

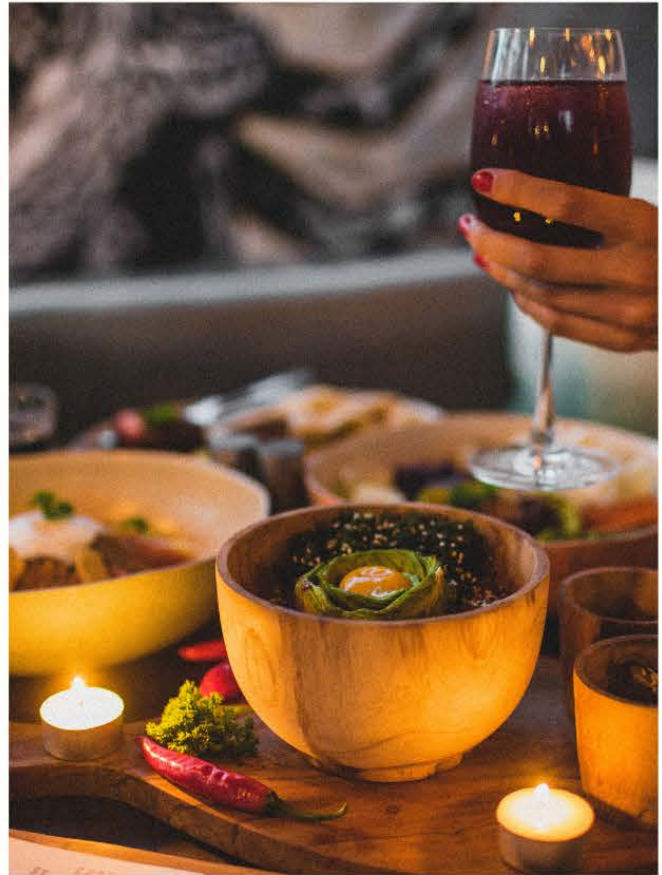


# Gut Health Tips for the Holidays



It's much easier to stay on track when you eat at home every mealtime. You're responsible for the ingredients giving you the advantage of knowing exactly what you're eating. Cooking at home is also an great way to adhere to your nutrition and health goals, and is the perfect solution to avoid/limit added sugars, excessive salt, and food triggers that can lead to reactions, sensitivities, digestive symptoms, weight gain, etc.,

Eating meals at home indisputably gives you complete control over your diet, yet, it is unrealistic to aspect a meal at home each and every day. We need a change in scenery, a break from the day to day, socialization, and the joy shared meals at restaurants or family/friends' homes can bring, especially around the holidays.



Not to mention a night “off cooking”!

Eating out is sometimes necessary and should be enjoyed. In fact, it should be your opportunity to reconnect with loved ones, engage in “catch-up” conversations, and soak in the ambience of social gatherings. All of this is good for your overall mental and emotional health, which is equally as important as your physical health.

However, dining out can often lead to digestive issues such as gas, bloating, and reflux due to the questionable ingredients used. But the fear of symptoms attacking during social gatherings can be managed!

## HERE ARE 10 STEPS TO HELP YOU ENJOY DINING OUT WITHOUT COMPROMISING YOUR GUT HEALTH...



### 10 Tips For Eating Out

- **Don't Arrive Hungry:**

Consider having a light, nutritious snack at home before heading out to your lunch or dinner gathering. This approach not only curbs your hunger but also makes it less likely for you to overindulge in dishes that could leave you feeling unwell or “too full” afterwards or impulse order. It’s like food shopping while hungry! Don’t do it!

- **Check The Restaurant Menu Online Beforehand:**

It's extremely helpful to familiarize yourself with the restaurant's menu before you arrive. This not only mitigates potential stress and anxiety- a factor that could negatively impact digestion, but also sets the stage for a pleasant start to your meal.

With access to the online menu beforehand, you can have your appetizer/starter and main course pre-selected to help speed things up when ordering your food.

However, keep a Plan B in mind—restaurants can occasionally run out of specific dishes, and having an alternate choice at the ready can help avoid disappointment, or you having to rush to choose another dish that won't help you keep on track with your health and nutrition goals.

- **Personalize Your Food Order:**

Feel free to inquire about ingredients and request changes to your order if necessary. Most restaurants and servers understand customers' dietary needs. For example: You can ask for your dish to be prepared without certain ingredients or request sauces and dressings to be served separately/on the side or call in advance with queries about specific ingredients.

- **Keep An Eye On Portion Sizes:**



Restaurants are notorious for serving larger portions, which can often lead to overeating, feeling “too full” and ending up with digestion problems like reflux or bloating. If you're hungry when you arrive, you're more likely to overindulge (take note of step 1).

A good workaround can be sharing a main dish with a friend or asking the restaurant to set aside half of your meal for takeout before you start eating. If appetizers are more to your liking, consider ordering two small ones to enjoy as your main meal and add a salad with dressing on the side.

- **Take Time To Chew & Savour Your Food:**

Nowadays, we all seem to rush to finish everything, especially our food. Slow down... and remember to chew your food properly. Take your time during meals. Eating too quickly often leads to overeating, indigestion, bloating, and gas.

Thorough chewing is a crucial step in the digestive process because enzymes are released to breakdown and assimilate nutrients. Slow down and enjoy the company and conversation around you to aid in digestion. Putting your knife and fork down frequently can help remind you to pace yourself.





- **Remember Your Enzymes:**

Enzymes are a critical part to a healthy lifestyle. The food we eat today are simply not grown the same way, even our soil is depleted of minerals and this means foods that should have enzymatic properties to assist in breaking food down, aren't adequate enough and we need supplementation.

Everything that happens in our body requires enzymes. So, if we lack them, our body is so smart at trying to remain balanced, it will pull enzymes from another area. Your eyesight or hearing may improve just by increasing enzymes and healing your gut. Pretty cool right?!

We never leave home without our enzymes. They help to breakdown fats, meat, dairy, gluten and more. Here are the enzymes I recommend to take daily, and increase as needed.

### Digestive Support Enzymes

- **Never Leave Home Without Your Essential Oils:**

Skip the mint with dinner, it is made of harmful dyes and sugar and instead grab your peppermint essential oil! Essential oils are highly concentrated and extremely effective. DiGize and Peppermint essential oils are my go to's for digestive support. DiGize is a blend of well known digestive aids like tarragon, ginger, peppermint, fennel and anise. After dinner, if you feel discomfort, a drop or two under your tongue with a class of water will bring you relief.

### Digestive Support Essential Oils

- **Consider Your Alcohol Intake:**

Remember sugar not only lowers your immune system, but it also feeds bacteria, fungus and prolongs the gut from healing.

When you drink alcohol, your body prioritizes its digestion, which can interfere with the digestion of your food leading to digestive discomfort and making existing gut issues worse.

To help limit symptoms, consider your alcohol intake and, when possible, choose alcohol-free alternatives.

Stay hydrated by switching between your alcoholic drinks and a glass of water. Social events and eating out should not sacrifice your gut health if you remember that moderation is key to balance.



- **Eating at a Family or Friends Home:**



Tell your host (family or friend) about your dietary needs ahead of time. Sharing this information early can prevent awkward questions and moments of turning down dishes at the dinner table.

Furthermore, it can also be a good idea to offer to bring a dish or two that suits your diet and can be shared with the group.

Ask about other dishes being served and make your contribution complementary to them. Consider options like gluten-free, dairy-free, and sugar-free, which will likely suit other guests.

- **You Choose The Place:**



Stay on track this holiday season by being the one that chooses the dining places for your social gathering, especially if you already know the their menu. Another great option is to choose farm fresh and family owned restaurants, as they are much more accommodating and avoid chains restaurants that may have less control on ingredients used.

## Balancing Life & Food

*Remember, life is a beautiful journey filled with spontaneous moments, so don't let your dietary choices or limitations control you.*

*Confidently navigate any dining situation this holiday with just a little extra planning, and you will no longer feel anxious about your meal choices or need to decline social invitations.*

*Instead, you can feel confident and fully equipped to enjoy the food, the company, and the experience without compromising your health goals!*

*xo, Rachael*

