

A Comprehensive List of All Paleo Diet Foods

If you're going on the Paleo Diet and still exploring what are the paleo diet foods you can eat and what you should avoid, then congrats, you've come to the right place.

If you check any study for the stats of obesity, heart disease, or cancer, you will see that the curve seems to always be going upwards. Strange thing considering all these new gyms that opened up and all the breakthroughs we made in medical science.

Actually, no. It's not surprising at all, because we've been eating wrong. The Paleo diet is one of the diets that build on this hypothesis, and its followers believe it really is the answer to modern man's problems, so let's explore it and its foods together.

Everything About the Paleo Diet Foods

The Paleo Diet is not as popular as the Keto Diet, but there is a lot in common between Paleo Diet foods and keto foods, so to help you learn the difference and find out what is what, let's start from the beginning. Roll the intro.

What is the Paleo Diet?

The Paleo Diet is a dietary plan that consists of only foods that humans could have been eating during the Paleolithic era dated from 2.5 million to 10,000 years ago. This is where the name came from.

The Paleolithic era happened before humans invented farming, so the paleo diet consists of only foods you can gather in nature or the meats of animals you can hunt (and fish).



Paleo Diet foods are the foods you could eat if you live in the wild and only gather or hunt your foods. Since farming emerged about 10,000 years ago, you can't eat any foods that came with farming such as legumes or dairy, but we'll explain

the paleo diet foods to avoid later in the article.

The Paleo diet is a whole-food-based diet that promises great health benefits. There are several studies that suggest that the diet does indeed lead to significant weight loss. Other studies point that those on the paleo diet lead healthier, more active lifestyles.

But why? Why would you only eat foods that you could eat thousands of years ago and leave all these delicious delicacies we have now?

Well, the answer is that our bodies have not had the time to adapt to the changes we made to our diets. You see, evolution is kind of a slow process that takes thousands of years to get anything done. However, humans are pretty quick-acting animals, and we have changed our diets so quickly in the last few thousand years that our bodies couldn't keep up.



Backers of the paleo diet believe that our modern diseases and health issues like obesity are caused by the foods we eat that our bodies haven't yet learned to consume right. So, the solution is to eat the foods our bodies still know how to consume, the foods that are right for us.

There are many studies against this hypothesis and many others that agree with it. Whether you believe in it or not is really up to you, but the thing you should know is; the diet can work for you, and you will never if it's the right diet for you without trying it out at least for a short while.

To help you with this last part, let's see what are the paleo diet foods you can eat and what are the ones you can't.

What are Paleo Diet Foods?

What kind of foods do you think our ancestors thousands of years ago were living on? I'm sure you can answer this, and if you do, then this is your answer to what are paleo diet foods.

Paleo diet foods include lean meats, fish, vegetables, nuts, and seeds. They can include anything that could've been obtained by hunting or gathering, so this means no legumes, no grains, no dairy products, and no alcohol – including beer, unfortunately.

Now, I know that just speaking in general terms is useful for some people, but more people – like myself – need the info to be more concrete and to contain more details.

So, I've created this comprehensive list of most of the paleo diet foods you can, broken down and everything.

Grab your notebook and bookmark this post, because you will need to get back to it later.

Paleo Vegetables

There are diets that contain only vegetables like the [vegetarian diet](#) and diets with no vegetables at all like the [Carnivore diet](#), then, there are diets that are somewhere in between, the Paleo diet is one such diet.



Get ready for tons of fresh vegetables, which is probably the thing your body will love the most about this diet.

Here are some of the best paleo vegetables to add to your paleo diet food list:

- Broccoli – Yes, Broccoli is still good for you
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Carrots
- Mushrooms – They will be much more important to you in this diet as they are in so many recipes!
- Zucchini
- Squash
- Onions – Onions are really underrated for the health benefits they offer, I highly recommend doing some

googling, you will gain a new appreciation for them in this diet

- Radish
- Olives
- Beets – Dwight Shrute’s beets are recommended (The Office Joke)
- Pumpkin Seeds
- Pickles
- Peppers
- Bok Choy
- Romaine Lettuce
- Kale
- Arugula
- Spinach

If you find a certain veggie and don’t know whether it is a fair game or not, they are most probably okay to eat on the diet. However, your vegetables must be fresh not frozen and try to get organic veggies if you can afford them in the long-term.

Paleo Fruits

Fruits will become your new candy, they are the sweetest thing you’re allowed on the diet.



Thankfully, fruits are actually more delicious than all man-made candy, it's just that refined sugar has ruined our taste buds. Once you quit refined sugar for a while, you will regain your ability to taste the sweetness of fruits.

Here are some of the paleo fruits you can enjoy:

- **Apples**
- **Bananas**
- **Melons** – including all types of melons like honeydew and watermelon
- **Tomatoes** – You can enjoy sun-dried tomatoes as well
- **Kiwis**
- **Grapes**
- **Berries** – all types of berries including blackberries, strawberries, and raspberries
- **Peaches**

- Citrus

Paleo Diet Proteins

The Paleo diet gives you access to many protein sources, as long as you stay away from processed foods. You can still eat bacon, but you have to do it in moderation and always opt for the nitrate-free variety when you are shopping, that is, if it is possible, of course.



Anything you can hunt or fish is allowed, but you should always make sure the food you eat didn't go through any kind of processing.

Here is a break down of the best protein sources on the paleo diet:

Meats

- Beef – but try to find grass-fed beef if you can
- Bacon – always try to find the nitrate-free variety
- Lamb
- Veal
- Pork
- Wild boar

Game Meat

- Rabbit
- Duck
- Deer
- Moose
- Reindeer
- Elk

And anything else you can hunt that is safe to eat. If you really like hunting, though, you might want to check the [carnivore diet](#) as well.

Fish

I know not everyone can actually go fish, but if you can catch your fish yourself, it would be much better and true to the

spirit of the diet. However, this will turn the diet into more of a lifestyle, and some people are not really on board with that. It's all up to you at the end.

- Salmon
- Sardines
- Tuna – An especially great source of protein
- Trout
- Bass
- Haddock
- Anchovies
- Walleye
- Herring
- Cod
- Turbot
- Tilapia
- Flatfish
- Grouper

Basically; if you can catch it yourself, you can eat it.

Shellfish

- Clams
- Shrimp
- Oysters
- Crab
- Scallops
- Mussels

Wild-caught shellfish is much preferred. Most of the shellfish (and fish) we eat are frozen for weeks or months before we get

to eat them, and there are some strong arguments against this for the paleo diet.

Poultry

Poultry is probably the most cost-effective way of getting the proteins you need.

- **Chicken** – If you can get free-range chicken or chicken that are allowed to at least feed outside of cages, that will be much better and more in the spirit of the diet.
- **Turkey** – Turkeys are harder to hunt, so they may not be worth the effort (That's a joke, of course)
- **Goose** – Much easier to hunt, especially in Canada. (another unfunny joke)
- Quail

Nuts

- Cashews
- Macadamia nuts
- Hazelnuts
- Brazil nuts
- Walnuts
- Almonds
- Almond butter

Any nuts you get should be free of any sugar or artificial sweeteners. Also, nuts are high in calories, just because there are no calorie restrictions on the diet doesn't mean you

should go crazy on the nuts. They can and will make you gain weight.

Fats

Fats are of great importance in the Paleo diet. Having a variety of them in the diet is important, so don't just get all your fats from butter.



The proteins you eat will still have fats, however, you will still need some other types of fats for flavor, which is totally okay in the paleo diet.

Here are some healthy fats that belong on the paleo diet food

list:

- **Olive Oil**
- **Coconut oil**
- **Butter** – In moderation, butter can easily make you gain weight, which is not what we want, remember?
- **Chia seeds** – You will need them as they are in a surprising number of paleo diet food recipes.
- **Ghee** – Opt for Ghee that's made from grass-fed butter if you can, which is not always easy, I know.
- **Tahini**
- **Avocado** – Avocados are tricky, so do some reading before you actually go ahead and buy them, there is no shame in doing this, these things are a bit on the expensive side!

Spices and Herbs

What is the easiest way to make your food taste better? Spice them up! Experiment with new flavors and try out different combinations of herbs and spices until you find the ones you like the most.

Keep in mind that Herbs and Spices actually have some great health benefits for you as well thanks to things like their anti-inflammatory properties.

Here is a list of the herbs that can make your paleo dishes more delicious:

- Garlic
- Ginger
- Chilies
- Fresh Chives
- Parsley
- Cilantro
- Cacao powder – I have to confess, I use cacao powders in my protein shakes. That's how much I love them.
- Leek
- Mustard
- Vinegars – Apple Cider vinegar is actually very useful in many dishes.
- Capers

Sweeteners

Since there is no refined sugar, you can no longer enjoy cakes or donuts, but even people in ancient times enjoyed sweet things, so, how?



By using the sweeteners of nature. We didn't invent sweet, sugar is actually a surprisingly new addition to our diet, and it hasn't even been a couple of centuries since we started consuming sugar, and at one point, people who ate sugar cubes were of only the richest families, and now it's everywhere.

Here are the natural sweeteners you can enjoy on the Paleo Diet:

- **Coconut Sugar**
- **Date Sugar** – Dates, in general, are a pretty wonderful source of so many nutrients. I recommend you go for dried dates as they have an amazingly long shelf life and are still sweet.
- **Raw Honey** – Only raw honey with no additives. Honey also has an incredibly long shelf life. Consume in moderation, honey has many health benefits but it is

still very sweet.

- **Maple Syrup** – Rejoice, our Canadian Friends.

Drinks

- **Water**
- **Herbal and Matcha Tea** – In moderation, and with no additives.
- **Black Coffee** – Many followers of the paleo diet recommend not including this option, but if you are dependent on caffeine to get through your Mondays – much like myself – then this is probably a good stepping stone.
- **Gluten-free spirits** – I would recommend against it as well.
- **Sparkling water** – Unsweetened, no artificial or even natural sweeteners allowed
- **Low-sugar hard cider** – Occasionally and sparingly.
- **Kombucha**
- **Bone Broth**

This is probably the one that will affect people the most. Peer pressure is a very real thing, and it's not easy to go to the bar or Starbucks and not drink while everybody else is drinking.

However, the benefits of quitting alcohol and caffeine are very real and will be the first wave of benefits you experience, way before the benefits of the diet itself start showing.

My point is; it will be hard, but it's worth it, and if anyone

has done it, so can you!

Paleo Diet Foods to Avoid

Now that you know the paleo diet foods you can eat, here are the paleo diet foods to avoid.

- **Bread** – Sorry, no more sandwiches for you
- **Pasta** – They definitely didn't have pasta back then
- **Rice** – Fish is fine, sushi isn't
- **Soy**
- **Corn** – You're already eating too much corn in everything, that's probably for the best
- **Refined Sugar** – any kind of man-made sugar is out of the question, no artificial sweeteners, no sweetened beverages, no sweet drinks.
- **Processed foods** – this includes anything frozen or packaged – you might as well get rid of your microwave.
- **Beans, lentils, and peanuts** – and of course no peanut butter
- **Dairy** – Humans started consuming dairy after they started the whole farms and farm animal things, so no more diet for you
- **Alcohol, Wine, and beer** – This will have an impact on your social life, more than you think. Not because you can't live without alcohol, but because of peer pressure.
- **Oats** – Oats seem to be a dear friend of all healthy diets, not this one though
- **Quinoa** – might as well, most of us only really pretend to like Quinoa or know how to use it in food
- **Potatoes** – It's surprising how difficult this one is, potatoes are surprisingly important in the diet of the

modern man.

How to Think of the Paleo Diet



The Paleo diet is not a strict diet like the Ketogenic diet where you eliminate whole food groups. It's also not like other diets where you have to count calories or eat only at specific times.

The Paleo diet serves best as a starting place from which you can begin your journey into healthy eating and an active lifestyle.

The Paleo diet does have restrictions, but they all have the same underlying principle; to eat healthier foods.

You should think of it more as a 'template' than a strict diet, and templates are there so you can adjust it and customize it to your own needs.

The Paleo diet is flexible enough to be adjusted and tempered with so it can suit your lifestyle. So, do that. Try to find the middle ground between the diet and your current lifestyle so you can go on the diet without sacrificing too much that you can't actually stick to it long-term.

Always think long-term, and consider doing more exercise while you're at it to get the best result of the diet. After all, we can't eat like our ancestors and still spend our days sedentary on office chairs and couches.

Related Questions

I know you have some burning questions going in your mind right now, so let's try to answer as many of them as possible in the simplest way I know.

Is Rice Paleo?

No, Rice is not paleo. You can't eat rice on the Paleo diet, and you can't eat any food with rice in it. Beware of sushi and other popular foods that rice can sneak into. I highly recommend you try always preparing your food yourself. Eating out is the easiest way to break the diet and cheat on it, and sometimes this happens even unintentionally, which is just the worse.

Are Sweet Potatoes Paleo?

No, Sweet Potatoes are not paleo. Potatoes are not paleo since ancient humans could not gather them from the forests. Potatoes are grown in farms, which means they don't belong on your plate or in the paleo diet foods menu.

Beware that both potatoes and sweet potatoes can sneak into foods, I recommend preparing your food yourself and avoiding eating out as much as possible.

Is Butter Paleo?

Yes, and No. Butter is considered paleo and not paleo at the same time.

You see, no one has a definite answer to this question. Butter contains milk solids, and we have established that milk is definitely not paleo, but many Paleoans do a work-around to eat butter still.

They clarify organic/grass-fed butter, separate the milk solids, and then remove them from the butter. Once you remove the milk stuff, you're left with butter that is paleo.

Is Almond Milk Paleo?

Yes, almond milk is actually paleo. The reason is quite

simple, and it's how you should always try to answer such questions;

What is it made of?

In the case of Almond milk, it's made of water and almonds, two things that are allowed in the paleo diet. Almond milk is not actually 'milk' in the traditional way we think about milk since it contains no dairy whatsoever.

Are Beans Paleo?

Beans and Legumes are traditionally not considered Paleo since we know they have come after the Paleolithic era with farming, however, recent evidence suggests that legumes and beans were actually part of the diet of our ancestors.

According to recent analysis of the Neanderthal tooth plaque, our ancestors did consume wild varieties of peas and fava beans, some of them consumed much more so than others.

We also know that early humans actually ate a more diverse diet than Neanderthals, we can then conclude that our human ancestors living in the Paleolithic era consumed legumes and beans as well.

Are Eggs Paleo?

Yes, Eggs are indeed paleo, since ancient humans could probably find eggs if they looked hard enough. However, I know some people who really don't believe they belong on the paleo diet foods menu.

If you do eat eggs on the paleo diet, they must be from fully pastured or free-range chickens that are allowed to live and feed outside of cages.

If you have any other questions about what foods you can or can't eat, always ask yourself those two consecutive questions;

What is it made of? Can I find those ingredients in nature (Can I gather or hunt them)? If the answer to the second question is yes, then it's allowed on the diet.

Resources

[Everyday health – a detailed paleo diet food list](#)

[Whole9life – The Butter Manifesto](#)

[Whole Health Source – Beans, Lentils, and the Paleo Diet](#)