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# SHOP HEALTHY

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Here are a few tips and tricks

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## Asian Market Shopping Strategies

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- **Forget about processed foods.** Most of the markets had tons of whole foods like seafood, poultry, pork, vegetables, and rice. Aisles of processed foods like sugared cereals, soda, cookies, crackers, frozen meals, and the bakery simply did not exist.
- **Use a hand basket.** I purchased food more thoughtfully and made more limited selections because a hand basket was all I had available to hold my market finds.
- **Fill up on seasonal products.** In these markets, the fruits and vegetables were all seasonal, exotic to me, and very fresh. They really add appeal to the thought of shopping seasonally. Try bok choy, Thai basil, cilantro, ginger, mint, and scallions.

## Considering Obesity:

Recently a dear friend invited me to come with her to a Vietnamese community in San Jose, and of course I said yes. At the market, I learned quite a few things about Asian food and shopping habits. This informed my fascination with the differences in BMI between their culture and ours in the US.

According to a study in the *European Journal for Clinical Nutrition*, Vietnam's obesity rate is at just 5% of the total population. That's much smaller than the whopping 35% that the CDC has found in the United States. That thought kept running through my head at the market, informing some of the conclusions I drew as I walked through the aisles of food.

