for a salad instead; and choose organic meats, heritage meats, or wild game if possible.

Sushi

Sushi is my favorite one-bite wonder. It's perfect for detox and post-detox diets because ginger, rice, seaweed, and wasabi can aid in cleansing the body and wild fish contains omega-3s and protein.

Don't forget to chase your sushi roll with a cup of green tea for an antioxidant boost.

Mediterranean

When eating Greek or Lebanese cuisines, load up on healthy appetizers — think olives, olive oil, hummus, falafel, babaganoush, yogurt dips, vegetables stuffed with nuts or rice, wild fish, or salads like tabouli, fattoush, or Greek.

Drinks

Switch soda for coconut water, water, spritzers with soda water and juice, natural sodas sweetened with stevia or fruit juice, freshly made iced teas or iced coffees, or fruit juices diluted with water at a 1-to-3 ratio.

Choose biodynamic or organic wines to avoid the pesticides. Or have Italian, Spanish, or French wines, which are usually lower in pesticides, if organic is not an option.