

Dietary Restrictions, Food Allergies, and Religious Restrictions

DIETARY DEFINITIONS

Always ask guests for their dietary restrictions on invitations to any event where food will be served. Someone with dietary restrictions will convey that they are vegetarian or vegan and will expect you to provide a meal that meets his or her dietary needs.

Vegan – A plant based diet with no animal products. They do not eat meat, fish, eggs or dairy products.

Ovo-Vegetarian – Eat mostly plants in addition to eggs. They do not eat dairy products, meat or fish.

Lacto-Vegetarian – Eat mostly plants in addition to dairy products. They do not eat eggs, meat or fish.

Lacto-Ovo Vegetarians – Eat mostly plants in addition to dairy products and eggs. They do not eat meat or fish.

Pescetarians – Vegetarian diet but they also eat fish. They do not eat meat.

There are plenty of delicious meals that can be prepared for the above diet as well as modifications to popular meat dishes. Caterers are used to preparing meals to accommodate vegetarians and vegans.

For more information on dietary definitions, please visit:

Common Food Allergies

All packaged foods in the U.S. are required by the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) to list all ingredients. Per the FDA, ingredients in foods must be listed by their common or usual name or have an allergen statement (i.e., CONTAINS: EGGS at the end of ingredient list). Also, be aware that many different products are manufactured and packaged in the same plant. These items should be listed as 'May Contain.' Ultimately, it is the consumer's responsibility to avoid ingredients that contain allergens, allergen derivatives or have been exposed to the allergen.

Peanut

A peanut allergy is very common and could cause a serious and possibly fatal reaction. If a guest has a peanut allergy you should avoid any kind of nut, even artificial. Also be mindful of dishes that may be cooked in peanut oil.

Some unexpected sources of peanuts:

- Chili
- Egg rolls
- Hot sauce
- Pesto
- Gravy
- Salad dressing

- Pancakes
- Specialty pizzas
- Some vegetarian food products advertised as meat substitutes

Milk

A milk allergy is different than lactose intolerance and is most common in infants and young children, although most will outgrow the allergy. Cow milk and products should be avoided, as reactions can be mild, such as hives, and sometimes life threatening. It is also wise to avoid milk from all other animals.

Some unexpected sources of milk:

- Baked goods
- Luncheon meat, hot dogs, sausages
- Nondairy products (look for casein)
- Shellfish is sometimes dipped in milk to mask the odor
- Restaurants sometimes put butter on steaks for flavor

Egg

Egg allergies are the second most common childhood allergy and most children will outgrow it. Reactions can be mild, such as hives, and sometimes life threatening. Eggs from other birds should also be avoided.

Some unexpected sources of eggs:

- Egg substitutes
- Macaroni
- Marzipan
- Lecithin
- Marshmallows
- Pasta
- Pretzels are sometimes dipped in egg wash before they are salted

Wheat

Not to be confused with gluten intolerance, wheat allergies can be mild or life threatening. Many people with wheat allergies can tolerate other grains, but it's safe to stay away from them if you don't know for sure.

Some unexpected sources of wheat:

- Couscous

- Cracker meal
- Flour
- Glucose syrup
- Soy sauce
- Starch
- Beer
- Processed meat
- Salad dressing
- Ice cream
- Potato chips
- Hot dogs
- Imitation crabmeat

Soy

Soy is another common infant and childhood allergy that is often outgrown. Soy allergies can be mild or severe, though severe reactions are rare.

Some unexpected sources of soy:

- Canned tuna and meat
- Cereals
- Cookies
- Crackers
- High-protein energy bars and snacks
- Low-fat peanut butter
- Processed meats
- Sauces
- Canned broths and soups

Fish

People with fish allergies are most commonly allergic to salmon, tuna and halibut, although it is advised to avoid all fish. Many people who are allergic to finned fish are not allergic to shellfish. Be advised that fish protein can become airborne in the steam released while cooking.

Some unexpected sources of fish:

- Caesar dressing
- Worcestershire sauce
- Bouillabaisse
- Imitation fish or shellfish
- Meatloaf
- Barbecue sauce
- Caponata (Sicilian eggplant relish)

Shellfish

Shrimp, crab and lobster cause most shellfish allergies and 60% of people with this allergy experienced their first reaction as an adult. There are two kinds of shellfish: crustacean (shrimp, crab and lobster) and mollusks (clams, mussels, oysters and scallops). Most shellfish reactions tend to be severe. It is also best to avoid all shellfish if there is an allergic reaction to any of them.

Shellfish to avoid:

- Barnacle
- Crab
- Crawfish
- Krill
- Lobster
- Prawns
- Shrimp

Mollusks shellfish to avoid:

- Abalone
- Clams
- Cockle
- Cuttlefish
- Limpet
- Mussels
- Octopus
- Oysters
- Periwinkle

- Sea cucumber
- Sea urchin
- Scallops
- Snails
- Squid
- Whelk

For more information on food allergies, please visit:

Source: <http://www.foodallergy.org/allergens>

RELIGIOUS RESTRICTIONS

Be mindful of guests at events during times when people of certain religions are restricted from eating some foods or foods that are forbidden by some religions.

Bahá'i

Forbidden: Alcohol

Fast: March 2-20. Bahá'is abstain from food and drink from sunrise to sunset.

Buddhism

Forbidden: None. Many people will not eat meat or fish however.

Fast: Only for Buddhist monks.

Christianity

Forbidden: None.

Fast: Catholics will refrain from consuming meat on Fridays of Lent and on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

Hinduism

Forbidden: Meat, fish, poultry and eggs. Some people also avoid garlic, onions, alcohol, tea and coffee.

Fast: Sundays, day of the new moon, the full moon, 10th and 11th of each month, the feast of Shivaratri, the 9th day of the month of Cheltra, the 8th day of Sravana, and days of eclipses, equinoxes, solstices, and conjunction of the planets.

Judaism

Forbidden: Emulsifiers and stabilizers of animal origin, gelatin, non-kosher meat, birds of prey and non-kosher fish such as prawns, shellfish, turbot skate and sturgeon.

Fast: Yom Kippur and Tisha b'Av, during this time eating and drinking are forbidden for a 25-hour period. Partial fast days (no food or drink from sunrise to sunset) include Tzom Gedallah, Tenth of Tevet and Seventeenth of Tamuz, Ta'anit Ester and Ta'anit Bechorim.

Islam

Forbidden: Pork, lard or any pork substance, gelatin from animal source that is not halal, meat that is not slaughtered in the prescribed Islamic way, meat coming from a lawful animal which died before slaughter, blood, any food or drink with alcohol, all carnivorous animals and birds of prey and some non-halal additives.

Fast: Voluntary fasting is common on Mondays and Thursdays. Ramadan is a mandatory fasting period. Muslims are also encouraged to fast 6 days during the month of Shawwal, on the 10th day of Muharram, and the 9th day of Zul Hijjah.

You can also find information on religious food restrictions by visiting the Webster University Library, <http://libguides.webster.edu/holidays>.

Sources:

<http://www.faithandfood.com/Bahai.php>

<http://eatocracy.cnn.com/2010/07/20/clarified-religious-dietary-restrictions/>