

10 Blue Zones Food Guidelines

We reviewed more than 150 dietary surveys of the world's longest-lived people to distill the average longevity diet. These 10 simple guidelines reflect how the world's longest-lived people ate for most of their lives. By adopting some of the healthy eating principles into your daily life, you too can live longer, better.



95/5 RULE. Eat Plants. 95 percent of your food should be fruits, vegetables, grains, greens, and beans. Use olive oil to sauté and spices to flavor vegetables. Feel free to eat a cup (cooked) of whole grains daily.



LIMIT MEAT. Think of meat as a celebratory food. Portions should be no larger than a deck of cards, once or twice a week. Avoid processed meats such as hot dogs, bacon, and sausages.



FISH IS FINE. Enjoy fish up to three times a week. Wild-caught salmon or smaller fish like sardines, trout, snapper, cod, and anchovies are okay choices. Limit portion sizes to 3 ounces (about the size of the palm of your hand).



DIMINISH DAIRY. Avoid dairy when possible. If cheese is a must, try ice-cube size portions of sheep (pecorino) or goat (feta) cheese to flavor foods. If you eat eggs, limit intake to three times a week.



DAILY DOSE OF BEANS. Eat a cup of beans daily spread out across breakfast, lunch, and dinner. All beans count, including tofu. They contain high quality protein and fiber. If you buy canned beans, avoid added salt, sugar, and chemicals.



SLASH SUGAR. Consume only 28 grams (7 teaspoons) of added sugar daily. Reserve cookies, cakes, and candies for special occasions. Read labels and avoid foods with more than 8 grams of sugar. Make honey your go-to sweetener.



SNACK ON NUTS. Eat a handful of nuts daily: almonds, pistachios, walnuts, hazelnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, Brazil nuts, and peanuts. Try different nuts so you don't tire of them. Avoid sugar-coated nuts.



SOUR ON BREAD. Eat only 100% whole grain breads or authentic sourdough bread made from live cultures. Limit bread to two slices daily. Choose whole grain or corn tortillas over flour tortillas. Avoid white breads and wraps.



GO WHOLLY WHOLE. Try to eat only whole foods or processed foods with fewer than five ingredients: If it's manufactured in a plant, avoid it. If it comes from a plant, eat it.



DRINK MOSTLY WATER. Drink six glasses of water daily. Feel free to drink unsweetened teas and coffee. Enjoy Wine @ Five with friends or with Blue Zones inspired meals. Avoid all sugar-sweetened and diet sodas.

Blue Zones® Food List

Select from the Top 50 Blue Zones Foods to create healthy, delicious meals inspired by Blue Zones centenarians.



Icaria, Greece

- Greens (all varieties)
- Lemons
- Eggplant
- Potato
- Mediterranean Herbs
- Chickpeas
- Black-Eyed Peas
- Olive Oil
- Honey
- Coffee



Sardinia, Italy

- Tomatoes
- Artichokes
- Fennel
- Onions
- Almonds
- Barley
- Durum Semolina
- Pecorino Cheese
- Goat's Milk
- Wine



*Nicoya Peninsula,
Costa Rica*

- Papaya
- Bananas
- Mango
- Winter Squash
- Summer Squash
- Cabbage
- Yams
- Corn
- Black Beans
- Limes



Okinawa, Japan

- Shitake Mushrooms
- Sweet Potatoes
- Green Onions
- Garlic
- Bitter Melon
- Seaweed
- Tofu
- Brown Rice
- Turmeric
- Green and Black Tea



Loma Linda, California

- Beans
- Bell Peppers
- Broccoli
- Berries
- Avocado
- Nuts
- Oats
- Whole Grains
- Seitan
- Tempeh