



What's in Your Allergy Friendly Lunchbox?

Note: These ideas focus on *Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Egg-Free, Nut-Free* choices. You must **ALWAYS** read labels and ensure that your allergens are not included in any ingredients.

Manufacturers can change their ingredients at any time. Something that you may have once considered safe, may no longer be so. Also, any food may cause an allergy, not just the most common ones, so please always take your necessary precautions to keep your meals safe.

Sandwich/Wrap choices -

Note: Any of these ideas can be put on gluten free bread (*Udi's* is our favorite), gluten-free pita bread (*GFL Foods, Inc* is our favorite), gluten free tortillas or wraps (*Sandwich Petals* are delicious), gluten free crackers, gluten free bagels (again *Udi's* are our favorites, hands down), or even home-made gluten-free whole-grain or grain-free pancakes and waffles.

Just have fun, think outside the box, and mix and match your sandwich fillings/toppings with what you put them on.

1. Try out different nut butters topped with fruit slices (instead of your typical PB&J) on any of the above bread types. If your child's school is nut-free, try Sunflower Seed or Soy Butter (I always sprinkle a little chia seed or flax meal inside my kids nut-butter sandwiches for a little extra omega goodness).
2. Home-made (or store-bought) Hummus topped with cucumbers and/or shredded carrots on any of the above (minus the pancakes/waffles – your kids may not quite appreciate hummus spread on them)
3. Mashed avocados with a little squeeze of lime, some mild salsa, and shredded cheese, Dairy or Vegan (such as *Daiya*) on gluten free tortillas
4. Organic Nitrate-Free turkey slices (such as *Applegate Farms* – only kind of lunchmeat I buy), Avocado slices, Roasted Peppers, Dairy or Vegan Cheese slices inside a gluten-free pita, in a sandwich, in a wrap, or on a bagel.
5. Organic Nitrate-Free turkey slices (such as *Applegate Farms*), Roasted veggies and hummus inside a gluten free pita, in a sandwich, in a wrap, or on a bagel
6. Mashed beans topped with shredded cheese, Dairy or Vegan, on a tortilla
7. Chicken (or tuna) salad: in a pita, on a sandwich, or on a bagel – Try a mixture of leftover chicken or tuna (or a gluten-free rotisserie chicken, shredded), diced celery, diced apples, cut grapes or dried cranberries, a tiny bit of organic mayonnaise (or use Egg-Free mayonnaise), a squeeze of lemon, salt and pepper to taste.

8. Cucumber slices and Dairy or Vegan cream cheese on a bagel (my son also loves smoked salmon on his)

9. Black Bean burgers with avocado slices on a sandwich or gluten free bun.

10. Shredded veggies mixed with cream cheese and spread on bagels or wraps.

11. Make a Sandwich on a Stick –

1. Take bread, vegan cheese, lunch-meat, grape tomatoes, lettuce, pickles, olives

2. Cut up cubes of bread, cheese, and lunch-meat.

3. Slide the cubes onto a skewer with other foods your child likes, such as grape tomatoes, a piece of lettuce, a pickle, or an olive.

4. Set out a side of mayo or mustard for dipping.

Other Hearty Main Dish choices –

1. Cooked brown rice mixed with cannellini beans, garlic, and shredded dairy or vegan cheese

2. Cooked brown rice or quinoa tossed with diced chicken, broccoli florets, dried cranberries, 1 Tbsp canola or coconut oil, and a splash of orange juice

3. Fun shaped Pasta noodles tossed with cooked broccoli, shredded carrots, diced black olives, and 1 Tbsp vegan salad dressing

4. Gluten-Free Gnocchi or Ravioli (Conte's** makes a good option, although Ravioli are not dairy-free) with Marinara sauce for dipping**

5. Gluten-Free Spaghetti and Meatballs

6. Meatballs and Sauce in a Thermos – send some allergy-free bread or rolls for a Meatball Sub

7. Mac and Cheese – Dairy based or Dairy-Free (try **VegNew's Vegan Version). NOTE: I have included this recipe at the end of this list. You have to try it if you have food allergies or are Vegan. It is amazing!!!!**

8. Homemade soups in a thermos

9. **Meatloaf Muffins with Brown Sugar Glaze – Recipe is on my blog (these are gluten-free, dairy-free, nut-free, and easily egg-free): <http://cookitallergyfree.com/blog/2010/09/easy-meatloaf-muffins-gluten-free-dairy-free-easily-egg-free/>**

10. Black bean Salsa with Gluten Free corn chips for dipping

11. Plain Gluten-Free yogurt (Dairy or Non-Dairy) mixed with any fresh fruit and a small

squeeze of honey

12. Pesto Sauce and Gluten-Free Noodles (try the [gluten-free, dairy-free pesto sauce](#) from my blog with recommendations on how to make it nut-free):
<http://cookitallergyfree.com/blog/2010/08/pistachio-pesto-crust-ed-chicken-gluten-free-and-dairy-free/>

13. Hard-boiled eggs or Deviled Eggs, if you are not Egg-Free

14. Risotto with sautéed veggies – I usually make my leftovers into risotto cakes that the kids love for lunch

15. Any leftovers, really. I use all my leftover meats from dinner in my son's sandwiches the next day.

Sides and Snacks –

1. Bananas, Apples, or Celery with a small container of nut butter, sunflower seed butter, or soy butter for dipping

2. Raw vegetables (sugar snap peas, broccoli, carrots, celery, etc) with hummus or salad dressing for dipping (try pureeing vegetables into your hummus)

3. Roasted Fingerling Potatoes with Marinara Sauce for dipping

4. Fresh Fruit Kebabs with Dairy or Dairy-Free yogurt for dipping

5. Fruit dipped in pumpkin pie dip: pureed pumpkin or sweet potato mixed with pumpkin pie spice and a little honey. This is good with apple or pear slices

6. Roasted pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds

7. Smoothies in a thermos – can get creative and add different fruits, greens, chia or flax seeds

8. Nuts: if not allergic and your school allows them

9. Trail mix with Dairy Free Dark Chocolate pieces for a treat ([Enjoy Life Foods](#) has Nut-Free Trail mixes)

10. Dehydrated Fruit

11. Home-made Gluten-Free Granola Bars. I like this recipe (I Sub out the Peanut Butter for Sunflower Seed butter to make them Nut-Free):
<http://asugarandspicelife.blogspot.com/2010/08/peanut-butter-oatmeal-granola-bars.html>
These are best the next day when they get crunchy.

12. If you can tolerate corn: Home-made air-popped popcorn tossed with organic coconut oil and celtic sea-salt. You can make a popcorn trail mix by adding sunflower seeds, chopped dried apples, and allergen free chocolate chips (like Enjoy Life brand).

13. Gluten Free/ Nut-Free Granola in a container with a separate thermos of Dairy or Dairy-Free milk to pour over it.

14. Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free Cornbread muffins (pair with a turkey sandwich and dried cranberries, or even cranberry sauce). Pamela's and The Gluten Free Pantry both make very good cornbread mixes.

Treats –

1. Homemade Rice Crispy Treats made with Organic Brown Rice Cereal

2. Muffins – sweet potato, carrot, banana, or zucchini muffins are all healthy ideas – you can really bake any pureed vegetable into a muffin and kids will eat it (I always throw in a little flaxmeal or chia seeds in to my batter as well). One favorite muffin recipe from my blog: <http://cookitallergyfree.com/blog/2010/08/a-moment-to-listen-and-powerpacked-muffins/>

3. Fruit Crumbles made with healthy ingredients (such as the **GF, DF, EF, SF Berry Crumbles that my boys actually made themselves): <http://cookitallergyfree.com/blog/2010/07/easy-individual-berry-crumbles-gluten-free-dairy-free-egg-free-soy-free/>**

4. The famous Nutty Flax Bars (they are actually nut-free and really good for you) – try **One Frugal Foodie's version – She gives you the allergen-free options: <http://www.onefrugalfoodie.com/2010/04/07/famous-flax-n-oat-bar-recipe/>**

5. Dates with Cream Cheese, Dairy or Vegan. Sounds weird but so yummy!

6. A couple of home-made or store-bought allergy-friendly cookies never hurt anyone

Try to mix and match your choices each day, throw in a note or a joke to put a smile on your child's face, and arm yourself with some fun eco-friendly reusable lunch containers. You really cannot go wrong with filling their lunch boxes with whole grain, plant based options, and avoiding the highly processed, nutrient void convenience foods. Have fun with your creations and then sit back and know that you have done a major part in fostering your child's learning potential.

If you ever have questions, need recipe suggestions, or just need help, please feel free to email me anytime: kim@cookitallergyfree.com

*****FREE E-Cookbook: Go to the link below and download it on your computer for free.**

Smart School Time Recipes: The Breakfast, Snack, and Lunchbox Cookbook for Healthy Kids and Adults.

<http://www.onefrugalfoodie.com/2010/09/01/free-school-time-recipes/>

You can also download it for free on your iPad in iBooks:

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/book/smart-school-time-recipes/id391057894>

And As Promised...An Amazing Vegan Mac and Cheese Recipe

Original Recipe by Veg News

Vegan Macaroni and Cheese

Serves 6

What You Need:

- ***4 quarts water***
- ***1 tablespoon sea salt***
- ***8 ounces (gluten-free or regular) macaroni***
- ***4 slices of (gluten-free or regular) bread, torn into large pieces***
- ***2 tablespoons + 1/3 cup non-hydrogenated margarine (such as Fleishman's)***
- ***2 tablespoons shallots, peeled and chopped***
- ***1 cup red or yellow potatoes, peeled and chopped (or sweet potatoes)***
- ***1/4 cup carrots, peeled and chopped***
- ***1/3 cup onion, peeled and chopped***
- ***1 cup water***
- ***1/4 cup raw cashews (or Tahini or raw sunflower seeds, for Tree-Nut free)***
- ***2 teaspoons sea salt***
- ***1/4 teaspoon garlic, minced***
- ***1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard***
- ***1 tablespoon lemon juice, freshly squeezed***
- ***1/4 teaspoon black pepper***
- ***1/8 teaspoon cayenne***
- ***1/4 teaspoon paprika***

What You Do:

- 1. In a large pot, bring the water and salt to a boil. Add macaroni and cook until al dente. In a colander, drain pasta and rinse with cold water. Set aside.**
- 2. In a food processor, make breadcrumbs by pulverizing the bread and 2 tablespoons margarine to a medium-fine texture. Set aside.**
- 3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a saucepan, add shallots, potatoes, carrots, onion, and water, and bring to a boil. Cover the pan and simmer for 15 minutes, or until vegetables are very soft.**
- 4. In a high-powered blender (or food processor), process the cashews (or sunflower seeds or tahini), salt, garlic, 1/3 cup margarine, mustard, lemon juice, black pepper, and cayenne. Add softened vegetables and cooking water to the blender and process until perfectly smooth.**
- 5. In a large bowl, toss the cooked pasta and blended cheese sauce until completely coated. Spread mixture into a 9 x 12 casserole dish, sprinkle with prepared breadcrumbs, and dust with paprika. Bake for 20 minutes or until the cheese sauce is bubbling and the top has turned golden brown.**

Source: <http://www.vegnews.com/web/articles/page.do?catId=10&pageId=40>