



**GLUTEN
INTOLERANCE
GROUP**



Gluten-Free Traveling

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Whether you are planning a weekend getaway or an extended vacation, being on a gluten-free diet shouldn't hold you back. With some advance planning and preparation, traveling while gluten-free is not only do-able, but may even expand your culinary horizons.

First, take the time to research, plan, and prepare. Once your destination is set and method of transportation determined, do some research on restaurants that offer gluten-free options along the way and/or at your destination. While other restaurants may still be able to accommodate your needs, those which indicate they offer gluten-free items are more likely to be a good bet. Finding new gems along your travel path can be very rewarding. But most importantly, doing the extra leg work beforehand will help ease the stress when hunger strikes. Taking some gluten-free foods along with you, whether traveling by car, plane or train should also be part of your game plan.

On the Road

Having handy snack and simple meal items on hand can be a lifesaver. Below are some suggestions for filling your cooler and dry goods tote. Many of these will work great at a roadside park; others are better for times when you're in a hotel equipped with a microwave.

Packing your Cooler

Easy items to pack include: Individually packaged plain yogurt, aged cheese, hard-boiled eggs, gluten-free deli meats, pre-cut hardy veggies (broccoli, sugar snap peas, carrots, celery, cauliflower), hummus, bean dip, fresh salsa, and gluten-free wraps.

Always make sure to have a fresh ice pack in your cooler to keep perishables fresh and safe.

Packing Dry Goods

Good options include: Canned whole or refried beans, canned gluten-free soup, canned fish (tuna, salmon, sardines), whole fresh fruit, avocados, nuts/seeds, dried fruit, gluten-free granola, quick cook brown rice, corn chips, popcorn, rice cakes, nut butter, jam, and whole-grain gluten-free bread. (Remember to include a can opener, as well as salt & pepper.)

In the Air

Flying can be more challenging because flexibility is reduced. Not all airlines offer gluten-free food, and many airport restaurants do not offer gluten-free menu options. In addition, security regulations may inhibit travelers from bringing their own gluten-free food items. However, once again, a little research and planning can make your trip less stressful and more likely to keep you well-nourished and healthy.

Quick Snack Ideas

- Banana and peanut butter
- Pre-cut veggies and dip
- Apple and sliced cheddar
- Popcorn and handful trail mix

Quick Meal Ideas

- Gluten-free tortilla with hummus, sliced cucumber, and deli meat.
- Canned chili topped with diced avocado and crumbled corn chips.
- Mixed greens, topped with canned beans and drizzled with gluten-free dressing.

First, research your airline. Some airlines offer special meals for individuals following certain diets including gluten-free. Only a few indicate that their meals are approved and monitored by a registered dietitian. Therefore, it is up to you to contact the airline regarding their gluten-free standards. Most airlines require customers to pre-order special meals 24-72 hours in advance.

Second, come prepared. Packing some gluten-free snacks and even meals from home can save you time, money, and stress when the unexpected occurs.

Follow the steps below to pack a TSA approved snack or meal.

1. For ultimate ease pack dry snacks. However if you do want to take liquids or “gels” such as yogurt, hummus, salad dressing, or dips be aware that you must comply with TSA regulations. Any liquid or gel must be in a sealed container with no more than 100 ml (3.4oz) per container. Place all liquids and gels (this includes any carry-on toiletries) into a single quart-sized Ziploc bag.
2. Each traveler is allowed only one Ziploc bag.
3. Only pack whole fruit through security. Half eaten bananas or apples will be confiscated unless placed into a bag or properly wrapped.
4. Dry snacks or sandwiches can be packed as long as they are wrapped or are in a sealed container. Do not wrap with aluminum foil as it will interfere with the x-ray machines.

Note: If you are traveling internationally, depending on your destination, you may need to toss out any uneaten perishable food items, including fruits and vegetables.

Packing your Carry On

Bringing gluten-free snacks and meals from home can make flying both easier and healthier. Airline meals are often high in sodium and rich in calories. Furthermore, the amount of water served on long flights is not enough to stay properly hydrated. This combination can easily promote dehydration and fatigue. Choosing to bring raw vegetables and fresh whole fruits (both of which contain a lot of water) and other low sodium snack options can help you stay fueled, hydrated, and feeling good. Including items like cheese, beans, nuts, and seeds can help keep you satisfied when on the go. Minimally processed snack foods such as plain corn chips, popcorn, or rice cakes can be great additions as well.

Mini Meal Ideas

- Bring a wrapped sandwich. (Be sure to include a small frozen solid ice pack if it contains perishable ingredients like deli meat.)
- Almond butter on gluten-free bread, crackers or rice cakes, plus a banana.
- Make an antipasti plate: bring sliced apples, cut carrots, aged cheese, 1/4 cup hummus*, and gluten-free crackers.
- Snack on low sodium popcorn, trail mix, and/or dried fruit.
- Always bring an empty water bottle to fill up after you pass security. This way you can stay hydrated on longer flights.

**Follow the TSA regulations above for liquids and gels.*

Dining Out

Whether you are on the road or flying to a foreign country, eating out is part of the fun of travel. Researching beforehand can alleviate stress and make for a more enjoyable as well as safe dining experience.

- Find out if there is a GIG support group in or near your destination. If so, get in touch. <https://gluten.org/community/support-groups/>. Reach out in advance to the listed contacts for local information regarding gluten-free restaurants and other resources.
- Look for GFFS certified restaurants. <https://gluten.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/GFFS-Certified-Eating-Establishments-190711.pdf>. These locations have been certified by GIG's Gluten-Free Food Services program (GFFS) and are equipped to provide safe gluten-free menu options.

- Since not all things can be planned, following are a few tips for successful gluten-free dining, wherever you are.

Gather information

Review the menu and identify if there are items which appear to be gluten-free. Then, speak directly with the staff to confirm gluten-free status of all ingredients and to find out whether practices are in place to avoid cross-contamination. Evaluate whether or not you feel adequate precautionary measures are in place.

Ask questions

- Review the menu to identify items which appear to be gluten-free.
- Speak directly with staff to confirm gluten-free status of all ingredients and to find out whether practices are in place to avoid cross-contact with gluten-containing food. This can help identify possible cross-contact issues and highlight potential ways to bypass them. Evaluate whether or not you feel adequate precautionary measures are in place.
 - » Are separate cutting boards, utensils, fryers, and toasters used in order to avoid cross-contact?
 - » Can substitutions be made?
 - * Corn tortillas in place of flour tortillas; gluten-free tamari in place of soy sauce.
 - * Rice in place of pasta; oil and vinegar/lemon in place of salad dressing

Express Appreciation

If your dining experience is a success always thank the staff for accommodating your needs.

Finally, traveling can be an opportunity to explore and gather culinary inspiration to bring back home, especially if you are traveling abroad. Look for local markets, street vendors, and specialty grocers to find interesting new ingredients and recipes that highlight the local cuisine. (However, be careful, as sometimes seemingly gluten-free items may in fact contain gluten.) Sharing the newly acquired ideas, tools, or skills you have learned with family and friends is a wonderful opportunity to educate others around you.

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Other helpful information is available at www.GLUTEN.org.

Advances in celiac disease are fast-paced. If this document is more than 2 years old, please visit our website for updated documents.

This information should not be used to diagnose or treat gluten-related disorders or other medical conditions. For questions about these conditions consult your healthcare team when considering this information.

Please consider your local GIG support group as another resource.

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The Mission of the Gluten Intolerance Group is to empower the gluten-free community through consumer support, advocacy and education.

To make a donation or become a volunteer to GIG, visit our website or call the office at 253-833-6655.