

# **SAILING FIT**

**By: Meka Taulbee**

*ACE Certified Personal Trainer*

SAILFIT Inc

## **Nutrition On The Road**

As many of you may know Kurt and I have spent a lot of time on the road traveling to and from regattas. Along with that, it's pretty well known that we pay pretty close attention to what we eat. At some point during the year most of you will travel to a regatta that is not close to home. Contrary to popular belief traveling be it by plane, train or automobile is not a license to eat fast food. Good nutrition needs to start way before you leave for the regatta and continue right up until the end. If you are going to put effort into a nutrition program to get ready for a regatta you will only defeat all of the work you have already put in by eating poorly on your way there. If you have never thought about what you eat before, during or after a regatta there's no time like the present to start.

First of all you may want to know why this is so important. It may not seem like a couple of quick meals could do that much damage, but whenever you travel you are usually sitting down for a long period of time. Your metabolism slows down and cannot digest food as well or as quickly as when you are able to get up and move around. When you eat fast food or food that is mass produced, like airplane meals, it is made with ingredients that will help preserve its shelf life and in most cases with a lot of salt. All of these added ingredients can tend to make you feel stiff and slow. They have most likely made you retain water and all of the sitting has made your blood pool in different areas instead of flowing freely. This is why they tell you to get up and stretch on long plane rides or to make sure you stop and get out and stretch and walk around if you are driving. This will get things moving and help your body rid itself of the unwanted additives and preservatives.

It may seem that when you are traveling your choices are limited. Most times you just want to get something quickly so you can keep going. With a little creativity and planning you can still eat well without having to stop for a long period of time. Not to mention you will probably save a few bucks too. The best strategy is to plan ahead. If you are flying you may want to pack some snacks to hold you over until you get to your destination. Some suggestions would be fruit, trail mix, granola bars, protein bars or energy bars. It's always good to bring along an extra bottle of water and to stay away from the soda that is always available on a flight. When you fly it is best to drink extra water and be sure to stay hydrated. For one thing it will make you use the restroom more often forcing you to get up and stretch. It will also keep your system flushed so your blood keeps circulating and you won't feel so slow and thick.

If you are driving you have many more options than when you are flying. The same as with flying I would pack some snacks. Driving tends to get a little monotonous and this is when we tend to graze more. Healthy snacks will fill you up so you don't eat so much and will be much kinder on your body than a bag of chips or a candy bar. The next suggestion is to pack a cooler. You can pack food to make sandwiches (or make sandwiches ahead of time), water and other snacks. You can pack cut up fruit and vegetables. Such items like melon and celery have a high water content and will help keep you hydrated and keep your blood flowing much like drinking water would. If you are not a big fan of planning ahead with a cooler there are still more options for you to choose from. Most signs on the highway will advertise supermarkets at the upcoming exits as well as restaurants. Find a supermarket and put together your own meal. This doesn't mean get the fried chicken that you can smell cooking all the way at the back of the parking lot. Get just enough to make a sub, get some trail mix or nuts, or pick out a salad. Many stores now have salad bars in them. If you are up to it you can also find health food supermarkets that will offer more in the line of salads and healthy meals to go. You can pick up some fruit that is already cut up and stock up on water and other drinks as well. Stopping this way often provides more of a variety of choices. Many times I find that what I packed already is definitely not what I am craving at that moment. Murphy's Law I suppose! This way you can get something different each time you stop and you are also giving yourself a great way to get out of your seat and stretch out.

If you are more of the restaurant goer you can do that also. A rule of thumb is if it is a restaurant with a drive through you should not be going! Restaurants are obviously the least desirable choice, but a definite option. You can stop and eat at a restaurant as long as you are making wise meal choices. Salads and plain vegetables along with a source of protein are the best choices. You just need to be aware that most restaurants use ingredients with lots of preservatives as well. You want to steer clear of anything that is marinated, fried or sautéed. Choose instead things that are broiled or steamed.

In all of these scenarios you want to be sure to include a protein source. Protein will make you feel full and digest more slowly. This will keep you from incessantly snacking or making choices that are full of empty calories. As always water is a must and staying hydrated will only benefit you. Even if it means you have to stop more often!

I know this is only a brief summary of some of your options, but hopefully it will help get you headed in the right direction. There are lots of different alternatives so you just need to pick the one that works best for you. For more information you can also go to [www.sailfit.com](http://www.sailfit.com) and find more articles to read on nutrition. As always I am here if you have any questions or would like to have a certain topic covered. Feel free to contact by going to [www.sailfit.com](http://www.sailfit.com) or email me at [meke@sailfit.com](mailto:meke@sailfit.com).