

NIOSA Survival Guide

It's that time of year again. San Antonio's annual Fiesta celebration is just around the corner. And while calorie-counting isn't generally on the minds of festival attendees, the following information may be helpful to those who wish to indulge "sensibly".

EAT FIRST:

Enjoy a light meal/hearty snack before heading out the door – include fiber (to fill you up) and protein (to keep you satisfied longer). Ideas: turkey/2% cheese on whole wheat & an apple; banana and a tbsp of peanut butter; yogurt w/2 tbsp granola & sliced almonds; whole grain cereal w/skim milk. Arriving hungry will increase the chances of over-indulgence later in the evening!

QUICK TRIP:

Soon after arriving (before you get hungry!) take a quick trip around the grounds and/or review NIOSA's incredible food selection online before you start to indulge. Set some **LIMITS** for yourself (which foods/how much) ahead of time.

DON'T WASTE:

Don't "waste" your calories on the more common offerings (burgers, corndogs, curly fries, cotton candy, snow cones – you can over-indulge on that stuff anytime!). Focus your attention on NIOSA's more *EXOTIC SPECIALTIES!*

SAVOR YOUR "FAVES":

Do thoughts of Maria's Tortillas at the Haymarket already have you drooling? Have you been dreaming of Sauerkraut Bend's Black Forest Cake since last year's NIOSA celebration? Go ahead...enjoy it! One food or meal doesn't define your whole diet. Choose one or two favorites from NIOSA and relish them...eat slowly...close your eyes...really **EXPERIENCE** each bite. And be ready to get back in the gym come sunrise!

SAFETY IN NUMBERS:

Enjoy NIOSA with a friend (or 2, 3, 4, or more) – this way you can share your goodies...allowing yourself to **TASTE** (rather than indulge in) the wide variety of ethnic cuisines. The 400 calories in an order of fried frog legs isn't so bad split 4 ways...it'll leave you with calories left over to split the 380 calorie Black Forest Cake with a few of your pals!

DON'T LOSE WITH BOOZE:

The calories from alcohol add up quickly...so drink slowly. Space out alcoholic beverages with lower calorie non-alcoholic drinks (water, diet soda). In addition, effects of alcohol may weaken your resolve to stick to your healthy habits!

DELIGHT IN THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE:

Remember that NIOSA is a celebration of the cultural heritage that has made San Antonio the city we love. Enjoy a little bite to eat...but then focus all your attention on everything else. The music! The dancing! The costumes! The face painting! The games! The people watching!

Let's face it...NIOSA's fanciful menu wasn't designed with your waistline in mind. It's hard to know exactly what's in all those tasty treats, but based on NIOSA's descriptions the chart on the following page offers some ideas to get you started with some lower fat/calorie choices.

Arneson Theater:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • banana smoothie – although the calories from smoothies can add up quickly, at least this tasty beverage offers nutritional benefits. Split one with a friend.
Chinatown:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicken lettuce wraps are likely to be a good choice • Fortune cookies are only about 25 calories with ½ gram of fat – easy sweet fix • While veggies are good for you...avoid the vegetable tempura – it's deep fried
Clown Alley:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skip this stuff – it's fattening, has little nutritional value, and you can get it anywhere, anytime. Indulge your senses with something special while celebrating at NIOSA
French Quarter:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skip the sausage and shrimp po'boys – high in fat • A Café au Lait will likely run you 150-200 calories; as will an order of 6 escargots with garlic butter.
Main Street USA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try one small fried green tomato for about 145 calories • Although soft pretzels are low in fat, they can have almost 500 calories.
Mexican Market:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy a fajita de pollo or a bean taco • Split an order of churros with a friend
Mission Trail:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Prairie Chicken looks good – skinless chicken sautéed with onion and bell pepper. Don't finish the whole tortilla if you're starting to feel full.
South of the Border:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Aguacates look healthy, but are fairly high in calories...but at least they offer plenty of good nutrition too. Avocados are high in fat, but they are rich in the heart-healthy monounsaturated fat. Opt for the fresh avocado and spicy sauce...but skip the sour cream.
Villa Espana:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tapas Bandas appear to be a good choice – pass on the Monterrey Jack cheese if you can – enjoy the flavors of the chicken, peppers, and the healthy fat in the olives and avocado • The Shrimp Parilla is probably a wise choice as well.

Let's fiesta, San Antonio! Have fun!