



Vegan Vacationing

How to Beat the SAD System

By Scott Laird

If you've ever gone on a theme park vacation, you know that you have to do some planning. With military precision, you convert your kitchen into a war room.

Armed with theme park maps and advice books, you plan your attack — how to get on the most rides with the fewest line ups and slip the Hollywood-style stunt shows in between.

For most people that's where it stops, but when you're on The Hallelujah Diet, there's one more step — planning your food.

Theme parks are the world headquarters of the Standard American Diet (SAD). The "sad" fact is that as a Hallelujah Dieter you're going to have very few dining options once you pass through that turnstile. And let's be honest, after walking (and walking) the happiest tarmac on earth for hours in the blazing heat, that dairy-laden, mouse-ear-shaped ice cream cone is going to be pretty tempting.

So what do you do?

Get out your laptop or pen and paper and literally plan every meal before you leave. It takes some effort, but if you don't do it, you run the risk of giving in to temptation and wishing you hadn't. It also helps to keep the kids from begging for the ice cream that everyone else is eating.

Planning your food also means choosing your hotel room wisely because you'll be using it for food prep. If you can spring for it, get a suite with a kitchen. A room with a kitchenette would be an adequate option, too. During a recent theme park visit, our family made it work in a standard room with a mini-fridge (which most hotel rooms include these days).

When choosing accommodations, remember that the best hotels for Hallelujah Dieters are the ones with a free hot breakfast — not that you're going to have the sausage and eggs. The reason is that these hotels also have the best variety of fruit to go along with the other breakfast items (you can bring the fruit up to your room to complement the Hallelujah-friendly breakfast items you bring from home).

Once you've booked a room, run through each day in your mind, starting with breakfast in the hotel room. First things first... BarleyMax. Bring the canister with you if you can. If you're short on space, fill a zipper lock bag with two servings of BarleyMax per person per day along with a teaspoon for measuring.

Why only two servings instead of three per day? Let's be honest... Even if you do your best, eating while on vacation is not like eating at home. During a busy theme park day with kids, the morning in the hotel room

is probably the only time you're going to get some BarleyMax into them. So, give them two servings at once before you head out for the day. Having two servings in their system is better than none.

To mix the BarleyMax some people bring along their Tribest Personal Blender (which also works well for smoothies) or a battery operated hand mixer. Our family simply used a sheet of paper to make a funnel to spoon the BarleyMax into some bottled water and shook it up. (Hallelujah Acres now offers a handy, new Fit-n-Fresh shaker cup that's perfect for mixing BarleyMax - available at hacres.com/catalog)

In addition to packing your BarleyMax, bring along some breakfast items for the kids, such as rolled oats to make oatmeal, then use the fresh fruit from the hotel to add some variety. The hotel will usually have hot water in the breakfast area to make the oatmeal. If not, just use your in-room coffee maker to heat some water.

As for the rest of your food, you may want to follow the rule of thumb that our family followed: bring an abundance of snacks in a backpack for morning and noon, then eat one mid-afternoon meal (including a large salad) for lunch/supper.

To our surprise, the Disney theme parks in Florida allow outside food and water. Even so, we kept a cooler in our vehicle packed with our mid-afternoon meal. This way we could take a break from the action (and heat) by eating our meal in the privacy of our vehicle with the air conditioning on.

To keep your cooler cold for as long as possible, line the bottom with dry ice packets, cover the dry ice with regular ice, then set your food on top.

Click here for dry ice near you.

When planning the mid-afternoon meals and snacks, we found it was easier to write out a shopping list instead of packing food from home. We simply looked online for a familiar grocery store that was close to our hotel.

Our shopping list also included a gallon jug or two of distilled water (to make BarleyMax, etc.) and some bottled water for hydration during the day (get the bottles with the sport bottle-style pop top for convenience). To make sure we were getting the best water possible, our family purchased only one 6-pack of bottled water and refilled them with distilled water and Hallelujah Acres' WaterMax supplement. (Make sure all water bottles are BPA-free)

Because we weren't sure if the grocery store near our hotel would have healthy snacks beyond fresh fruit, we did bring some snack foods from home including Hallelujah Acres

Survival Bars, unsulfured dried fruit, organic snack crackers, etc.

As well equipped as we were, after a couple of days of eating out of a backpack and going back to the vehicle for a mid-afternoon meal, it was time to at least try to eat healthy in one of the theme park's restaurants — this took a little more creativity.

You may find, as we did, that some theme park restaurants have vegetarian options that are not on the menu. For example, by asking the restaurant hostess, we found out that one burger place had a "garden" patty option. It wasn't the best option in the world, but at least it was Hallelujah-friendly and it didn't cost an arm and a leg (which vegetarian options at the park's fancier restaurants did).

Another place offered a veggie melt sub sandwich. We asked them to skip the cheese and voila — Hallelujah-friendly lunch was served.

Both of these fast food type restaurants had a "fixings bar" which is a secret weapon for anyone on The Hallelujah Diet.

Once we had our veggie burger or sub sandwich in hand, we used the fixings bar like a salad bar, loading up our plates with the shredded lettuce, tomatoes, onions, and mushrooms that other people were using as condiments. This way we were able to get some fresh salad into our bodies, even if our "salad" consisted mostly of

iceberg lettuce (which is not as nutritious as other varieties). Of course, being a fixings bar there was no salad dressing, but salsa worked just fine instead.

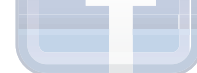


Although the theme park restaurants are fun to try, it can be challenging to find Hallelujah-friendly options the whole family will like. You're much better off to pack your own mid-afternoon meal or bring more snacks so you can hold off for an evening meal at an off-site restaurant after your day at the theme park is done.

If you opt for an evening meal, buffet restaurants are great if you can find one with quality salad ingredients and steamed veggies (which the Golden Corral® chain has). Just remember that all of the SAD food is also spread out before you, so make sure you're able to resist temptation before you go.

Vacationing on The Hallelujah Diet is not difficult; it's just different than what everyone else is doing. But staying on the diet while on vacation is much better than forgoing your principles only to suffer with gastrointestinal issues (or worse) when you get home. 🍌

Do you have any tips for traveling on The Hallelujah Diet? We'd love to hear about it and so would our Facebook fans! Tell us your story at www.facebook.com/hallelujahacres



Scott Laird is a member of The Hallelujah Acres marketing department.

