

# How to Eat Healthy When You're on The Road



Traditional restaurants can put a big dent in your travel budget, and gas-station mini-marts and fast-food restaurants aren't exactly known for nutritious fare. However that doesn't mean you must abandon all your healthy-eating principles on a road trip. Whether you're traveling with a buddy or bringing the family along, check out our experts' tips for eating healthy and get ready to hit the highway!

## Find a balance between packed foods and restaurants

"When I travel with my family, we eat out once a day or so and pack food the rest of the time," says Sarah Krieger, MPH, RDN, a registered dietitian and spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Her family picnics at rest stops or parks "where we can eat outside in the fresh air and the kids can run around."

## Bring travel-friendly foods

"Pack things that are mostly non-perishable and that won't get smashed or ruined," says Elisa Zied, MS, RD, a registered dietitian and author of "Nutrition At Your Fingertips" (Penguin). Good healthy options include fruit (unsweetened dried fruit, apple sauce, oranges, apples, pears); veggies (carrot and celery sticks, pepper strips, peeled-and-sliced cucumbers); protein foods (nuts, seeds and pre-packaged individual portions of nut butters); dairy (low-fat milk boxes; hard cheeses, such as cheddar or provolone); and whole grains (cereal, crackers, low-fat granola, bread and air-popped popcorn).

## Keep food safety in mind

Zied notes that perishable foods should be packed on ice or eaten within two hours of preparation or removal from the refrigerator or cooler. These foods include deli or other meats such as chicken breast, turkey breast or steak; soft cheeses (e.g., muenster, mozzarella, cottage cheese); fresh cut-up fruit; and hard-boiled eggs. Keep perishable foods in a cooler with ice in a zip-up bag, Krieger suggests. "Ice packs melt too quickly," she says. "If traveling more than four hours or for multiple days, keep refreshing the ice each day." You can also fill water bottles to the halfway point with water, freeze them overnight and then add fresh water to them in the morning and use them as ice packs in your cooler, Zied suggests.

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## Make healthy choices even when you haven't planned ahead

"The good news is that there are now a lot more options at most gas-station convenience markets and fast-food restaurants," says Krieger. "The bad news is that if you buy a food that has been prepared (sliced apples or a fruit parfait), you pay more than if you sliced the fruit yourself." When you're buying snacks on the go, your best bets are nuts, hard-boiled eggs, grilled-chicken sandwiches, yogurt-and-fruit parfaits, salads and whole-grain breads.

Before your vacation, prepare for the unexpected. [Nationwide travel insurance](#) can help protect you and your family and keep your trip on the right track.