

FEED YOUR SOUL NOT YOUR WAIST

THE OLD 'WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS STAYS IN VEGAS' ATTITUDE IS NOT, SADLY, RECOGNISED BY CALORIES - SO HERE ARE 20 TOP TIPS TO AVOID A BURGEONING WAISTLINE WHILE ON HOLIDAY

HOLIDAYS often mean a holiday from healthy living. But that doesn't have to be the case. It is possible to have a relaxing summer getaway and still stay on track.

Brisbane author and fitness consultant Sally Symonds says healthy habits come under fire when travellers stray too far from their everyday routine. The regular morning walk followed by a low-fat breakfast is abandoned in favour of a late, buffet breakfast with all the trimmings.

"People can fall into the 'What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas' mentality," she says.

"Your body still remembers everything you ate and drank - even if, perhaps, you don't.

"And alcohol - which is empty calories - lessens your inhibitions and so you may eat, and do other things, that you otherwise might not do.

"It's absolutely about balance. No one is going to enjoy a holiday if they deprive themselves of all the fun things. It's a case of changing your mindset so that you don't feel deprived if you don't have that extra martini and, indeed, reaching the point where you no longer want the extra martini at all.

"Personally, I can now indulge, but without over-indulging or feeling deprived.

"And you can exercise anywhere from a hotel room to a footpath," she says. "Get creative."

Sally Symonds' tips to a healthy holiday:

1 Declare to come back in even better shape . . . than your partner. Turn it into a competition to make it more fun if you'll be away for an extended period of time, make a bet with your significant other about who can lose the most weight or the most centimetres, or

which of you will be able to do the most sit-ups when you return. It's a great way to keep motivated and bond across the miles at the same time.

2 Take your own equipment if you prefer. Resistance bands and skipping ropes are just a couple of light, easy-to-pack options for simple, healthy exercises while you're away from home.

3 Choose a hotel that offers healthy eating options. Many hotels now feature healthy choice meals and snacks as part of their regular room service, which makes selecting a healthy dinner a lot easier after a hard day.

4 If you're a regular gym goer, you may find that most hotel gyms don't offer the same variety of equipment that you're used to, so replicating your

normal workout routine could be tricky. Don't let this stop you from trying - there are always alternatives. For example, if you



belong to a large gym chain, check to see if there's a branch near your hotel.

5 Find out what your hotel has to offer in terms of additional healthy services - anyone fancy an in-room massage at the end of the day? Some higher end hotels chains also offer yoga or personal training services, so do your research before you go away.

6 If your room doesn't come equipped with a microwave, consider asking for one. Many hotels offer this option and it can be a great saving in terms of time, money and calories.

7 When you're travelling, remember that boredom doesn't equal hunger. Airports can be boring places, and they can also be a healthy lifestyle nightmare. Don't eat just because there is seemingly nothing else to do. If you're faced with a long airport stopover, bring a good book so that you're not tempted to wander the shops and indulge in unhealthy snacks.



8 Airline club lounges may offer free food and drinks, but they aren't free in terms of calories.

Avoid the cookies and cakes - stock up from the fruit bowl, instead.

9 Water is a great way to fill up and help your body metabolise fat. Air travel can be dehydrating, so extra water is a must.

10 In-flight exercises are vital, particularly on long-haul flights. They are a great way to kill time without killing yourself in the process. They also help get your blood flowing when you've been sitting down for a long time.

11 Alcohol is a sure way to dehydrate your system, and this is especially so if you drink when you're on a plane. In-flight air is actually drier than any of the world's deserts. Skip the alcohol and drink plenty of water instead.

12 Most airlines offer healthy and not-so-healthy options, so follow your common sense and choose the healthier foods on offer. You can usually pre-book different types of meal when you buy your airline tickets, such as vegetarian or low-fat.

13 When you arrive, stock up on your healthy essentials. If you only drink

bottled water, there may not be enough in the hotel room to last the duration of your stay (and it's usually overpriced),

so pick up some extra supplies. You might want to consider getting some kitchen staples such as milk and fruit from the nearest shop.

14 Keep to as much of your normal healthy routine as you can. If you normally exercise in the mornings, then remember to set the alarm when you're away. This makes it easier to slip back into usual habits when you return home.

15 Keep to your normal diet as much as you can. Try to find the happy balance between indulging in a few extras so that you don't feel resentful, but not indulging so much that you manage to gain an extra few kilograms in only a few days.

16 Consider how much incidental exercise you can integrate into your trip. Take the stairs instead of the escalator or lift.

17 Plan your hotel room workout. It's easy to Google an appropriate routine to do while in a hotel room and don't have access to your usual

equipment. Print this out before you go and then you won't be stuck trying to think of what to do while you are away.

18 Explore new cuisine experiences, but remember: everything in moderation. Every city has its own local speciality chocolate or cheese shops, but you don't have to sample every flavour. You'll enjoy it more if you don't overdo it and won't regret it afterwards.

19 Wait wisely. Walking before flying is one of the best ways to boost circulation and help ward off potential deep vein thrombosis. Always try to wear appropriate shoes and/or clothing to help ensure this option is even more attractive to you while you are away.

20 Always select set menus over buffet options. Studies show that people eat significantly more when faced with a wider variety of choices in front of them - it's easy to lose track of portion sizes and how much you've eaten. And remember the "mini" in mini bar doesn't refer to its effect on your waist.

Sally Symonds is the author of 50 Steps to Lose 50kg . . . And Keep It Off, www.sallysymonds.com.au

