

Vegan travel tips

Viva!

Being vegan can be difficult at times and this can especially be the case when travelling.

But, as they say, forewarned is forearmed! With our travel tips ringing in your ears you will have solutions for averting just about any vegan disaster while in unfamiliar surroundings.

On the road:

Service stations are slowly becoming more vegan-friendly but don't expect much choice!

From the café you probably won't get much more than chips and beans, beans on toast or jacket potato with beans! On the sweet side, you'll probably find fruit salads and, if you're after a lighter bite, Dove's Farm biscuits or Raspberry Crumble bars – both are which are clearly marked as suitable for vegans – which can be a nice little treat to boost your energy levels.

Most coffee chains now provide soya milk and you can sometimes ask for Fairtrade coffee blends too. Whether they advertise the fact or not, do make a point of asking even if it does end in disappointment – if you don't ask, you don't get! And the more demand that's created, the more likely that chains not currently stocking soya milk will do so.

M&S stores are becoming more common and with these you can get more choice with some nice salad options, hummus, falafel and a great fresh fruit selection not to mention healthy vegan nibbles like dried fruits and nuts.

Come prepared – see Lunchbox ideas.

For details of motorway services in the UK and reviews go to www.motorwayservices.info. And for alternatives to motorway services, go to www.thegreatmotorwaysecret.com where you can purchase a book of the same name, costing £6.99, detailing over 95 supermarkets just minutes from the motorway.

At the airport:

Airports usually have limited vegan fare but you will probably get a slightly better choice compared to motorway service stations. There'll be at least one coffee house that has soya milk and at least one place where you can get a decent wrap or salad. The best places to try are:

Gatwick North:
food: Eat, Marks & Spencer
soya milk: Costa, Starbucks

Gatwick South:
food: Marks & Spencer, Starbucks
soya milk: Caffé Nero, Costa, Starbucks

Heathrow:
food: Eat, Pret, Marks & Spencer
soya milk: Bite, Coffee Republic, Costa

If you're really stuck, you should be able to easily find somewhere that does chips and beans or jacket potato and beans.

Come prepared – see Lunchbox ideas.

Lunchbox ideas:

If you're worried about what vegan morsels you'll be able to lay your hands on, then remove the element of surprise (=fear!) by bringing along your own provisions.

Sandwich suggestions:

- Bean burger with salad and ketchup
- Cheatin' chicken with avocado and vegan mayo
- 'Cheese' and pickle'
- Cream 'cheese' with olive tapenade and lettuce
- Falafel, grated carrot and sweet chilli sauce
- Hummus and roasted veg
- Peanut butter and jam
- Sausage, tomato, salad and vegan mayo
- Spicy bean pate with green salad and vegan mayo
- Vegan BLT

Try different types of breads as well as bagels, rolls and pittas.

Salads:

- Carrot and celeriac
- French lentil
- Middle Eastern cous cous
- Mock duck
- Sweet potato, fennel and beetroot

These are just a few ideas, all of which have been taken from *The Salad Scoffer* (available from Viva! – see www.viva.org.uk/vivashop or call 0117 944 1000 for details) which only costs £1.25 so no excuse! Salads are very healthy and easy to transport in airtight plastic containers.

Snacks:

- Dried fruit
- Nuts
- Fresh fruit
- Vegetable sticks – carrot, celery, pepper – great with a dip/hummus
- Flapjacks/raw bars
- And, if you're feeling naughty, a vegan chocolate bar or bag of sweets – check out Viva!'s online shop (see www.viva.org.uk/vivashop) for some tasty treats!

In the air:

Depending which airline you fly with, the quality of vegan meal – and whether you get one at all! – will vary hugely. But don't let this spoil your trip. Be prepared!

1. Check when booking your flight/trip that you will receive a vegan meal.
2. Double-check that you're still down to receive a vegan meal when you check in as bookings often seem to go awry between the airline and caterers.
3. Even if your vegan meal has been confirmed, don't expect to receive one!
4. Always bring a back-up! A cup-a-soup or pot noodle type meal is perfect as the air stewards will be happy to provide hot water.
5. Remember to do all of the above for the return journey!

In the air (cont'd):

Airlines providing vegan meals:

Aer Lingus
Air Canada
Air Malta
Air New Zealand
American Airlines
British Airways
Cathay Pacific
Continental Airlines
Lufthansa
Malaysia Airlines
Qantas Airways
Qatar Airways
United Airlines
Vietnam Airlines
Virgin Atlantic

Tour operators providing vegan meals:

Direct Holidays
My Travel
Thomas Cook
Thomson

Tour operators that don't provide

vegan meals:
First Choice

Please let us know if you discover others that do (or don't!) cater for vegans and we'll add them to the list!

Also check out <http://www.airline.meals.net/indexSpecialmeals.html> to find examples of meals served by airlines and to post your own review.

Out and about:

If you're organised, you'll have done a bit of research before your journey (see Veggie travel books and Online veggie directories) to see if there are vegan, vegetarian or veggie-friendly eateries in the area.

If you haven't, don't worry, there'll be vegan offerings out there and if you're lucky you may stumble upon a true delight!

1. Ask around if appropriate – the best place is obviously the tourist information office but otherwise a newsagent, bookshop or health food store, if there is one, may also be worth trying as the staff may know of local veggie friendly places.
2. If there's no one to ask, or you've tried asking but no one has a clue, familiarise yourself with your surroundings and look for somewhere that appeals to you.
3. You've found it? Great!
4. Look at what's available on their menu. Is there anything vegan? Is

there anything vegetarian that can be adapted? Are there any ingredients used in dishes that could be used to make up something for you? Have a good look and consider the possibilities.

5. Make your selection – don't be afraid to ask for a vegan combo to be made up for you – most will be happy to oblige. The baseline (which isn't as low as you may need to go!) is hummus and roasted veg for lunch and cheese-free pizza (don't forget to check the base) for dinner so let's see how well you can do!
6. There, that wasn't so bad – or was it?!

Veggie travel books:

UK:

Guide to Vegetarian Brighton
Vegetarian & Vegan Guide to Bristol & Bath
Vegetarian & Vegan Guide to Yorkshire
Vegetarian Britain
Vegetarian Guide to the Lake District
Vegetarian London
Where to Eat Vegetarian Restaurant
(all available from Viva! – see www.viva.org.uk/vivashop or call 0117 944 1000 for details)

Rest of world:

Vegan Passport
(available from Viva! – see above)

Naturals Foods Restaurants (US+Canada)
The New Spain
Vegan Guide to New York
Vegetarian Europe
Vegetarian France
Vegetarian Israel
Vegetarian Italy
Vegetarian United States
(all available from www.vegetarianguides.co.uk)

Online veggie directories

When trying to locate vegan-friendly places in the UK and abroad, you may find the following websites of use (please note that most rely on public submissions so may be out-of-date):

UK:

- Viva! Veggie-Friendly Places: www.viva.org.uk/eatingout/veggie-friendly-form.php
- www.happycow.net
- www.vegdining.com
- www.vegeats.com
- www.vegetarianvisitor.co.uk
- www.veggieplaces.co.uk
- www.vegout.info

UK, by region:

- Blackpool: www.blackpool.vegangroup.co.uk/index.html
- Durham: www.dur.ac.uk/animal.rights/durham/
- Edinburgh: www.crueltyfree.org.uk/edinburgh/
- Gloucestershire: www.vegan3counties.org.uk/
- Herefordshire: www.vegan3counties.org.uk/
- London: www.veganlondon.co.uk/
- Nottingham: www.vegan-nottingham.co.uk/
- Oxford: <http://the.earth.li/~kake/cgi-bin/openguides/vegan-oxford.cgi>
- Scarborough: www.scarb.co.uk/index.html
- Wales: www.eatoutveganwales.org/
- Worcestershire: www.vegan3counties.org.uk/

Rest of world:

- Viva! Veggie-Friendly Places www.viva.org.uk/eatingout/veggie-friendly-form.php
- www.happycow.net
- www.vegdining.com
- www.vegeats.com
- www.vegetarianusa.com
- Vegetarian Resource Group www.vrg.org/restaurant/index.htm
- www.veggieplaces.co.uk

Your experiences welcomed!

If you've had a particularly good – or, heaven forbid, particularly bad – vegan experience, we'd love to hear from you as we want our travel tips to be as helpful as possible and the only way to ensure they are is through your feedback. So come on, spill, email angie@viva.org.uk.

And if you want to let others know about a great veggie place, don't forget to post details at www.viva.org.uk/eatingout/veggie-friendly-form.php.

If you have any questions or queries about vegan travelling, please contact:

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