

ThePlateCoach's Dining Out Redesign: Eat Out Smarter

Cooking at home more often is the best way to improve your health as you have more control over your food.

But, eating out at your favorite restaurant doesn't have to spell dietary disaster.

Try these tips and leave your next restaurant experience both satisfied *and* healthy.

- ☑ Speak Up! Restaurants will often make adjustments. They want you to return.
- ☑ Try the Restaurant Rule of Two by SlimByDesign.org 1. Order any reasonable entree 2. Only have 2 additional items (piece of bread & glass of wine or 2 glasses of wine). You just can't have it ALL.
- ☑ Half today, Half tomorrow. Ask for half of the meal be placed in a to-go box right when you place your order. Commit to the doggie bag at the beginning. It's much easier to eat less at one time if half of the food is out of sight.
- ☑ Try not to go to a restaurant REALLY hungry. You'll order too much and eat too fast. Try having at least 8-10 ounces of water, warm water or tea before heading out to the restaurant. Drink 1-2 glasses of water during the meal.
- ☑ Try double appetizers & a separate plate of roasted or steamed (non-starchy) vegetables instead of the entree.
- ☑ Split an entree. Or, ask for a reduced portion or lunch portion & a full plate of non-starchy vegetables.
- ☑ Ask to sit near a window or in a well-lit area, away from TVs or the bar. Try a hightop table instead of a booth.
- ☑ See if the manager will play softer, slower music instead of loud, fast paced music. Ask for smaller dishes for entrees but larger dishes and bowls for vegetables.
- ☑ Understand menu design. Descriptive words, icons, highlighted boxes and different fonts will naturally draw more attention. Decode seductive names. Ask for descriptions if they're not listed.
- ☑ High-calorie words: buttery, creamed, crispy, crunchy, smothered, Alfredo sauce, cheese sauce, white sauce, fried/ deep-fried, scampi, loaded
- ☑ Low-calorie words: seasoned, spiced, roasted, steamed, light, reduced, clean, marinated, fresh, local, broiled
- ☑ Hold the bread. If you have bread, skip the carbohydrate (pasta, rice, potato) with your entree.
- ☑ Fast food place? Keep it simple, small & go sparsely. Burger, small fries, water. Less is more.
- ☑ Eating out with picky kids that only choose fried chicken nuggets *every time*? Ask them what Batman would eat (any Superhero will do). They will probably pick a healthier option to match the Superhero.