

Traveling Vegan

Whether you are going on vacation or a business trip or away for military duty, sometimes cooking facilities are not existent, and sometimes you are at the mercy of what you can bring or scavenge. Here are some meal ideas for you in case you are in the 'scavenge' position!! The top section assumes you are reliant on military dining or hotel buffet options. Below will be hotel room options.

Breakfast:

Oatmeal or grits or cream of wheat-If it is pre-made like a hotel or military, ask if it is made with milk. If it is, then ask for the single serving packages so that you can make it yourself with water.

Toast: Butter free toast still might have trace amounts of milk in it but if you are not allergic, sometimes that is the best you can do. Instead of butter, top with **peanut butter** if calories are not an issue, or with **jelly**. Most bagels happen to be vegan (no muffin will be). Or skip the toaster and just make a PB&J!!

Dry Cereal: These cereal types tend to be vegan so choose over other options: corn flakes, Chex, raisin bran, Wheaties, most cheerios, Grape Nuts, All Bran, Alpha Bits, Cap'n Crunch Peanut Butter Crunch, Life, Cinnamon Life, Fruit Loops, Frosted Flakes, Kix, Kellogg's Mini-Wheats Unfrosted Bite Size and Rice Crispies.

Fruit: Breakfast is the best time to store up on fruit as it is generally most available at this meal. Bring some back to your room/sleeping area if allowed to provide afternoon snacks.

Omelet station: If there is an omelet station, ask for all the veggies you like to be made into an eggless omelet. In other words, they can sauté your vegetables and you can eat them over toast, over hash browns, wrapped in a tortilla or just on the side with a bowl of fruit or oatmeal.

Hash browns/potatoes: Ask if they have been fried in butter. Generally they are fried in oil so should be 'safe'. If they are made to order, ask that they use oil and not butter to cook them.

Lunch/Dinner:

Many of your options depend on if you have a microwave or refrigerator.

If you are relying on food provided to you and have no microwave/refrigerator, options are generally limited. USUALLY there is one vegetable you can eat. Just have a super big bowl of it. For all of the below, ask if the vegetables have been prepared in butter and if so if you could have some from the back that have not yet been cooked in butter. This includes the grill like for hash browns or at Mongolian grills at restaurants-ask that they use a small amount of oil and not butter.

You might also ask if the cooks have a **potato or sweet potato or ear of corn that THEY could microwave** for you to give you an additional food option without a burden on them.

Food line options: the vegetable of the day, plain pasta, marinara/pizza sauce. Less healthy items include French or sweet potato fries.

Avoid: breaded vegetables (have milk and egg), baked goods like biscuits and cookies (milk and egg). Corn of the vegetables seems most often cooked in butter.

If you can obtain a sweet potato or baked potato, and if you can obtain some beans, you can improvise and make a **chili like recipe**. Mix the beans with some condiments available to you, any vegetables available, and any seasonings like taco powder you might have brought with you, and make a mixture to go on your potato. It will be high in fiber and certainly filling. Oftentimes you can find kidney beans or chickpeas on a salad bar.

If you have chickpeas available, take ½ cup and attempt to make a tunaless sandwich by mashing the chickpeas, adding mustard, some pepper, pickle relish if available, otherwise maybe a bit of oil and vinegar or other vegan dressing that might be available and mix. Maybe you can find some lettuce and tomato to add to your sandwich.

If you have a can of **refried beans** and the food line offers plain tortillas or taco shells, fill the tortilla or shell with refried beans and then any veggie you can find like tomato, onion and lettuce.

If you brought some TVP, reconstitute the TVP and add spices, condiment packages you found, mix it in with the marinara sauce or salsa or other flavorful ingredient to make a potato topping or wrap.

If you have a **microwave**, then most grocery stores have vegan prepackaged meals. Get a box of bocca burgers and a small loaf of bread or some bread that you saved from breakfast or asked the cook for at a military facility. Amy's has a scrambled tofu for breakfast and several lunch/dinner options. Van's has vegan frozen waffles that you can pop in a hotel toaster and have with hotel syrup (just skip the butter and the calories). Gardein has an endless variety of vegan meat products that can be quickly warmed and served with a veggie side. Instant rice still takes a long time in the microwave but you can buy or bring measured amounts with you and something to cook it in.

NissinTop Ramin (oriental flavor) or Simply Asia Sesame Teriyaki Noodle Bowl or Thai Kitchen Noodle Bowls (Hot & Sour, Mushroom, Roasted Garlic, Spring Onion, and Thai Peanut)-if you have hot water, you can make a bowl of ramin and add in a can or scoop of peas or other vegetable. You can even reduce the water and make more like a pasta dish with just the noodles and a big pile of vegetables mixed in.

Most frozen falafel balls are vegan. Microwave the falafel and some lettuce and tomato and a wrap and make your own falafel wraps.

Cans: While not as flavorful as what you can make at home, there are some can goods that you can pack with you for a car trip. Canned chow mein, vegetarian chili or soup, or Manwich that can be mixed with some cooked lentils and reconstituted TVP or Boca crumbles or slightly mashed beans.

Make your own chili by mixing two cans of different beans (like black or pinto or navy), drained, mix in some kind of sauce (catsup, BBQ, some mustard, any spices you might have like ground pepper). You can microwave a potato or sweet potato and serve your chili over your potato, over some bread, wrap it in a tortilla, open and drain a can of veggies and serve over veggies.

Buy sauces like accidentally vegan spaghetti sauce or accidentally vegan Indian curry sauce etc. Buy frozen mixed veggies or canned veggies, drain and mix the sauce in with the veggies or cook some instant rice and serve over rice and veggies. (Most refrigerated pasta has egg in it). If you have an instapot, you can cook pasta in your instant pot and then mix your veggies, sauce and noodles in with your cooked pasta.

Snacks:

Nature Valley Granola bars-the oats and several other crunchy types are accidentally vegan and many of the more expensive brands have a wide vegan selection. Fruit (fresh and dry), nuts, trail mix, carrots, cauliflower and other vegetables. Cans with pull tops of soup, chili and vegetables. Less healthy options are popcorn, saltines, rice cakes, and pretzels. Oatmeal and hummus are options. Unfrosted Pot Tarts.

If you can bring some **basic staples** with you, suggestions include:

Dry oatmeal, TVP, peanut butter, pull top cans-beans, soup, vegetables, fruit, NissinTop Ramin (oriental flavor)

If you can bring things with you, then you can make endless dishes with the **TVP**. For example, bring some taco seasoning and then reconstitute the TVP with hot water, add seasoning to taste, top on a baked potato or put in a wrap, a taco shell or tortilla, whatever is available.

Can goods you may want to bring (bring a can opener or get pull top): vegetarian baked beans, soup, fruit, vegetables.

Condiments you may want to bring or scavenge when you see them available or in packets: catsup, mustard, pickle relish, hot sauce, pepper, BBQ sauce, jelly, maple syrup.

More esoteric: powdered hummus (reconstitutes with water), powdered soy milk,

If you can cook, like camping, then you can make pancakes with Bisquick or Aunt Jemima Whole Wheat waffle mix, just add non-dairy milk and IF it is available some applesauce, but they come out fine with without an egg substitute. You can make foil packets to bake veggies over a camp fire or if you have a microwave the options are much greater even if you have no plates-baked potatoes, corn on the cob etc.

Bread: Note, most french and sourdough breads are accidently vegan. Choose them first if available.

Hotel room breakfasts:

Bring or buy some instant oats (they cook faster than rolled oats) or buy the flavored packages if you prefer them. What some do is heat water in the coffee maker and pour it on the oats and then microwave it for a minute, then turn, then another minute, then let sit covered until the desired thickness. If the hotel gives out the flavored packages you can mix it with plain instant oats and add additional spices like cinnamon.

Buy some seasonal fruit like berries in the spring and summer or apples in the fall to go with it or as a mid-morning snack.

See the bread and cereal options above and just buy what you need for your room. If you are buying bread, see the veganaugusta.com list of accidently vegan products for what breads tend to be vegan and what margarines happen to be vegan.

Several of Van's frozen breakfast products and Frozen Kroger Original French Toast Sticks happen to be vegan.