

Maybe when you were in your teens, you could scarf down anything at any time, anywhere, day or night. When at the big game, out with the gang, doing birthday bashes, midnight buffets, jalapeno chili, pizza and whatever. You had a bit of heartburn on the morning after, but you'd be OK by noon, and ready to start on another round of eating stuff that would kill you today. Most of us seasoned citizens have made it this far because we discovered moderation before all the bad food got to us. However, when we travel, we're often tempted to get off the track of sensible eating.



We take cruises about once a year, and one of the attractions is that the food is great and unlimited. In addition to sumptuous sit-down meals, there are snacks and noshes available 24 hours a day throughout the ship. And we challenge our elderly bellies most at the midnight buffets, where the fat content of the food is only matched by endless spreads of cakes, cookies, pies, ice creams and fountains of chocolate.

Fortunately, even with such temptations, we survived and gained only about five pounds per cruise. We also visit Las Vegas several times a year, and the food glut at Sin City's famed buffets is just as impossible to resist. However, in recent years, on our travels, as we aged and slowed down a bit, we moderated our eating routines. For what it's worth, here are some suggestions on how to control your chowdown urge to splurge.

When traveling, whether by car, airplane or ship, try to maintain the same portion and calorie routine you've established at home. Try to resist temptation. Breakfast on the road or sea is toughest for me. Mine at home every morning is a bowl of hot or cold cereal with a banana half or a spoonful of raisins, plus a cup of tea. When we're in a hotel or aboard ship, I too often go for the full meal, including orange juice, toast, ham and eggs, home fries, plus a cup of cocoa. If I gain five pounds a week on a trip, at least four are earned by those doggone full breakfast platters.

The simple rule when you're away, no matter what the temptations, is that you take in the same number of daily calories you do at home. For a senior male, it's about 2,000, a bit less for a senior woman. Keep your choices simple and nutritious. Smaller portions, fresh fruit instead of cake and other logical choices. However, when you cheat, then eat less calories in your next meal. If you insist on attending the midnight chocololic buffet, consider the battle lost, and you'll just have to lug that extra blubber home with the rest of your baggage.