



Dietary and Allergy Policy

We would love to be able to cater for everyone at St Columba's House, but as a small retreat house which is also a charity we have few resources including only one cook. We are not a restaurant or a hotel. We aim to produce good, simple, home-cooked style food. As a result, we produce one meal for each group, with no menu choices on the day. This means that we might not be able to accommodate everyone's dietary needs or wishes, whether they are allergies, medical needs, religious regulations or lifestyle preferences. This policy aims to clarify what we can, and cannot cater for. Please talk to staff if you require further clarification.

THE POLICY

Notice: We need at least 10 days' notice of any dietary requirements and we are generally unable to accommodate dietary needs unless we are given the required advanced notice.

We do not keep records of dietary requirements because of data protection legislation. Guests who are returning still need to give notice of their dietary requirements every time they visit us.

Diets we can cater for:

Vegetarians

We can cater for vegetarians. Guests are asked to clarify in advance of their stay whether they do or do not eat fish. Our assumption is that vegetarians do not eat fish unless we are told otherwise.

Vegans

We can cater for vegans.

Some Gluten Free

We can make food with gluten free ingredients. However, we are not a suitable kitchen for those with Coeliac disease as we use gluten in our other meals and cannot guarantee that there is no cross contamination. We provide a separate toaster and breakfast items storage area for gluten-free guests.

Some Dairy Free

Similarly, we can produce meals without dairy products and can provide soy or almond milk, etc but, since we use dairy products in the kitchen we are not a suitable venue for those with a serious dairy allergy as there may be cross contamination.

Some Nut free

Similarly, we can make meals which do not contain nuts but we are not a suitable venue for those with a serious nut allergy because we cannot guarantee that there is no cross contamination, either from our suppliers or our kitchen.

Diets we generally can't cater for (this is not an exhaustive list but includes the following):

- Paleo diets/wholefood diets
- Coeliac
- Anaphylactic allergies (including nut or dairy or nightshade family allergy).
- Kosher food
- Halal food
- Raw food diets
- Low FODMAP diets
- Anti-Candida diets
- Low casein diets
- Anti-migraine diets
- Oral allergy syndrome diets
- Lifestyle diets (whether those recommended by a nutritional therapist or based on personal lifestyle decisions)
- Food preferences (i.e. food a guest does not like)

Other options

St Columba's House policy is that residential guests will eat food prepared on the premises and this cost is calculated as part of their stay. Should clients wish to bring their own food because of their dietary requirements, they can request permission to do this in advance. It is at the discretion of St Columba's House staff as to whether this is practicable and whether there will be a reduction in the cost of a client's stay.

There is a supermarket 5 minutes' walk from St Columba's House. A microwave oven and a (gluten free dedicated) toaster are available in the dining room. Fridge space can be made available (although it may be contaminated with gluten and dairy).

Alternatively, Redwood House within our grounds, is available as a self-catering let for groups of up to 8 people. Again, the kitchen in this house is likely to have been used by other guests for the preparation of foods containing dairy, gluten, nuts etc.

Please speak to one of our staff for any further information.

Marguerite Hutchinson

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