



Gluten-Free Menu Planning: Budget-Friendly Tips

Increased production and distribution costs due to the fact that gluten-free ingredients are sourced differently make gluten-free products more expensive than their gluten-containing counterparts. The National Foundation for Celiac Awareness (NFCA) and Kathleen Reale of BeFreeForMe.com offer the following tips to help you maintain a healthy, gluten-free diet without breaking the bank! Tips originated from NFCA's webinar: Gluten-Free Menu Planning: Budget-Friendly Tips (May 2013)

Before Heading to the Store: Plan Ahead

Write a "Master List"

A master shopping list is a list of your important grocery items, which includes:

- Naturally gluten-free items: rice, beans, corn tortillas, popcorn, veggies and fruit
- Add gluten-free specialty items that you use often: baking mixes, chicken broth, pasta, soy sauce/tamari
- As you run out of things on this list, add them to your shopping list.

How to Write a Shopping List

- Assess your available food: what's in the refrigerator and pantry?
- Make use of flyers and coupons

At the Store: Shopping Tips

Shopping in Stores

- Join the "Rewards Programs" at grocery stores and other retailers to get discounts and free items
- Check out a store's circulars/flyers to stock up on deals and coupons
- Shop the perimeter of the stores
- Buy fruits and veggies when they are in-season
- Avoid pre-packaged food

Shopping "Locally"

- Find farmers markets and farm stands for fresh fruits and veggies (Locate them at www.LocalHarvest.org)

Cost Per Unit

Watch out for "bad" sales by identifying an item's Cost Per Unit (CPU)

- Supermarket labels show two prices: retail price and unit price
- Retail price is the price you pay at checkout
- Unit price is the cost of an item based on a standard unit of measure, such as a pound or a gallon
- Use the unit price to determine the best deal
- Compare the unit price (red) to the retail price to determine if it is a "good" sale or a "bad" sale. Want some help to determine this? Here are some helpful apps!
 - o Android: "Unit Price Compare"
 - o iPhone: "Real Price"



After Shopping: Cut Down on Waste

Recipe Planning

- Check to see what you have in your pantry and how to use them in a variety of dishes
- Buy fruits, veggies and meats only as you need them
- Re-use leftovers or second meals
- Crackers double as breading/coating and cookies double as pie crusts

Resources for Recipe Planning with Specific Ingredients

- Epicurious.com
- Delish.com
- BeFreeForMe.com

Double Batch

- Freeze foods in single-serve containers and reheat to serve
- Make a big pot of gluten-free rice, quinoa or other grain and incorporate it into multiple meals

Go Meatless

- Halve the amount of meat used in chili and stew recipes and add beans, rice, veggies and other gluten-free whole grains
- Dedicate certain days of the week for “meatless meals”

Make your own!

- Instead of buying store-bought, processed foods, find a recipe and try making it at home
 - Store-bought cereal is a budget killer – make your own granola and store in an air-tight container
 - Get new gluten-free recipes each Monday with NFCA's Recipe of the Week! www.CeliacCentral.org/recipes

Additional Budget-Friendly Resources

General Coupon Sites

- Coupons.com
- SmartSource.com
- RedPlum.com
- CouponNetwork.com
- CouponCabin.com
- RetailMeNot.com

Grocery Coupon/Deal Sites

- MyGroceryDeals.com
- OrganicGroceryDeals.com
- Freebies4Mom.com
- WickedCoolDeals.com
- GlutenFreeSaver.com
- HealthEsaver.com

Online Shopping

- GlutenFreeMall.com
- NavanFoods.com
- Vitacost.com
- Peapod's Nutrifilter
- Amazon Smile (remember to designate the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness as your charity of choice!)

Shopping Apps

- Zip List
- GroceryPal
- Locavore
- Apples2Oranges

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