

BUFFET EXTRAVAGANZA

How to survive the buffet tables at all inclusive RESORTS & CRUISES

It is that time of the year again when our clients are heading south for their yearly beach vacation or taking a much deserved cruise. Many will simply throw healthy eating caution to the wind; choosing to consume large amounts of food and massive amounts of sweet drinks.

The number one problem at these 'buffets extravaganzas' is that the food availability is very high; it is all there, ready to go, just waiting to jump on the plate. The food is chanting: "pick me pick me!"

How to survive the **BUFFET EXTRAVAGANZAS!**

1. Always use a small plate. These are usually found near the salad bar or the dessert bar; avoid the large plates. Give yourself permission to go back for 2nds. Once you have eaten the contents of the smaller plate, you decide your level of hunger. You will be tempted by the larger plate but DO NOT give in. This strategy really works!
2. Put the vegetables first on your plate. Our eyes are bigger than our stomachs, especially with the over abundance of food available. Try to fill ½ your "small" plate with vegetables and then proceed to the less nutritious food items. This will help you eat healthier and feel better. To be successful at this strategy, try to fill the bottom of the small plate with greens and/or lots of vegetables. Make a bed of low calorie vegetables and put the more calorie laden food on top.
3. For the breakfast meal, scoop up fruit first on your plate; again, use the smaller plate. Then, you can add protein and lastly, the starch or grains.
4. Watch the grain foods; the breads, buns, scones, croissants are limitless, made with lots of white flour and white sugar, and very high in calories. Try to put these last on your plate and always reach for the higher fibre whole grain versions.
5. Assess your hunger. Wait until you are truly hungry to have your next meal or snack. Just because the cruise ship or resort tells you it is meal time does not mean that you need to eat immediately. Typically, meals are served

within a 2 to 3 hour window. Assess your hunger. Your goal is to be hungry but not starving. Timing your next meal or snack puts you in control of your own food intake.

How to judge your hunger on a scale of 0 to 10 (being the highest)? Try to hit the buffets tables when you are at a 7 or 8; never a 10 as you will overeat and never a 1 or 2 as you are not hungry yet. To help you flex that hunger muscle, go for a long walk on the beach/ship or jump into the salty sea to tackle those waves.

6. Eat at the table. Do not pick at your food while you are still in the buffet line. Make a deal with yourself. I will only eat once I am sitting down, relaxing.... I am on vacation after all.
7. Beverages **do** count. Pina Coladas, Daiquiris, Cervezas and even non-alcoholic drinks are loaded with calories. Have water between sugared drinks. You can dilute a drink by adding ½ soda water. This will also help keep you hydrated.
8. Drink a glass of water just before going to the buffet table. You are likely very thirsty from your fun in the sun. Many times, we are more thirsty than hungry. If you always assume you are thirsty, you will make a habit of drinking a large glass of water before each meal.

This is an easy, healthy strategy to transfer into your everyday life at home.

And..... you still overeat!

Don't get angry get even! If you overeat and do not feel good about yourself, do some damage control at your next meal. Simply try to eat less to balance out the overindulgence of calories and BURN IT OFF... walk, swim, beach aerobics, ship volleyball...have FUN!

BUFFET EXTRAVAGANZAS are fun and delicious; full of flavour, color, textures. It is your time to socialize, to relax. Be aware of your mind, mood and appetite; you will be fine.

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