



## **Eat Out & Feel Proud**

### **Eating out with toddlers with multiple food allergies**

For some families, eating out with a toddler with multiple food allergies is a no-go. They simply find the whole event too stressful. My experience, however, is that it is possible and great fun to all eat out together. My son Taran is very sociable and loves eating out with us, especially when the grandparents come along!!

Having said that, I do understand how difficult it can be. Up until recently, eating out with Taran was fairly easy. Everyone expects parents to bring food, homemade or jars, to a restaurant to feed their baby. So just like everyone else, I would bring a meal (in my case homemade) for Taran to eat and there wasn't a problem.

More recently however, especially since he has turned 18 months, restaurant staff have given us a children's menu along with the other menus thinking that we will order some "proper" food for Taran. However, it is virtually impossible for us to find something "safe" for him to eat from either the adult or children's menu.

When it first happened, I felt really embarrassed having to tell the waiting staff that we wouldn't be ordering anything for him and even more embarrassed when I had to produce his food from my bag! However, once I'd explained about his food allergies, everyone was very understanding and we enjoyed a great meal out. The next time it happened, I simply explained right from the start and didn't feel embarrassed at all. Luckily so far, all the restaurants we've been to have been fantastic when we've explained the situation.

As I mentioned, Taran loves joining in and so to include him I always bring along something appropriate. For example, if we are dining at a "posh" burger type restaurant, I will make homemade mini meatballs and potato wedges for him to eat, or if at a fish restaurant, homemade fish cake. This way, he doesn't feel left out and enjoys the whole experience too.

I would love to hear of any experiences, good or bad, that you've had eating out with your toddler. Send me an email at [lucy@feedmeallergyfree.co.uk](mailto:lucy@feedmeallergyfree.co.uk).

***Article written by Lucy Chahil, January 2007***

***For all the recipes mentioned in this article, please refer to the Feed me allergy free recipe book available from [www.feedmeallergyfree.co.uk](http://www.feedmeallergyfree.co.uk).***

***Please note that this article is not intended to provide any professional / medical advice. For advice, always consult your GP or dietician.***

