

How to Stay Fit While Traveling

Summer, at first glance, seems to be much more conducive to staying fit than winter does. Whereas in winter, we can easily blame cold weather and cozy beds for our tendency to sleep in instead of work out, in summer, the temperatures are warm (sweltering here in south Texas!), the sun is shining, bright green grasses are begging to be frolicked upon, and hiking trails and swimming pools are calling our name.

But so are vacations. And for many of us, vacations mean temptations to eat more and move less.

Most people I train have a love/hate relationship with vacations for the precise reason that they seem to have a sneaky way of undoing hard work in the gym. Leading up to their trip, they train hard and eat well, but take two steps backward the moment they arrive at their destination. **An all-or-nothing mentality takes over** when they're presented with all-you-can-eat buffets and beautiful beaches, and they return home feeling defeated by that "cheeseburger in paradise."

But vacations don't have to be defeating, I promise! In this article, I'm going to give you practical tips that will help you stay on the straight and narrow road of health and fitness while still enjoying your summer escape.

1. In the plane. It's important to start your trip off on the right foot. Before you get to your vacation spot, **set the bar high** to establish how you're going to eat for the duration of the trip.

It's no secret that airline food (*if* your airline serves meals) is subpar in taste and nutrition. Bring what food you can from home, such as fruit, nuts, no-refrigeration-required nut butter, carrots, celery sticks, or all-natural snack bars.

Pack these in your carry-on and steer clear of the airport's sugary, salty snacks.

After you've made it through security, any food you purchase can be brought onto the plane. Definitely say "No" to artificially sweetened beverages and go for the bottled water or unsweetened tea instead. Fortunately, more healthy eating establishments seem to be popping up in more and more airports, so take the time to find out where these are located and bid *bon voyage* to the fast food options.

When you're in the air, avoid soft drinks (especially diet ones!) and alcohol, as both can dehydrate you. Not only do flyers experience physiological changes related to an increase in altitude, they are also exposed to low moisture levels. Aircraft cabin humidity levels are unnaturally low, from 5-10 percent, creating an environment with less humidity than the Sahara Desert! **Water is *always* the best choice** for preventing dehydration, fatigue, lightheadedness, and jet lag, not to mention keeping cravings at bay.

2. In the car. Sitting in the car for hours on end, stopping only to use the restroom or eat a meal, can take its toll on your health and fitness fast. To avoid the lure of the golden arches, **invest in a cooler**. A big one. And fill it up with healthy snacks like raw veggies, homemade sandwiches, and fruit. Restock along the way when you have the opportunity to stop at local grocery stores or farmers markets.

For help finding healthy local eateries, try the GoodFoodNearYou app, which pinpoints the healthiest menu options at restaurants in your area, including fast food chains.

On particularly long road trips, be sure to **stop at least once a day** for an exercise and stretching break (in that order.) Check your road map or GPS for nearby parks where you can go for a walk, or spend some time exploring a new town or city,

by foot of course!

3. In the hotel. The first thing to look for while searching for a hotel is ... you guessed it ... a fitness center! Or at least a pool. Most major booking sites allow you to customize your search to show only hotels that offer certain fitness amenities.

If your hotel doesn't have a gym, bring a few pieces of home equipment along with you, such as a jump rope or resistance bands. You could even bring a workout DVD with you and do it first thing in the morning, leaving the rest of the day to focus on your itinerary!

As a lower-tech option, you can jog around the local neighborhood, or devise your own bodyweight workouts using tried and true exercises such as squats, lunges, push-ups, and sit-ups!

Along with a fitness facility, you may also consider booking a room that has a kitchenette, as this will save you money on food and enable you to cook healthy meals without all the salt, butter, and unhealthy oils that many restaurants use.

4. On the ship. Cruises are arguably the worst offenders when it comes to derailing diets. They are notorious for boasting beaucoups of food at all hours of the day. However, in the midst of the pastries and pizzas, most cruise lines offer healthier options with reduced sodium, trans fats, and simple sugars. Royal Caribbean, Holland America, Carnival, and many other lines have eliminated trans fats completely from their dining rooms.

Along with giving into gluttony (let's call it for what it is), cruisers generally face the temptation to lounge by the pool instead of staying active. But on today's ships, there's no reason not to exercise—if you have the motivation, which as believers, is derived from our desire to glorify God with our bodies. Nearly all ships have a gym and jogging track, and

most also offer a number of fitness classes that passengers can take throughout their cruise. Newer ships even have ice skating rinks and rock climbing walls! There really is no excuse not to burn some calories and break a sweat while at sea.

Off the ship, choose active shore excursions, like kayaking, hiking or biking. If you do enough physical activity during the day, then you can splurge on ice cream at night guilt free (one serving will do it!).

If you're interested in a bit of light reading that will motivate you to stay on track while traveling and provide quick, bodyweight workouts, check out my book *Perfect Fit* available for the Kindle and in paperback.

Stay fit, stay faithful.

Diana Anderson-Tyler is the author of *Creation House's Fit for Faith: A Christian Woman's Guide to Total Fitness*, *Perfect Fit: Weekly Wisdom and Workouts for Women of Faith and Fitness*, and her latest book, *Immeasurable: Diving into the Depths of God's Love*. Her popular website can be found at www.dianatylertyler.com and she is the owner and a coach at CrossFit 925. Diana can be reached on Twitter.

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