



10 Tips for Planning a virtual

Global Food Tour

1. Determine how long your food tour will last
 2. Pick which countries you'd like to "visit"
 3. Create a Pinterest board
 4. Create a menu plan and print your recipes
 5. Make a categorized grocery list
 6. Go Shopping
 7. Start cooking
 8. Invite the family to help
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Planning for Success

1. Determine how long your food tour will last

Will your culinary adventure take place over a long weekend? One whole week? Two? If you plan to make it longer than a few days, consider scheduling in an “off day,” in case you just want to grab a pizza and take the night off.

2. Pick which countries you'd like to “visit”

We have some favorites, either because we've traveled to those countries or just because we love the foods we've tried from there (Japan, Thailand, and India in particular). But we also wanted to include dishes we'd never experienced. My map-loving hubby suggested we travel the globe systematically, so we started in Asia and moved westward, attempting to visit each continent. (We skipped Antarctica, for obvious reasons.)

3. Create a Pinterest board

Once you've selected several countries to explore, start browsing Pinterest and saving any recipes that pique your interest. (Check out my "Global Food Tour" board @meredithnmills to see some of the recipes we tried -- or would like to try someday.)

Be sure to consider the time and experience level required as you're picking dishes to try. If your schedule only allows half an hour in the kitchen most nights, don't pick a recipe that will take all afternoon to prepare. And if you don't love cooking or have lots of culinary experience, avoid dishes which require above-average kitchen expertise.

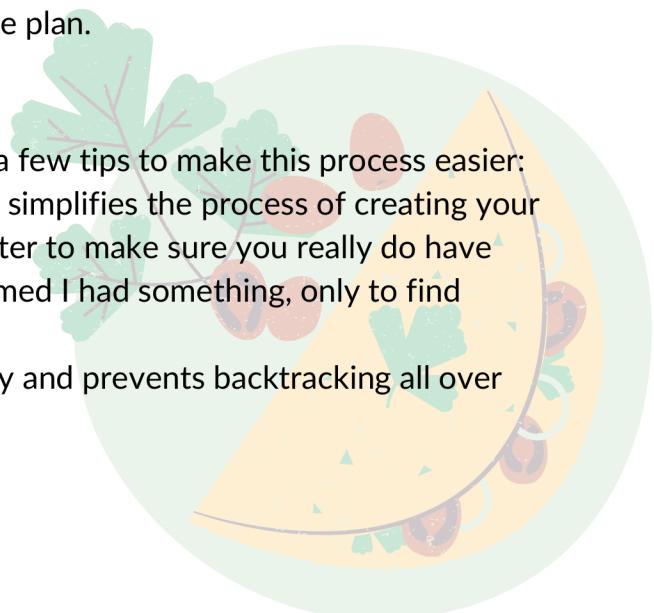
4. Create a menu plan and print your recipes

Once you've pinned recipes from each country you plan to "visit," choose which ones you'd like to try this time (because you can always do this again!) Very often, I cook using recipes on my phone or iPad, but sometimes, I just want a hard copy – especially when I'm cooking something unfamiliar. If you print all your recipes ahead of time, you can keep them in a binder with your menu plan in the front and your recipes in order behind the plan.

5. Make a categorized grocery list

Using your printed recipes, create a grocery list. Here are a few tips to make this process easier:

- *Write down every item, even if you're sure you have it.* This simplifies the process of creating your list and gives you a chance to double-check your pantry later to make sure you really do have that staple item. (I can't tell you how many times I've assumed I had something, only to find another family cook finished it up.)
- *Create categories.* This enables you to shop systematically and prevents backtracking all over the grocery store.



6. Go Shopping

Most items will be available in your local grocery store, so start by shopping there. I'm a huge fan of grocery pick-up services. Most stores have an app which makes it easy to submit an order. I love the convenience of pulling into a parking spot and having my groceries loaded right into my car. I highly recommend this for all your standard items.

For those items not carried at your local supermarket, a quick Google search will show you ethnic stores in your area. I had so much fun exploring Indian, Persian, and Asian markets!

You can also order most of these items online if you can't find your items at a local store. Just be sure to plan ahead so you have all the items you need when it's time to make each dish.

7. Start cooking

Be sure to read through the whole recipe ahead of time, preferably in the morning. Some items need to be soaked or marinated for a few hours before you cook them. Looking over the recipe well in advance will head off any last-minute surprises.

8. Invite the family to help

Kids in the kitchen can be a bit stressful if you're an anti-messmaker like myself. But the memories made there are priceless. Cooking together also builds camaraderie and gives the kids ownership of the meal you created together.

9. Take a picture and share

Before you dig in, take a picture of your culinary masterpiece. I used a white dish and carefully plated our meal as attractively as possible. My daughter even got out her letterboard and listed our menu for the night, along with the country we were "visiting." Sharing the picture online sparked some really fun Instagram conversations throughout our food tour. If you tag the recipe creator, you may make a new friend!

10. Enjoy!

Invite each family member to "rate" each dish and talk about which ones you'd like to make again.

I hope you make lots of fun memories on your global food tour! If you post pictures, please tag me on Instagram @MeredithNMills so I can follow along!

