

Diners: Healthy Eating Survival Guide

Have you ever wondered how in the world you can practice healthy eating while dining out? Wonder no more as I share with you my 9 surefire ways of mastering your dining experience so you not only walk out feeling satisfied, but lean too. No wonder why people today are more concerned about healthy restaurant eating. A recent study of 300 American chefs showed that 50% didn't even consider the caloric content of the foods they served. As a matter of fact, only 1 out of 6 American chefs feel calorie content is important. Therefore, as expected, a typical chef's main goal is to provide you with an excellent, but not necessarily a healthy, dining experience so you will tell your friends, and come back wanting more. Healthy eating is not on the top of chefs to-do lists. With that said, loading the dishes up with fat, salt, and sugar is of very little concern to most chefs. They are simply willing to do whatever is necessary to show the customer extreme value focusing on the main goals of making their food taste and look great, even if it is at the expense of our health. This extreme perceived value goal has led to our "super size portion generation" as we sadly see today. Do to the fast pace seen in today's society, Americans are now getting over one third of their calories from dining out. How many of those calories are actually healthy dining calories? Probably not too many. In today's society we, as diners, must take on more of a personal responsibility than ever before focusing on healthy restaurant eating. The chefs, restaurants, and our friends are not going to look out for our health. Thus, it is our personal responsibility to preserve our health by eating right while dining out. Here are 9 surefire health eating tips to help you take personal responsibility by eating right while dining out.

1. Don't arrive ravenous. It is best to have a small snack a couple of hours prior to dining out. This will ensure that you don't enter the restaurant ready to eat the whole bread basket. Don't worry about spoiling your dinner. It is a bad healthy eating habit to come into a restaurant ravenous.
2. Box it up. When an extra large portion comes to the table request a doggy bag immediately before putting a bite of food in your mouth. Cut the extra large portion in half, take it home, and enjoy it tomorrow.
3. Dine at healthy eating establishments. Patronize healthy dining restaurants so you won't be caught in a situation of not being able to find anything healthy on the menu. Don't set yourself up for failure.
4. Tell servers what you want. Be specific to the server about what you want to substitute. It never hurts to ask about getting your food prepared in a healthy dining manner. An example would be replace the mayonnaise with mustard. It never hurts to ask.
5. Dressing on the side. Another healthy eating tip is to order your salad dressing on the side. Be a dipper. You will save yourself added fat, and calories.
6. Beware of the beverage. As you know, wine, beer, and regular sodas all have calories too. Look at the water option to conserve calories. Why drink your calories when you can eat them?
7. Healthy eating means avoid these terms: alfredo, au gratin, breaded crispy, french fried, pesto, hollandaise, light cream sauce, sauteed, or pastry.
8. Don't clean your whole plate. A good healthy eating exercise is to always leave a bit of food on your plate. You don't have to clean your plate. If you follow the doggy bag rule, of course, this may not apply.
9. Eat slowly. Eating slowly is proven to decrease the amount of food you eat. Thus, the caloric content will be less. By following each of these 9 healthy restaurant eating rules you will have a better chance of taking responsibility of eating right for the preservation your overall health.

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