

Health, Wellness & Modern Green Living

organic spa

MAGAZINE

Gourmet Food & Travel

Secrets from a
Plant-Based Chef

A Perfect Spa Picnic

Healing Benefits of
Oil & Vinegar

TOP 10
ORGANIC SPA
AWARDS

Natural Sunscreens



AUGUST 2017

\$5.99

08>



A Lifestyle Publication
www.organicspamagazine.com

Breakfast Around the Globe

One of the best things about traveling is getting out of your comfort zone and trying new things—and that starts at the breakfast table.

By **Sandra Ramani**

For those of us who are used to traditional North American morning fare, the idea of starting the day with grilled fish, fermented rice, fava bean dip or a chili-spiced meat porridge might seem unusual. In many cultures, however, savory, spicy and pickled are typical morning flavors—and there may be some healthy reasons why.

“The ideal breakfast features elements of good fat, low-glycemic carbohydrate, protein, dairy and antioxidants,” explains Suprina Berenyi, a nutritionist and wellness/lifestyle consultant who integrates modern nutritional science with Eastern wellness philosophies. “Good fats (like almonds, pistachios, cashews or avocado) are needed to fuel the brain, help nerve cells communicate better and slow down the digestion process to prevent drastic spikes in blood sugar,

while complex carbohydrates, such as beans, whole grains, sweet potato or steel-cut oats, also help with the latter.”

Meanwhile, proteins like fish, meats, eggs, tofu and dairy help us feel more satiated between meals and can stimulate the metabolism, and antioxidant vitamins are key for all-around good health.

Berenyi notes that global traditional breakfasts often feature a beneficial combination of these key nutrients and have been crafted with long-term health in mind. Here are global morning meals that help start the day right—and that just might inspire you to swap cereal for congee, or pancakes for dosa.



MIDDLE EAST

If you enjoy tapas-style small-plate meals, then breakfast in spots like Oman, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates is for you. Hotel buffets in these countries are typically laden with a wide array of items like hummus, baba ghanoush, labne (thick homemade yogurt) and fowl medames (fava bean dip with herbs, tomatoes and spices), plus accents like pickles, olives, local honey, salad and plenty of freshly baked pita. Depending on the region, sweet teeth can enjoy baklava pastries layered with nuts and honey, or hot dishes like knefeh—soft cheese soaked in sour cherry syrup and wrapped in a semolina crust.

WHERE TO TRY IT The indulgent breakfast buffet at the new Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort in Oman offers a wide array of regional and Western dishes, as well as a low-to-the-ground kid's buffet table for budding foodies (anantara.com).

IRELAND

Ireland's hearty traditional breakfast was born of its agricultural history, designed for farmers who needed to fuel up for the long day ahead. As such, it's got a great mix of needed elements: steel-cut oatmeal and baked beans for complex carbs; grilled mushrooms and tomatoes for antioxidants; and protein in the form of bacon, sausage, eggs and white pudding, a patty made with pork meat and fat, suet, bread and oatmeal. (The similar black pudding is higher in calories but richer in iron and zinc, as it also contains blood.) Traditional Irish soda bread comes plain or baked with seeds and fruit, for added nutrients.

WHERE TO TRY IT At Chicago's historic Palmer House, A Hilton Hotel, Executive Chef Stephen Henry pays tribute to his Irish roots by serving a full traditional breakfast—complete with white and black pudding—every St. Patrick's Day (palmerhousehiltonhotel.com).

CHINA

China's culinary scene varies by region, but there are some breakfast items beloved throughout. Thick, creamy congee is a porridge-style rice soup that typically includes chili, scallions, egg, and a protein like chicken, pork or shrimp; it can be paired with dim sum (steamed dumplings) for a heartier meal. Born of the street food stalls, portable jianbing is a wheat and mung bean flour crepe that's cooked on a round, cast iron pan, topped with egg, then rolled up with crunchy fried wonton strips, cilantro, pickles, scallions and a sweet-and-spicy combo of chili and hoisin sauces.

WHERE TO TRY IT The Langham Place, New York, reflects its Hong Kong roots with a 24-hour in-room Ying menu that includes breakfast items like congee, steamed dim sum and shrimp fried rice with scrambled eggs and BBQ pork (langhamhotels.com). The Shangri-La Hotel Xian serves up a tasty jianbing in the Yi Café, where the live cooking stations highlight cuisines from China, Japan, Southeast Asia and Europe (shangri-la.com).



Poolside breakfast at Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort in Oman

JAPAN

The traditional Japanese breakfast is loaded with healthy ingredients. Grilled or raw fish provides protein and good fats; miso soup is rich in probiotics, copper and vitamin K; rice provides the carbs; seaweed is packed with vitamins and minerals; and pickled vegetables boast vitamins A and C and, thanks to the fermentation process, lots of beneficial gut-boosting bacteria.

WHERE TO TRY IT At the Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Marunouchi, the Motif restaurant complements its sweeping city views with elegantly presented dishes like the Japanese Breakfast, a bento box filled with grilled fish, rice, a slow-cooked egg, seaweed and homemade pickled veggies (fourseasons.com).

MEXICO

You'll find plenty of protein in a traditional Mexican breakfast in the form of eggs, beans, avocados, plus antioxidants in tomatoes, and an array of spices to get the metabolism revving.

Favorite dishes include chilaquiles, fried tortilla strips simmered with red or green salsa, then sprinkled with queso fresco (fresh cheese), onions and avocado; add chicken or beans for more heft. Another staple is huevos rancheros, fried eggs served on corn tortillas and topped with beans, salsa and cilantro.

WHERE TO TRY IT Along with signature dishes like chilaquiles and huevos rancheros, the gourmet breakfast at the Rosewood San Miguel de Allende includes traditional pastries, a selection of mild-to-spicy salsas, fresh-off-the-griddle tortillas made to order by the longtime "tortilla ladies" who set up shop on the patio; fill the latter with poblano peppers, cheese, chicken and more (rosewoodhotels.com).

INDIA

While cuisine in India varies greatly by region, several breakfast dishes from the south have become popular both throughout the subcontinent and beyond. Thin, crispy dosa are savory crepes made from a batter of fermented rice and black gram bean flour, then eaten plain with dipping chutney or stuffed with potato curry. Based on a similar batter, fluffy idli are from steamed, spongy disks served with chutney, chili oil or rasam—a spicy soup. In both cases, the bean-based batter is a good source of protein, the fermentation process increases the vitamin content, and the chutneys and curries are loaded with beneficial ingredients like turmeric, garlic, clove, cinnamon, fenugreek and ginger.

WHERE TO TRY IT Though set in the northern town of Agra—home to a little monument called the Taj Mahal—the Oberoi Amarvilas' excellent breakfast buffet includes regional delicacies from around the country, including made-to-order dosa that stretch far beyond the borders of your plate (oberoihotels.com).