



Tips for Dining Out

Healthy Meals At Restaurants Cheat Sheet Many restaurants will adjust their menu and/or cooking methods if you simply ask them.

Chinese – This is a tough category since many of their sauces contain monosodium glutamate (MSG), which is an excitatory neurotoxin. MSG is also used to increased body weight in mice for obesity studies. Ask for your meats and vegetables to be steamed and no sauces are applied. Alternatively, ask for vegetables that are less absorbent such as broccoli, snow peas, and peppers. Eggplant is best to be avoided since it tends to be sponge-like and absorb sauces and oils extremely well.

Italian – Italian food is typically very carbohydrate-dense. Skip the bread and choose an appetizer such as marinated vegetables or salads like an antipasto salad. In terms of pasta, many places now offer plant-based noodles such as zucchini noodles. Avoid thick crust pizza and opt for the thin crust with more vegetables on top.

Indian – Tandoori meats are grilled and make a great option. Kebabs are another option if available. Grab a plate of veggies and skip some (or all) of the rice. Avoid fried items like pakora and samosas. Make sure to ask the server about the flours used in the sauces since they sometimes contain wheat flour. For those who want to skip the meat, lentils and chickpeas provide a protein option when combined together.

Japanese – Tempura is the equivalent of deep-frying so skip it and ask for grilled meats and veggies instead. Many places will offer reduced-sodium soy sauces for dipping, but beware that some may still contain MSG so double-check the ingredients. Use chopsticks, which will slow down your eating which often equates to smaller portions.

Mexican – Choose healthier options by avoiding the battered/fried menu items and go for grilled. Swap out the cheese and sour cream for salsa and guacamole and ditch the tortillas. Turn that taco into a salad.

Mediterranean – With such amazing salads as the Greek Salad, how can you go wrong eating here? Avoid pita bread.

Peruvian – Stick with grilled meats and fish, quinoa, and vegetables. Avoid fried foods and high sugar desserts. Peruvian foods are very high in quality spices and flavor. Ceviche is a fresh quality option for an appetizer or an entrée.

Sushi – Stick with sushi (less rice) or sashimi. Both of these contain raw fish that has been thinly sliced. Avoid any of the rolls that have tempura or fried options on top.

Thai – Smart choices include the summer rolls that are meat and veggies wrapped in rice paper, Satay (grilled meat skewers), hot and sour soup, and papaya salad. Cashew chicken or mixed veggies are also healthy options.

