



4 Recipes You Can Make in a Hotel Room, and Other Healthy Travel Hacks

By Darshana Thacker Wendel
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Cooking in a small kitchen with limited tools can be tricky—but it's not impossible! Whether you're on the road for a business trip or a family vacation, hotel kitchenettes have everything you need to create tasty vegan meals without all the fancy gadgets from home. Plus, if you're visiting a new city that isn't very [WFPB-friendly](#), it's important to get creative in small spaces so you can still nourish yourself (and perhaps the whole family) with healthy meals.

At Forks Over Knives, we want to make eating plant-based as easy as possible. In this article we'll walk you through the basics of preparing satisfying and healthy dishes using a few portable kitchen tools, a microwave, and [pantry staples](#) that are easy to find just about anywhere you travel. These tips and recipes are also great for prepping vegan meals in dorm rooms, office kitchens, or other places where you have limited access to kitchen equipment. Be prepared to be wowed by the ease of eating well outside of your own home!

Things to Consider Before You Travel

If you're headed out of town and not sure where you can find a wholesome plant-based meal, we've got you covered. Think about these important aspects of your travel plans to ensure a smooth (and tasty) trip.

Lodging

When choosing a [hotel](#), look for a room that includes a microwave and a mini fridge. Bonus points for a freezer! Consider upgrading to a room with a kitchenette or

booking lodging with a kitchen through Airbnb. When comparing costs for these upgrades, factor in the money you'll save on restaurant food. If you're traveling with family, the savings can add up quickly.

Flying

You may want to check at least one bag so you can bring basic kitchen tools and ingredients—a knife won't make it through the security line. The more food you pack, the easier it will be to prepare meals as soon as you arrive, rather than looking for a grocery store.

Regulations

Check the rules and regulations for bringing fresh produce into any foreign countries. For details, contact your destination country's embassy or consulate in the United States before you go.

What to Pack

Not all of these items will be necessary based on your destination, but think about bringing some of these helpful tools and pantry staples with you to minimize kitchen complications when you arrive. Bonus tip: use packing cubes in your suitcase to sort out your cooking essentials from clothes and toiletries.

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Kitchen Tools

Most of these items, except for the knife, can be transported in carry-on luggage.

- Insulated bag to carry perishables
- Microwave-safe [collapsible silicone containers](#) with lids, to cook and store food
- [Microwave rice cooker](#) (works for cooking pasta and oatmeal too)
- [Collapsible colander](#)
- Collapsible measuring cups and spoons
- Lightweight plastic cutting board

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- Knife
- [Portable utensils](#)
- Vegetable peeler
- Travel-size can opener
- [Microfiber dish towels](#)
- Flatware and serving spoon(s)
- Lightweight reusable serving/storage bowls
- [Zip-top bags for leftovers](#)
- Shopping bags
- Trash bags

Food Items

When choosing what to pack, focus on lightweight items that you already have in your pantry. Grains, nuts, and dry spices can be packed into zip-top bags to save space.

- Rice and quinoa (ideally precooked, in shelf-stable pouches; uncooked is OK too)
- Dry pasta or noodles
- Rolled oats (for microwave oatmeal breakfasts)
- Nuts and seeds
- Salt and pepper
- Garlic powder
- Italian seasoning
- Paprika or chili powder
- Packet of low-sodium taco seasoning mix
- Packet of low-sodium chili seasoning mix

Travel Snacks

Along with whatever you pack in a checked bag, it's smart to carry some foods to enjoy en route—and something to tide you over when you reach your final destination. Sliced fruits and veggies (apples, grapes, celery, cucumber, bell peppers), prepared sandwiches with nut butter or hummus and vegetables, cooked rice and beans, roasted or baked potatoes, sweet potatoes, and steamed vegetables will stay fresh for at least a day in airtight containers.

When You Get There

You probably won't want to pack every single ingredient in your suitcase: Bring the essentials along with you and then pick up the rest at a local supermarket to make hotel cooking a breeze. Plus, visiting the grocery store can be a fun way to discover the place you're visiting!

Items to Buy at Your Destination

- Fresh fruits and vegetables for snacking and meals (whole and/or prewashed/sliced)
- Frozen vegetables (if you have freezer access)
- Canned beans (ideally in pop-top cans)
- Canned diced tomatoes (ideally in pop-top cans)
- Rice and quinoa (ideally precooked, in shelf-stable pouches)
- Any spices or seasoning blends you didn't pack
- Tortillas and/or bread
- Oil-free pico de gallo or salsa, hummus, and/or guacamole
- Plant milk, such as almond, soy, cashew, or rice
- Hot sauce

Find a Salad Bar

Ask at your hotel about the nearest salad bar, where you can pick up just the right amount of prepped ingredients for pasta primavera, tacos, sandwiches...and salads! No fuss, no waste.

4 Healthy Vegan Recipes You Can Cook From Anywhere

Ready to get started? Check out these four delicious, nutritious, and oh-so-easy recipes you can concoct from just about any kitchen in the world. All you need is a small countertop to prepare your ingredients and a microwave. Dinner will be ready in no time.

Microwave Sweet Potato and Kale Chili



No slow cooker needed for this chili recipe. Simply zap the sweet potatoes in the microwave with your seasonings, add beans and kale, and voilà! Spoon everything over brown rice and you'll have a crave-worthy meal ready in a matter of minutes.

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Super-Simple Hummus Veggie Wraps



Ready in a flash, these tasty veggie wraps will fuel you through everything on your travel itinerary. Crunchy carrots, bell peppers, and cucumber are arranged over a thick slather of hummus, sprinkled in hot sauce, and rolled up in whole wheat tortillas. What's not to love?

Southwest Potato and Red Bean Bowls



Potatoes, kidney beans, and fresh salsa join forces in this microwave recipe to create a quick and comforting meal. Lemon juice adds brightness, while paprika brings a warm flavor to round out this satisfying bowl. Feel free to add any extra frozen veggies you have on hand.

20-Minute Black Bean Tacos



Tacos in the microwave? You bet! This hearty recipe is packed full of savory black beans, sweet corn, smoky Southwest spices, and fresh toppings. Your favorite taco shop won't feel so far away when you have this recipe in your back pocket.

For more help staying on a healthy plant-based path no matter how busy life gets, check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool. To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#).