

Eating Outside of Your Comfort Zone?

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Grocery stores are full of a wide variety of fruits, grains, vegetables and meats that most of us have never seen or tried. Look at grocery aisles as a new horizon with new foods to discover and explore.

We all get in a rut and find ourselves purchasing and eating the same food over and over again. For example, there are only a few ways that you can change up chicken – the



bottom line is it's still chicken. Grocery stores are full of a wide variety of fruits, grains, vegetables and meats that most of us have never seen nor have we tried. Instead of thinking about buying the same thing over and over again, look at grocery aisles as a new horizon with new foods to discover and explore. We often eat the same things repeatedly because we know what we like and we always ask ourselves: What if I don't like it? The question we need to pose to ourselves instead is: What if I do like it?

Change of any kind can be hard, even more so with food. Food is expensive, and we want to use our food dollars wisely. We want to buy and eat what we know our family will like. What you ate as a child also contributes to your food rut. Were your parents adventurous eaters or were they more the meat and potatoes kind of people? We eat what we know – what is familiar. As parents we tend to create a bias for our kids. If we don't like a particular food, then we don't prepare it and the child grows up thinking they don't like it. As a parent we have a huge influence on our kids. So try to be food neutral. Expose them to lots of different things and don't refer to food as “nasty” or “yucky” because they will see it that way as well. Encourage them to try it. Before they can rule a food out as like or dislike, they need to try it at least once or twice. There are many things that you think you don't

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like because of the way it was prepared, but if you tried it again prepared in a different way, then you may find that you really like it. Being adventurous is the key. After all, variety is the spice of life.

Make a Plan

The first step is to start slowly, don't go in the store and purchase all new foods. You and your family will go into shock with overload. Start slowly, maybe try something new every month, every two weeks or even every week. Make a plan to try something new. One week you may decide to try a new vegetable, the next week a grain and the next maybe a different protein. Research the internet or look through a cookbook to find a recipe that utilizes that new food. You can find recipes for just about anything you want to cook. Recipes often have ratings so you will know what other people thought when they tried it. Prepare it and determine if it will go in your hit or miss file.

Ask friends and family members what foods they like. Find out what they have tried and like, you might like it too!

When you're out at a restaurant, instead of ordering the same thing, try something new. Look on the menu to see what dishes you've never had before and order that. You might love it, and if you don't some restaurants will let you switch it out for something else.

Grains

There are lots of grains that are really good and versatile. Some that you might incorporate into your diet are:

- Quinoa
- Amaranth
- Freekeh
- Barley

Vegetables

There are so many different and versatile vegetables on the market today. Check your local grocer or enjoy the wonderful bounty that is often available at your local farmers market.



There's no reason to eat the same green beans and iceberg lettuce salads. Some unique vegetables to try are:

- Chayote
- Fennel
- Jicama
- Tomatillo

Meats

Like vegetables, there are many different types of meat available in today's market. Here are some meats you may not have previously considered:

- Lamb
- Veal

Remember we eat with our eyes first; the food must look appealing. If it looks good, we are more likely to try something different. Challenge your food rut and see what new and exciting dishes you can add to your culinary repertoire.

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