

# The Health Nut's Guide to the Disney Wonder: A Disney Cruise Line Review

by Amy Wear, PassPorter Guest Contributor

I'm a certifiable [health-nut](#) and will go to great lengths on Disney vacations to maintain a healthy diet and keep active.

Our recent sailing on the Disney Wonder, however, was literally uncharted waters for this health-nut.

Before setting sail, I read as much as I could about eating and exercising on a Disney ship. While I didn't want to be overly focused on exercise, I knew that this vacation wouldn't come with the built-in marathon walking of the Disney parks. And while some shore excursions can be highly physical, I knew this wouldn't be the case for our family.

□ Touring the facilities on our first afternoon on-board was a top priority. I was pleased to see plenty of cardio equipment, especially the elliptical machines. Noting the view of the sea from the forward position of the ship. I knew I'd have no trouble finding the motivation to do some cardio on "at sea" mornings.

□ I was hoping to sign up for a few exercise classes, but found the options were rather limited. They offered yoga and spinning at no charge, but these aren't my thing. They also offered a muscle toning class, but at \$22/class or \$44 for 3 classes, I decided to pass and stick to elliptical training.

Runners and walkers will enjoy using the track on deck 4. Three laps around the ship is equivalent to one mile. There is nothing quite like the postcard-perfect sea to motivate you to get out for an early morning run or walk.

□ My exercise goal for the cruise was to do some light cardio at least every other day. I knew that it wouldn't be feasible to hit the gym on shore excursion days, so I aimed to get there on our free mornings.

□ If you tend to wake up before the rest of your family, you'll find early morning is the most feasible time to get the job done. There is something magical about walking around the pool deck when most people are still sleeping. Enjoy your surroundings and some fresh fruit from Goofy's Galley before you work-out.

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□ Speaking of fresh fruit, you will want to make frequent trips to Goofy's Galley on the Magic class ships. You'll find fresh cut melons, pineapple, bananas, grapes, and oranges all day long. After breakfast hours, they also offer mini wraps (watch out for heavy fillings) and small bowls of salad. Bananas and oranges are also at your disposal in the fitness centre.

□ To be completely honest, it wasn't easy to find other nutritious food on the Disney Wonder. You will need to do some digging and make your dietary restrictions known.

□ If you were thinking of getting room service for breakfast to avoid the tantalizing breakfast buffet, note that the options are almost all cold continental breakfast style, such as breads, pastries, and cereals. There was no option for hot oatmeal or other high nutrient food. The fruit bowl came with a few cut pieces of melon and one piece of pineapple. One of the sit-down restaurants that is open for breakfast may be your best option.

□ As for Beach Blanket buffet, this comes with a world of temptation. Breakfast did have some of the standard fresh fruit, but was predominantly processed meats, fried food, and pastries. My go-to was the hot oatmeal. Some dried fruit options for toppings were available, but I'll admit I enjoyed the sugary strawberry sauce to sweeten it up.

□ At lunch, there were some steamed veggies and plain white rice, but most of the buffet offerings were meat-centric and in heavy sauces. If you love seafood, the shrimp and mussels were impressive, even for this grand-daughter of an Atlantic Canadian fisherman. While there was plenty of fried food, I never found anything whole grain. I found no fresh fruit at lunch, but thankfully Goofy's Galley was just around the corner.

□ The saving grace at Beach Blanket is the salad bar, located between the two buffet lines. It was several days before I found this hidden gem, offering fresh spinach and other high nutrient veggies. If you can bring yourself to do it, walk on by the main buffet and go straight to the salad bar, supplementing with fruit and mini wraps from Goofy's Galley.

□ You may want to relax your dietary standards, however, and enjoy the buffet each day. The quality of the food is very good and we felt that it was on par with what was served in the restaurants each night.

□ Finding healthy food on our port adventures proved to be impossible. One 5-hour excursion gave us access to purchase only snack foods like chips and cookies. Another resulted in me buying pizza for the first time

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in my 6 year old's recollection. The only things that got us through were the few granola and nut bars we brought with us, as well as bottled water. Added to the challenge is the strictly enforced regulation that no fresh food can be brought off the ship.

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□ Keeping it healthy in the restaurants each night takes practice and a lot of willpower. I found it hard to pass up the bread offerings, when the wait for our main course was over an hour each night, timed precisely in the kitchen. Appetizers like non-creamy soup or salad with the dressing on the side are the key to getting you through to the main course. Eating some fresh fruit before going to dinner was also helpful.

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□ I hit the jackpot with Alvito, our main server, when I explained that I would prefer to keep all of my dinners free of meat and dairy. He was my ally each night, pointing out the best vegetarian dishes. Being from India, after only two nights, Alvito took it upon himself to special order me authentic vegetarian Indian food for the rest of the cruise!

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□ Fortunately or unfortunately, the dessert offerings at dinner were just ok and in very small portions. I could satisfy my sweet tooth with just a taste. Only one chocolate lava cake commanded that I indulge in every last bite.

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□ In the interest of full disclosure, we did have our share of treats, including following PassPorter Disney Cruise Line's insider advice to order Mickey bars from room service for a bedtime snack. A day at sea also wouldn't be complete without bedtime chocolates waiting in your stateroom each night. After all, a chocolate a day keeps the doctor away, right?

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Article last updated: 02-04-2016

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<http://www.passporter.com/articles/health-nut-disney-cruise.html>

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