

How to Eat Well When You're Eating Out

Yes, you can avoid bacon grease in your veggie stir-fry and other pitfalls of restaurant dining.

POPULAR CHEF "SECRETS"—like a stick of butter in your sauce—can sabotage a healthy diet, and are especially troublesome if you avoid animal products. So follow these new tips from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) and the Vegetarian Resource Group (VRG):

1. **CALL AHEAD.** Visit the restaurant's website or dial before you dine. You'll have more time to find nutritional information.
2. **LEARN MENU LINGO.** Order items marked "light" or "heart healthy," which must have nutritional data to back up the claims.
3. **BE SPECIFIC.** Ask about preparation methods and realize that your server may not know that rice cooked in chicken broth is not vegetarian or that Caesar



Health claims on the menu are a good sign.

- dressing often contains anchovies. If you get a vague response, say you're allergic to an ingredient.
4. **PRACTICE PORTION CONTROL.** Ask for a doggie bag at the beginning of your meal and fill it with any food on your plate that

exceeds one portion size. One protein serving is about the size of a deck of cards. One serving of rice, pasta, or mashed potatoes is about as big as your fist.

5. **FIGHT THE POWER.** Lobby for healthier menu items by writing, calling, or emailing the restaurant manager or the corporate headquarters.

For more detailed information, CSPI offers an *Eating Smart Restaurant Guide* that reveals the calorie, total fat, saturated fat, and trans fat amounts in nearly 300 restaurant foods.

To order, call 202-332-9110 or visit www.cspinet.org. VRG offers a guide to vegetarian and vegan offerings at 80 popular restaurant chains. To order, call 410-366-8343 or visit www.vrg.org. Both guides cost \$4. —Julia Tolliver Maranan



The Skinny on Your Brain

A high-fat diet could be dumbing you down.

NEW RESEARCH MIGHT EXPLAIN THAT DULL-WITTED FEELING YOU GET after eating fries or pizza. In a recent study published in *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*, Toronto researchers found that rats fed a diet with 40 percent of calories from fat—about what the average American eats—flunked learning and memory tests that didn't faze a group fed standard lower-fat lab food. The scientists theorized that too much dietary fat inhibits your brain's ability to use glucose (sugar), its primary fuel. Sure enough, when they injected glucose into the high-fat feeders, their smarts improved temporarily. However, the researchers warn that relying on jolts from the sweet stuff is not a smart choice. —M.N.M.

PRODUCT REVIEW

Gourmet Ice Cream with Less Fat

THE PRODUCT: Turtle Mountain Purely Decadent Soy Delicious

THE PROMISE: This new line of eight frozen desserts is the only dairy-free brand to offer gourmet flavors, and it uses organic soy products and organic and less-refined sweeteners like brown rice syrup. While popular ice creams can pack in 380 calories and fat per ½ cup serving, Soy Delicious desserts are cholesterol-free and have an average of 130 calories and 9 g of fat per ½ cup.

OUR VERDICT: We tested Chocola Brownie Almond, Praline Pecan, and Chunky Mint Madness and found the chunky textures and smooth tastes satisfying as the creamiest ice cream.

TO BUY: A pint costs \$3.50; 541-998-6778.

