

MARCOVACATION



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What to Do When the Chef is on Vacation Too.....

One of the many reasons people choose vacation rental properties over hotels is to avoid eating out for every meal. Not only does it get expensive really quickly, but you have to round everyone up, change out of your comfy pool wear and after a few days, eating out for every meal tends to get surprisingly boring. And if you have little ones traveling with you who can't sit still for more than 15 minutes tops, you know eating out is rarely a relaxing experience.

Preparing a meal can be a fantastic communal activity that brings friends and family together like no other. Tasks can be divided and in no time the feast is ready and everyone can enjoy a relaxed meal that offers a great alternative to the numerous Marco Island restaurants. And the added benefit is that you don't have to have a designated driver.

Inevitably however, there's usually one person who tends to carry more of the load and no matter how much they insist they love to cook, they are on vacation too. So what alternatives do you have if you still want the convenience of eating out but don't want to leave the house? Many stores now offer easy to finish meals; area restaurants will get you back to the pool in a jiffy and if you're looking for a special treat, bring in a personal chef.

1. Store-bought Fresh Meals

The local supermarkets have many fresh entrées and salads for a quick and easy meal. Costco also has both frozen and fresh items that will give you more time in the sun. If you're flying into Ft Meyers, there is a Costco close to the airport. And there is another one in Naples.

2. Family Style Take Out

You'll be spoiled for choice when it comes to pizza, but that will only get you through one night. Many of the restaurants offer food to go and if they don't deliver and you don't feel like going out to collect the food, just call one of the taxi companies who will deliver for a nominal charge. Here are a few you might consider:

- **Michelbob's** only does take-out and has some of the best ribs on the island. They're typically closed on Sunday and Monday so plan accordingly. <http://www.michelbobs.com/>
- **Mango's Dockside Bistro** has a great location so it seems a shame not to take advantage of the views, but they also offer catering. <http://www.mangosdocksidebistro.com/about>

3. Personal Chef

- Private Chef Sebastian Mazzotta offers excellent in-house dining as well as cooking lessons. It's a great option if you're celebrating a special occasion. You can also pick up some of his famous crab cakes at the Farmer's market. <http://www.chefmazzotta.com/Services.html>
- Private Chef David Hill also operates on Marco Island offering in-house dining and lessons. <http://www.chefdavidhill.com/index.php>

4. Mail-Order

Many companies now send food directly to your doorstep. You may already be familiar with Market Day, but did you know they deliver? You could place your order before you leave and have it delivered when you get to your vacation home. (Please note that you'll need to confirm how delivery is being made. Mail is being forwarded so packages sent by the US Post Office and in some cases UPS will not be delivered.) <http://www.marketdaydirect.com/>