

How to Eat Healthy on a Budget

Most of us worry more about what to put on the table for dinner tonight and not about providing something healthy. Considering the economic crisis going on right now, which lead to the increase in food prices, I thought it will be a to provide you with some helpful tips for stretching your dollar at the supermarket. Let me provide you with top saving ideas from moms who know best.

When food budgets are tight, taking steps to make the most of your food can pay off in multiple ways. Let me guide you on how you can feed your family well when you plan carefully and save dollars that you might otherwise spend at last minute grocery store strips or take-out meals.

- **Planning, planning, and more planning** – this is the name of the game
 - Get creative with meal preparation
 - Plan a couple of meals for the week – they can be as easy as spaghetti with meat sauce (or just marinara sauce), garlic bread and a salad!
 - Adapt your menus accordingly to the season – it will provide the best flavors and the best prices.
 - Develop a standard list
 - Know when to go off the list – if you see a sale on a food item that you tend to use frequently, you may as well stock up.
 - Try to shop for fresh perishable recipe ingredients – weekly
 - Try to shop for staples - monthly
 - Compare store prices
 - Not all stores are created equal
 - Be aware of “discount store syndrome” – you will be surprise to see some items with a very high markup.
 - Buying in bulk can be economical if you know it will be used wisely and timely
 - Check your receipts- many times the sale price is not reflected
 - Develop a price comparison notebook – know your average prices, sounds time consuming at first but you will be able to recite them soon.
 - Learn the rules

- Check food advertisement – spend 10 to 15 minutes per week browsing the coupon section in your paper.
 - Request price matching
 - Sometimes a great bargain isn't the lowest price, especially if it will go unused.
 - More isn't always cheaper if you will use unnecessary amounts just because you bought so much and is taking over your pantry.
- Plan your trip
 - Come with a full stomach so you can avoid impulse buying and eating!
 - Never leave home without your list and coupons

- **Top 10 healthy saver tips**
 - Develop inexpensive menus – simple is best
 - Think of meats, poultry and fish as side dishes, in terms of portions
 - Eat more seasonal fruits and vegetables and buy them from local farmers whenever possible
 - Plan ahead – at least make a mental note a few days ahead
 - Experiment with new easy seasonal recipes
 - Be creative with leftovers, keep re-using the leftovers into different recipes or freeze them for another occasion.
 - Get on the shopping mood – avoid shopping when you are hungry or on a rush
 - Shop early and alone
 - Shop in bulk when you know it will be used wisely
 - Put your savings to work

Here you have the rules so enjoy the rewards!