

SMART DINING:

Making Healthier Choices When Eating Out

PLAN LIKE A PRO

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- **Check the menu ahead of time:** Many restaurants post their menus online. Have a peek and look for meals that are bursting with colorful veggies, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- **Don't arrive starving:** A little snack before you head out can do wonders! Grab something with protein and fiber (like a handful of nuts or Greek yogurt with fruit) to help with portion control and keep you feeling satisfied.
- **Think balance:** Craving a burger? Pair it with a side salad or roasted veggies instead of fries. Love pasta? Try a smaller portion and add a protein-packed side to keep things balanced.



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MASTER THE MENU



Choose more often:

- Grilled, roasted, or steamed proteins (think chicken, fish, tofu, beans)
- Whole grain sides (quinoa, brown rice, whole wheat bread)
- Veggie-packed dishes or extra veggies on the side for that extra crunch
- Sauces and dressings on the side (so you can add just the right amount)

Choose less often:

- Fried or breaded foods (chicken fingers, tempura, crispy shrimp—save these for a treat!)
- Big portions of pasta, rice, or fries (go for a smaller size or share!)
- Creamy, cheesy, or super-heavy sauces (a little indulgence is fine, just keep it in check!)

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PORTION PERFECTION

We all know restaurant portions can be huge—but that doesn't mean you have to eat it all. Split an entrée with a friend, or ask for a take-home box right away to save some for later.

Love variety? Order two appetizers instead of one big main dish, or mix a side salad with a protein-packed starter for a fun combo!

BUFFET STRATEGY:

Before you dive in, take a walk around the buffet to check out all the options. Then, fill half your plate with colorful veggies, a quarter with protein, and the last quarter with a starch of your choice.

Fun tip: Some buffets charge extra for leftovers, so take just what you'll enjoy, and if you're still hungry, you can always go back for a little more!



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DRINK SMART



Choose more often: Water (your best friend!), sparkling water with lemon (a little zing!), herbal teas, or milk alternatives (so many tasty options!).

Choose less often: Sugary sodas, blended coffee drinks, or supersized juice portions (sip slowly if you're craving something fancy!).

5

FINAL TIPS FOR AN ENJOYABLE MEAL

SLOW DOWN AND SAVOR

Take a moment to enjoy the flavors, the company, and your body's hunger cues. This isn't a race!

MODIFY WHEN NEEDED

Don't be shy—restaurants are happy to swap sides or adjust ingredients if you ask with a smile!

NO GUILT, JUST BALANCE

One meal won't make or break your health. It's the overall habits that count, so enjoy your food and feel good about it!



Eating out should be a fun experience full of flavor and joy. A little planning goes a long way in making sure every meal is delicious and balanced!