

Up, off and away! **Gluten free travel tips**

Although you may have been diagnosed as requiring a gluten free diet, it should not prevent you from enjoying your travel experiences.

Whether for work or pleasure, the key to successful travel gluten free is planning!! Think about where you are going, how you are going to get there, and what style of accommodation (including cooking and food storage facilities) you will be using whilst there.

General travel tips

No two destinations will be the same; it is likely that access to gluten free foods will be greater in larger cities. More remote holiday locations are going to require you to be a little more resourceful. There will be varying availability of specialty bread, pasta, biscuits, and snack foods. Make enquiries at your destination early in your travel planning. You want to use your time to enjoy your destination, not waste it on finding where to get food.

If your travel plans include catering as part of a holiday package, eg. coach, train or cruise travel, it is essential that you organise your gluten free meal before you go! If arranging your holiday through a travel agent, advise them of your needs when booking. A travel agency with a particular focus on gluten free travel planning is GlutenFree Travel – more information is available at www.glutenfreetravel.com.au

The foods eaten whilst on your travels will also be based on the cooking and storage facilities available to you. If storage space and refrigeration are limited, you may not be able to eat fresh foods regularly. Canned/packaged dry non-perishable foods are good options. There are many gluten free pre-packaged complete meals now available.

Travel within Australia:

It is recommended you contact the Coeliac Society of Australia to find out the "local knowledge", including handy

hints on where to shop and dine. The Coeliac Society of Australia's website is www.coeliacsociety.com.au and there are links to each State from this site.

Travel Overseas:

You may like to pack some of your own gluten free food to take with you on your travels overseas. If you do pack your own food, it is recommended to take a letter with you written by your doctor stating you have a medical condition that requires special dietary food. You may like to check with Customs about any food restrictions that may exist in some countries.

Having some food packed in your luggage when you arrive can help see you through until you find where to purchase specialty gluten free food at your destination. Availability and awareness of gluten free diets will vary from country to country! In some countries you will be able to purchase gluten free foods in supermarkets, in others you will find them in chemists/pharmacists, health food stores, reform houses and other locations.

The definition of what is a gluten free diet can vary around the world. It is recommended you follow the Australian definition of a gluten free diet when you travel overseas.

The Australian definition of a gluten free diet is "no detectable gluten", using the most sensitive test that is available. Presently, this is a test sensitive to detect gluten to a level of 5 parts per million. This means that ingredients like wheat starch, wheat based thickeners, wheat dextrins and (most) wheat maltodextrins are not considered gluten free, as they have more than 5 parts per million gluten present. However, ingredients such as wheat glucose syrup, wheat glucose, wheat dextrose, and wheat colour caramel (colour 150) can be included in the gluten free diet as they do not have detectable gluten.

In some countries, oats, wheat starch and malt are allowed in "gluten free" foods. In Australia, these are not

considered gluten free. It is recommended to research (using a dictionary, etc) the names of food ingredients that are not gluten free before travelling overseas. This will assist you when reading ingredients on food packets.

It is also important to note that not all countries have the same strict food labelling laws we have in Australia. In Australia, all foods and ingredients derived from gluten-containing grains (wheat, rye, oats and barley) must be declared on the food package. This may not be the requirement in all countries. Read food labels carefully.

Translated summaries explaining coeliac disease, the gluten free diet and food requirements, can be a useful way to assist you to eat out successfully in

restaurants, cafes, and other venues in non-English speaking countries. You may wish to check out Gluten Free Passport (www.glutenfreepassport.com) for details about a comprehensive dining translation book, or the following organisations who have translated cards in many languages: Coeliac Society of Australia (www.coeliacsociety.com.au) and Roma Foods (www.orgran.com). Such cards can be helpful, but do ensure you enquire about the cooking methods and ingredients for each menu item as best you can. If in doubt, leave it out!

Travel insurance is recommended, especially when travelling overseas. You will be required to declare your pre-existing condition of coeliac disease. This should not affect the

availability of cover for you, but, as is the case with any pre-existing condition, you will probably not be covered for any illness relating to coeliac disease whilst travelling. Check with your travel insurance company for all details of your cover.

So what's stopping you? Get out your diary and atlas now to choose when and where in the world you are going to embrace gluten free! Enjoy!

By Sue Shepherd
Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian
B.App.Sci (Health Promotion), M. Nut. &
Diet., PhD Researcher
www.coeliac.com.au



IRRESISTIBLE GLUTEN FREE WHEAT FREE* FOOD SHOW

TASTE, TRY AND BUY GREAT GLUTEN FREE!

THE BIGGEST GLUTEN FREE/WHEAT FREE* EVENT EVER HELD IN AUSTRALIA AT MELBOURNE EXHIBITION CENTRE (OPPOSITE "CROWN COMPLEX")
ENTRY FEE \$15 CONCESSION \$12

OCTOBER 20TH - 21ST 2007 (SAT&SUN) 10AM - 5PM

SPECIALTY GLUTEN FREE MANUFACTURERS, MAJOR FOOD MANUFACTURERS
OVER 100 EXHIBITORS! CONSUMERS AND EXHIBITORS: FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO

WWW.FOODSHOW.COM.AU HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE, Sue Shepherd

BOOKS! BAKEWARE! BISCUITS! MEALS! CAKES! RESTAURANTS! PASTRIES! BEER!

TICKET SALES AT: WWW.FOODSHOW.COM.AU

*"Individuals with dietary wheat intolerances should check ingredients prior to purchase and consumption to ensure suitability. Foods containing ingredients derived from wheat but with no detectable gluten will be permitted at the Show. All foods at the Show will be gluten free."

Proceeds from entry fee to be donated for research into coeliac disease and other food intolerances.

DO YOU SUFFER FROM
COELIAC DISEASE
FRUCTOSE MALABSORPTION
OR
BLOATING, WIND OR
IRRITABLE BOWEL
AFTER EATING?
ENJOY FRIENDLY FOOD
AT THE SHOW!

