

## How to Vacation Without Adding Baggage. . .Weight!

### ***By Car, Train, Boat or Plane – Diet Advice for Travelers to Help Keep the Weight Off.***

Whether your traveling across the ocean or cross-country this summer, the change in routine can instill fear into a dieter trying to stay on track. A little planning can dispel those fears and make the vacation experience – including the food – more enjoyable. Planning ahead will allow you to keep from feeling deprived and enjoy your splurges without guilt.

When traveling to a different culture, be sure to *sample* all the local eats you've read about. Consider splitting high fat items like pastries or other rich dishes with a friend. When sightseeing, make it a priority to walk a lot. Many cities are very accessible on foot and you'll burn extra calories that will make up for your little splurges. Moderation is still the key, so remember that an once-in-a-lifetime taste doesn't need to end up in a lifetime struggle with added pounds when you get back home.

Local markets and bakeries can also offer wonderful, fresh, regional foods and you can plan to make some lighter meals between the splurges this way. When ordering off a menu, aim for grilled, steamed, broiled or baked instead of fried or heavily creamed foods.

Road-trips in the car can offer their own challenges. Again, planning ahead and packing healthy snacks like low-fat pretzels, carrot sticks, apples and other healthy items can keep you well-armed with foods and help avoid the last-minute, only available fast food stop when you're ravishing hungry. And if you do find yourself at a fast food restaurant, choose one of their healthier items like grilled chicken or a large garden salad.

Keep plenty of bottled water or low-calorie beverages on-board to keep you hydrated. Often, people confuse thirst for hunger, especially when sitting for long periods of time in a warm environment.

Don't deprive yourself of the vacation treats like ice cream or specialty foods, but try to order a smaller size or lower fat option from the menu that may be equally appealing. You'll probably find that the small change still *hits the spot* and you'll avoid the guilt later. Since driving in the car can reduce the amount of exercise you're getting while on vacation, try to plan stops or tours that are on foot or provide physical activity for you and your children.

Whether traveling by car, plane, train or boat this summer, remember to plan ahead and make arrangements to add some healthy foods and extra exercise in your travel schedule. When flying, call ahead and order one of the airline's

special meals that range from low fat, low cholesterol to vegetarian and a variety of other options. Indulge yourself, but not at every meal and most importantly, have fun!

*References:*

Holli, B.B., & Calabrese, R.J. (1998) *Communication and Education Skills for Dietetics Professionals*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins.

Larkin, M. (1999). *Ways to Win at Weight Loss*. *FDA Consumer Magazine*.