



MEDITERRANEAN DIET GROCERY STORE TOUR

Use the following suggestions to help shoppers navigate supermarket aisles.

Store tours help shoppers learn about accessible and affordable Mediterranean Diet foods and provide an opportunity for dietitians to answer their questions, clear up confusion, and help them learn to read and understand nutritional labels.

*If you're too busy to conduct a tour yourself, reach out to a dietitian at your local hospital or in your community and suggest that they lead a tour. And if you have a room large enough to accommodate a group, arrange to offer a brief lecture and show our **Mediterranean Diet Presentation**.*

10 TOUR TIPS

Before the tour begins, take advantage of participants' interest in learning more about healthy Mediterranean foods by placing POS displays throughout the store featuring healthy Mediterranean products.

Begin with a brief introduction to the Mediterranean Diet, based upon easy to digest **Steps for Following the Mediterranean Diet**. As you walk through the store, highlight the following areas and point out the many new products that are part of this remarkably healthy eating pattern.

Encourage participants to ask questions as you go. Their questions and your answers can make great reading for a follow up blog post or newsletter!

- 1. FRESH PRODUCE** – Highlight the many different kinds of vegetables, fresh herbs, and fruits. Remind shoppers that potatoes are part of a healthy diet, and discuss how easy it is to roast a tray of peppers, squash, onions, beets, and other foods. Point out mushrooms, garlic, avocados, eggplant, and other choices as important to building a healthy plate for lunch and dinner that is at least half filled with vegetables. Explain your retailer's signage or other ways of promoting produce. (Remind shoppers of the value and convenience of using canned and frozen produce as well and take them to these sections of the store, too.)
- 2. DAIRY** – Point out the many different kinds of Greek yogurt and Mediterranean-style cheeses including Feta and Parmesan.
- 3. EGGS** – Talk about ways to include eggs in a lunch or dinner meal, not just breakfast.
- 4. HUMMUS AND OTHER MEDITERRANEAN SPREADS** – Encourage everyone to look at all the flavors of hummus and point out the differences in terms of ingredients. Show them tzatziki and baba ghanouj, too, and talk about how these are great substitutes for mayonnaise in sandwiches and wraps.

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- 5. OILS** – Show the many different kinds of oils, including olive, walnut, peanut, and others and explaining why these are healthy sources of fat. Point out the new spray oils, too, which help cut back on the amount of oil used in sautéing and stir frying. Talk about the importance of tasting different kinds (like you do for wine!) and give tips for using in cooking or making dressings.
- 6. NUTS AND SEEDS** – Stress the importance of getting healthy fats from peanuts, almonds, walnuts, and other nuts, plus flaxseeds, sesame seeds, sunflower and pumpkin seeds, too. Talk about some ways to use them as snacks, in homemade trail mix, and to top vegetable and grain dishes.
- 7. BEANS** – These vegetable protein powerhouses are central to Mediterranean Diet cooking. Explain the convenience of using canned chickpeas, black beans, cannellini beans, or kidney beans (with a tip about rinsing and draining) and the economy of preparing your own dried beans.
- 8. SEAFOOD** – Ask tour participants what confuses them the most about shopping for seafood and help them understand your store’s labeling system and/or your sustainability policies. Recommend eating fish or seafood twice a week and point out the many options. Remind them to keep tuna, sardines, and anchovies on hand.
- 9. GRAINS** – Emphasize whole grain breads, pastas, rice, pizza crusts, crackers, and cereals and explain why whole grain options deliver health benefits as well as satiety. Be prepared to discuss gluten-free options including oats, rice, and quinoa. Point out lesser-known traditional grains such as emmer, farro, or freekeh. Remind participants that it’s easy to cook up a pot of whole grains and freeze some in individual portions for quick reheating.
- 10. CONDIMENTS AND PANTRY ITEMS** – These make all the difference! Walk participants through aisles that contain vinegar, mustard, olives, sun-dried tomatoes, capers, dried herbs and spices, Medjool dates and other dried fruits. Give tips on how to use each item to boost flavor in meals.

Complete your tour by handing out copies of the Welcome to the Mediterranean Diet brochure.