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Airline Food (Snacks) Calorie Guide by Diet Detective

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Charles Stuart Platkin with DietDetective.com recently surveyed the cuisine for several major airlines to determine whose packing on the pounds in the stratosphere. We all know business travelers tend to plump up like a Ballpark Frank, and this time of year the problem is compounded by the holiday munchies. So it's definitely worth your while to know how many calories you're shoving in to your mouth on the 757. Here are the results, along with a little 411 on how to keep healthy in the air:

[DietDetective.com](#) Airline Snack and Health Survey results:

(Health Score 5 stars = highest rate, 1 star = lowest rating)

American Airlines

Health Score: 3 stars.

Best Bet: Skip the breakfast muffin unless you have nothing else, but split it with your seatmate. If you buy the snack pack, get rid of the cookies and the Goldfish.

Total Calories: Snack Pack = 710 Breakfast Muffins = 440/420

Exercise Equivalents (Amount of walking to burn off the calories): Snack Pack = 183 minutes, Blueberry Muffin = 108 minutes, Chocolate Muffin = 113 minutes

Snack Choices:

- Snack Pack (Pepperidge Farm Goldfish - 0.75 ounces 100 calories; O'Brien's Cured Meat - 32 grams, 110 calories; Lorna Doone Cookies - 2 cookies 140 calories; Kings Raisins - 28 grams, 90 calories; Carr's Table Water Crackers - 7.5 grams, 2 crackers, 30 calories; Le Petit Fromage Cheese Spread - 0.75 ounces, 70 calories; Emerald Deluxe Mixed Nuts - 1 ounce, 170 calories) Breakfast Snack: Otis Spunkmeyer 4 oz.
- Muffin (chocolate muffin = 440 calories. Blueberry = 420 calories.)

Delta Air Lines

Health Score: 1 star

Best Bet: Keep the granola bar and the peanuts; dump the rest.

Total Calories: 766

Exercise Equivalents (Amount of walking to burn off the calories): 197 minutes

Snack Choices:

- Snack basket (Frito-Lay SunChips - 1-ounce bag, 140 calories; Quaker Granola Bars - 1-ounce bar, 120 calories; Dry-

roasted peanuts - 1 ounce, 30 nuts, 170 calories; Biscoff Cookies - 5 cookies, 146 calories; Lance Honey Peanut Butter Crackers - 1 package, 190 calories)

United Airlines

Health Score: 5 stars. United has the most variety and the most healthful choices. The Smartpack is trans-fat free and "vegetarian-friendly."

Best Bet: Go for the Ritebite or the Smartpack (if you're sharing)

Total Calories: Smartpack = 895, Minimeal = 550, Quickpick = 650, Ritebite = 580

Exercise Equivalents (Amount of walking to burn off the calories): Smartpack = 231 minutes, Minimeal = 142 minutes, Quickpick = 168 minutes, Ritebite = 149 minutes

Snack Choices:

- Smartpack (SunGold Creamy SunButter - 1.5 ounces, 266 calories; Bear Naked All-Natural Fruit and Nut Granola - 1/2 cup, 280 calories; Vermont Village Cannery Organic Peach Applesauce - 4 ounces, 80 calories; Glacier Ridge Farms White Cheddar Cheese - 0.75 ounces, 50 calories; Pita Shack Multigrain & Honey Lavash crackers - 4 ounces, 120 calories; Hero Strawberry Preserves - 1/2 ounces, 64 calories; Bali's Best Latte Candy - 1 candy, 15 calories; Emer'gen-C Tangerine Fizzing Drink Mix - 1 packet, 20 calories)
- Minimeal (Hormel hard salami slices - 1 ounce, 110 calories; Rondele Peppercom Parmesan cheese spread - 1 ounce, 70 calories; Venus wheat crackers - 1 package, 60 calories; Mott's Healthy Harvest Granny Smith applesauce, unsweetened - 1 cup, 50 calories; Kettle Classics natural potato chips - 1 ounce, 150 calories; Pepperidge Farm Milano cookies - 2 cookies, 120 calories)
- Quickpick (Jack Link's hickory-smoked beef jerky - 1 ounce, 60 calories; Just the Cheese Baked Cheddar Cheese Snacks - 1/2 ounce, 75 calories; Stoned Classics all-natural blue tortilla chips - 1 1/2 ounces, 180 calories; La Victoria Thick n' Chunky salsa - 1/2 ounces, 15 calories; SunRise honey coated trail mix - 2 ounces, 205.5 calories; Pepperidge Farm Milano cookies - 2 cookies, 120 calories)
- Ritebite (Bumblebee Sensations Lemon & Pepper Seasoned Tuna Medley - 3 ounces, 110 calories; Late July Organic Crackers - 1 package, 100 calories; Wild Garden Hummus - 1 jar, 73.5 calories; Stacy's Multigrain Baked Pita Chips - 1 ounce, 130 calories; Fino Selections Gouda cheese - 1 ounce, 101 calories; Newman's Own organic California raisins - 0.5 ounce, 45.5 calories; Mini-Toblerone - 12.5-gram bar, 66.5 calories)

Continental Airlines

Health Score: 4 stars

Best Bet: Both sandwiches are fine; the light mayo is a nice touch

Total Calories: Turkey sandwich = 285; Ham sandwich = 316

Exercise Equivalents (Amount of walking to burn off the calories): Turkey sandwich = 73 minutes; Ham sandwich = 81 minutes; Peanuts = 21 minutes; Pretzels = 13 minutes

Snacks Available:

Flights Over 2 Hours:

- Turkey sandwich - 170 calories, including packet of Hellmann's light mayo
- Ham sandwich - 201 calories, including packet of French's yellow mustard
- Carrots - 35 calories
- Fun-size candy bar - 80 calories

Flights under two hours:

- Honey-roasted peanuts - 1.5 ounces, 80 calories
- Mini pretzels - 1.5 ounces, 50 calories

JetBlue

Health Score: 4 stars

Best Bet: The nuts have protein and good fat and will satisfy you.

Total Calories: See individual choices below.

Exercise Equivalents (Amount of walking to burn off the calories): see individual choices below

Snack Choices: (not a snack pack, distributed separately, no charge)

- Nabisco 100 Calorie Packs Wheat Thins Minis - 1 package, 100 calories, 26 minutes of walking
- Chocobillys Chocolate Chunk - 4 cookies, 130 calories, 34 minutes of walking
- Doritos Munchies Mix - 1-ounce bag, 140 calories, 36 minutes of walking

- Mama Says Biscotti Gingerbread Grande - 1 cookie, 210 calories, 54 minutes of walking
- Mama Says Biscotti Pistachio Grande - 1 cookie, 150 calories, 39 minutes of walking
- Mrs. GoodCookie Jungle Crackers - 1-ounce bag, 120 calories, 31 minutes of walking
- Terra Blues Potato Chips - 1-ounce bag, 140 calories, 36 minutes of walking
- All Nuts Jumbo Cashew Halves - 1-ounce bag, 170 calories, 44 minutes of walking

US Airways

Health Score: 2 stars

Best Bet: Eat the fruit and nut mix and the cheese; skip the crackers and cookies.

Total Calories: 470 (snack pack)

Exercise Equivalents (Amount of walking to burn off the calories): 121 minutes

Snack Choices:

- Snack Pack (Azar Fruit and Nut Mix - 1 ounce, 110 calories; Famous Amos Chocolate Chip Cookies - 4 cookies, 150 calories; Austin Cheese Crackers with Cheddar Cheese, - 1.38 ounces, 210 calories)

DietDetective.com Healthy Snacking Suggestions

Even if you ate before you left home, you are still going to get hungry. We often underestimate the amount of time a trip can take. A two-hour flight could mean four or five hours of travel.

Here are some ideas for snacks you can bring:

- Water: Buy it after the security checkpoint to take onboard. Dehydration can cause or exacerbate hunger, jet lag and fatigue.
- Cereal: Kashi (a variety of healthy versions) or Cheerios are both portable, low-calorie choices.
- Beef jerky: Especially if you're a low-carb fan — but not if you're watching your sodium.
- Fruit: Apples, pears and grapes are durable, and almost anything can be stored in a container.
- Rice cakes: Be selective, since calorie and fat content vary widely.
- Energy bars: Although they tend to be high in calories and fat, they often are better than a slice of pizza or a candy bar at the airport.
- Nonfat yogurt: Yogurt is a great portable snack (although it is perishable). You could pack a 3-ounce container or less in an insulated bag or take a small cooler, but understand that this can be counted against carry-on bag limitations.
- Sandwiches: Pre-cut them into portion-controlled sections so you can pull them out at different times during the trip without making a mess. Chicken, turkey, cold cuts and cheese (on 100 percent whole-wheat bread) are all great options for sandwiches on the go.
- Soy chips: These are yet another portable, low-cal, high-fiber snack.

Make sure to check with the [Transportation Security Administration](#) for the latest in-flight rules on bringing food and water. Liquids over 3 oz. are not allowed.

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[Peter](#) | November 29th, 2006 at 2:54 pm

Even though I eat meat, I always order a vegetarian meal. They are healthier and usually more edible than the junk food snacks most airlines dish out these days.

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