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THE TREES

JADE YOGA
PLANTS
1.5 MILLION +
TREES FOR
THE FUTURE

SPRING
FESTIVAL
AND EVENT
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STRESS
RELIEF &
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THROUGH
PRACTICE

THE POWER
OF YOGA
AMERICA'S
YOUTH
SPEAK
OUT

summer essentials

SHOPPING
GUIDE

MEAL PREP
PACK YOUR
FAVORITE
FOODS
TO GO

regional
TRAVEL

EAT WELL ON THE ROAD

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MAY 2018

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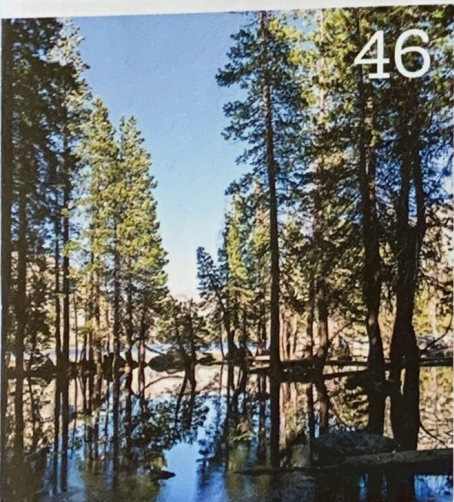
MEAL PREP SECRETS FOR HEALTHY TRAVEL FOOD

Eating for fuel, fun, and function is possible even while traveling with pro meal prep tricks from Nikki Sharp.

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Spending time walking or even just being amidst California's trees and forests is good for mind, body, and soul.



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meal prep secrets for
**HEALTHY
TRAVEL FOOD**

Helpful hacks for festival season, road trips,
family excursions and more

BY NIKKI SHARP // PHOTOS BY JEFF SKEIRIK/RAWTOGRAPHER







We may have our kitchen organization on point when we're at home. It's easy to find everything we need for salads, soups, smoothies and more. But then it comes time to pack a bag and get on the road. While travel can definitely be one of our most rewarding activities, there are times when we feel confused about what and how to eat when we're faced with all of the unknowns that come with being on the go. Fortunately, with a bit of planning, it is actually possible to enjoy healthy travel food and to maintain vitality and wellness even while crossing time zones.

Personally, I've had the opportunity to test out success strategies for healthy eating while on the move. So far, I've lived in seven countries, traveled to more than 50 cities, and lived out of a suitcase for two years. In my professional life, I've made my living as an international model and have segued into sharing success strategies as a book author and health and wellness expert. So really, I've become a bit of a professional traveler. Along the way I've collected info related to mastering the art of maintaining the fun in flying, beating jet lag, and knowing how to eat healthy food wherever in the world I may be.

We know that meal prepping is essential for better health and saving money. So, we can apply techniques from meal prepping at home to the needs of travel. In my new book, *Meal Prep to Weight Loss*, I show readers how to become a meal prep master. Don't get turned off by the title—this isn't a diet book and it's not about weighing yourself daily. I believe that focusing your attention on how you eat for health and wellness can set you up for life-long success. Weight loss just might be a result of making a lifestyle shift motivated by wanting to be healthier, have more energy, enjoy your daily life more, or even sleep better.

Let's take this on the road so you can not only survive traveling but you can thrive while enhancing your life.

LEARNING FROM TRAVEL

As I have traveled the world for work and for fun, I've developed greater empathy and compassion from my experiences. And I've also seen the importance of finding the pleasure and enjoyment of small moments. This is the case even in the midst of the challenges of daily life, the frustrations of being stuck in traffic, or hanging out in airports as a result of delayed flights. Practicing meditation has helped me see the bigger picture wherever I am.



Cultivating compassion and letting go of control have helped me connect to the journey rather than the end goal. Living with love and understanding is a great reminder that I can't always control everything, and when I let go, I realize that the path is actually pretty awesome.

TRAVELING FOR SERVICE

Last November, I took a trip that I had been wanting to take for years: volunteering in Africa. A friend and I served with International Peace Initiatives (IPI.org). IPI was founded by Dr. Karambu Ringera to empower those around her, which included starting women's groups, housing kids and sending them to school, and having a positive impact in the community of Meru, Kenya.

While in Kenya, I experienced how communities can become family, with a sense of always having someone to rely on. Africa taught me the importance of community and that sharing life with others daily is far more rewarding than a bigger house, more money, or more cars.

In addition, there was my relationship with the food. I learned that GMOs are banned in Kenya. We ate all organic, local, fresh food that IPI's chef prepared daily with the help of the kids, as a family effort. The

predominantly vegetarian meals were some of the freshest and most delicious meals I've ever had.

EATING LOCALLY

As I experienced in Kenya, I would recommend trying local foods and flavors wherever you are. This could be handmade pasta in Italy, durian in Asia, fresh moringa in Hawaii, Balinese gado gado, or even a po-boy in New Orleans. Release your restrictions and practice moderation in portion control. Seek out farmers markets or the places where the locals in the know eat. Look for food made with love.

QUICK TIPS FOR TRAVEL SUCCESS—WHEREVER YOU GO

Carry a bottle of water with you at all times. All too often, we think we're hungry but we're really a bit dehydrated. Water is more important than food; we can live three minutes without air, three days without water, and three weeks without food, yet we tend to flip this and skimp on our hydration and nutrition. If you are somewhere you can bring a reusable water bottle (or mason jar), carry it with you and refill often. If you're in an area where you need to think about water safety, make wise choices but drink often.



Count the colors on your plate. Having three colors at every meal ensures you'll have maximum nutrients and this naturally will curb your cravings.

Relax! When it comes to food, eat what you love and create balance with nutrient-dense foods. Guilt about what you eat equals stress in the body. This is worse than eating a slice of cake—especially if it was made or served with love.

Reframe your mind when it comes to indulgence and weight gain. Going on vacation shouldn't mean you put on weight then have to diet when you come home. Enjoy things in moderation, both healthy and not-as-healthy foods.

Ask for steamed or grilled vegetables as a starter. When you stimulate your appetite and start your meal with veggies, it adds more nutrients than bread. But if the bread is freshly made, enjoy it! Just balance the meal with colorful vegetables.

When you're on the road and out of snacks, all airports and gas stations will have bottled water and raw nuts such as almonds. Choose the nuts and water over the processed sugar found in candy bars and soda.

I travel with some select supplements. What works for me: magnesium to combat bloating and constipation, digestive enzymes, and probiotics for overall immune system health. Try out what works for you and have them packed in advance. I like to keep them in snack-size plastic baggies with their name and directions for use written in a sharpie to reduce bulk in my bags. I reuse the bags every trip.

UPGRADE YOUR WATER

One of my favorite tricks to drink more water is to make it colorful and tasty. Some people don't like the taste of water, so I recommend adding in slices of fruits such as orange, lime, and/or lemon. Fruit gives water a beautiful burst of color inspiring you to drink more. Sparkling water and citrus is a great combination, as it's super refreshing. To make it, I'll add slices of citrus, or chopped strawberry and mint into a Mason jar, and fill it with ice. I'll carry it with me during the day, refilling as needed. This refresher banishes cravings and makes drinking water far more enticing.

FLY HIGH AND HEALTHY

I have gotten many-a-strange look while flying when I whip out my homemade salad with all the fixings. However, when I start eating, those looks turn to requests for my airplane secrets.

Bring your own food. Most people are surprised to know that you can actually bring your own food into the airport and even onto the plane.

Know your no-gos: There are items which don't make it through TSA check-points, more than three ounces of anything liquid or liquid-like, such as yogurt, hot cereal, humus, soup, peanut butter, or salad dressings.

When prepping your own meals, make sure that salads include a light dressing that has already been drizzled on top. Remember bottled liquids or dressings are no-go items for TSA.

You can bring fruits, salads, wraps, or similar items. If you travel with produce to Hawaii or outside the country, remember to eat it on the plane because you won't be able to take it with you.

My favorite meal to bring on the go is a Mason jar salad. I put some dressing at the bottom and then I layer it with items such as spinach, roasted vegetables, quinoa, black beans, chopped hard boiled eggs, and avocado. When I'm done, I rinse the jar and use it as a water bottle.

Bring mint tea or even fresh mint leaves to add to your bottled water.

When flying, we tend to get bloated and constipated. Mint is excellent for freeing your belly from this discomfort. The water doesn't need to be warm, just steep the mint for a few extra minutes.

If you're flying on an itinerary that includes a meal, call the airline in advance to request something health-conscious. Some options include: vegan, vegetarian, fruit plate, or low salt, among others.

When ordering food at the airport, choose lightly and simply. Skip meals that are full of salt or processed items, which can increase bloat, dampen digestion, or make jet lag worse.

If you don't have time to prep before a flight, pick up a ready-made, healthy salad or other meal or even order delivery in time before you leave.

MASON JAR SALADS 101

These are my favorite style of salads to make because of their convenience and because they're packed in a reusable container. Start with your salad dressing at the bottom. This keeps the vegetables, especially lettuce, from wilting. When you're ready to eat the salad, you can flip over the jar to drizzle the dressing over the salad. I like to mix it up with items with different colors and textures such as spiralized cucumber or zucchini, roasted veggies, black beans, or avocado. I recommend using a one liter Mason jar with a wide lid to make it easy to add food and then to eat it with a fork. After you've finished the salad, you can just wash out the jar and use it for water while you travel. (Bonus points if you add mint or strawberries later!) Then, on your trip home, you can again make a salad for the plane or car ride, so you reduce plastic and save money. (Check out my *Meal Prep* book for more ideas and recipes).



CHEATING OR ENJOYING?

I am asked often if I cheat when I travel, which includes drinking or eating naughty food. While the answer is yes, I don't see it as cheating, which has a negative connotation. I see it as balance, and savoring all that

there is to offer. It has taken me years to arrive at this attitude. All too often, we see health as something restrictive rather than something fun and enjoyable—and balanced.

For example, I can go out on the town in Barcelona for a 10pm dinner. I enjoy a shared bottle of wine, lots of little bites with sharing plates, and then water before bed. The next day, I'll enjoy a light breakfast of fruit, some green tea, and a walk around the city. This way, I eat locally while enjoying the energy and love in my food, and then I fully experience where I am in the moment.

FESTIVAL HACKS

The sun is shining, the crowds are screaming, and you're at a festival with thousands of others enjoying your favorite music—fun times! Food-wise though, festivals can throw even the best meal-prepper for a spin.

Don't let it frighten you! There are some easy ways to survive the festival while still enjoying those last drops of summer sunshine.

Plan ahead. You already know there isn't going to be a salad bar with all the fixings, so have snacks ready to go if hunger strikes and there's nothing healthy nearby. Pack some snacks such as nuts, trail mix, date balls, a piece of fruit, or a healthy bar. Opt for items that can't go bad or get squashed.

Remember the good-old days being a kid and having a lunch box/bag? It's time to whip that out and fill it with all the essentials. Some ideas: hardboiled eggs, homemade popcorn, sliced veggies, and proportioned hummus in containers.

“When we’re on the road, whether we’re eating our own humus, or trying something new, love is one of the most savory ingredients for our own wellness.”

If you’re going for more than a day, pack a cooler with frozen waters at the bottom, chilled snacks next, paper towels to soak up condensation, then any snacks that don’t need to be chilled.

Drinking alcohol will inevitably lead you to want to eat a slice of pizza (or three), but resist those extra slices. You’ll only feel worse the next day. Soak up the booze with water, some more water, then one slice of pizza or a burger. Make sure to munch on all veggies you can find.

Apply sunscreen every two hours. This is absolutely key because sunburns dehydrate your skin, can cause headaches, and will pretty much ruin any fun time you want to have. Bonus points if you drink a liter of water each time you apply sunscreen. The extra stress from dehydration or sun burns can interfere with your meal planning.

FAMILY FEUD? NO, FAMILY FOOD + PREP

Traveling as a family can offer both challenges and opportunities.

Make it fun. By using gadgets such as a spiralizer, it is no longer just about preparing dinner for others. You can get everyone involved. Kids love using this, but then again, so does everyone I know!

Create a family affair when making dinner. It can be easier to cook the meals you want when you give tasks to everyone and sit in the kitchen together.

For the kids, focus on colors. Select a variety of colorful foods in fun shapes to maintain their interest and excitement.

When cooking for the family, make it a point to put on an extra pot of water and whip up a batch of quinoa at the same time. Then it’s available to either enjoy the same night or ready to eat another day with veggies. This streamlines your overall meal prep.

For greater success, don’t make your loved ones eat like you if they’re not feeling it. This might be the hardest tip because when we believe in something, we want others to do it with us. Allow them to be on their journey, just as you are, and without judgement. Ask if they will eat what you want, and if they say no, then don’t stress.

EAT WITH LOVE

Two of my favorite things in life are traveling and health. When paired together, it becomes a recipe for success to enjoy every place you go. I recommend trying these tips and find what works for you. It has taken me years to stop being fearful of food and to enjoy everything I eat. I focus on quality over quantity and choose things that have been made with love. For example, the last time I had fast food from a large chain was nearly six years ago. I remember walking into the place, ordering a burger, and seeing how quickly they threw it together. It hit me that if I am eating food that is made that quickly by people who don’t like their job, then the energy of the food will affect me. Since then, I’ve made it a point to focus on finding food that I know has been grown, prepared, and served with love. When we’re on the road, whether we’re eating our own humus, or trying something new, love is one of the most savory ingredients for our own wellness.

Nikki Sharp is the author of [The 5-Day Real Food Detox and Meal Prep Your Way to Weight Loss](#). You can follow her journey and find more recipes at: [nikkisharp.com](#). Follow her on Instagram @nikkisharp.

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