



Dining out is an important part of our lives. I encourage you to socialize with friends and learn how to navigate a restaurant menu. When possible, help in selecting the restaurant and review the menu in advance. If you know what you will order before arriving you are less likely to make a choice that is not healthy or consistent with your goals.

At the restaurant, focus on the conversation and your guests versus the food around you. If you choose to have an alcoholic beverage, your best choice is a clear liquor with sparkling water. Following that, red wine, sparkling wine and then white wine. Avoid drinks with high sugar mixers (margarita mix, juices, soda, etc.) and most beer. Typically, portions are very large, so consider ordering an appetizer as your entrée or ask the wait staff to box up half of your entrée before serving. If you would like to have a dessert, ask your guests to split one serving with you.

Healthier Restaurants – In Denver, we are fortunate to have many farm to table restaurants and others committed to using healthier food sources, such as organic vegetables and meats raised without antibiotics or hormones.

- Chipotle
- Potager
- Watercourse Foods
- Black Pearl
- Sushi Den
- Izakaya Den
- Mod Market
- Protein Bar
- True Foods
- Linger
- Root Down
- Larkburger
- The Kitchen
- City O City
- The Squeaky Bean
- Mercury Café
- Shine (Boulder)
- Blooming Beets (Boulder)
- Fresh Thymes (Boulder)
- Foodcopia
- Vert
- Old Major
- Gaia
- Kaos Pizzeria
- Work and Class
- Lyfe Kitchen
- Silvis
- Beet Box
- Ophelia's
- El Chingon Mexican Bistro
- Atticus
- Devil's Food

Based on the type of restaurant, here are some menu suggestions:

- The easiest choice is a salad with protein. Ask for dressing on the side and use 1-2 tbsp. if you are not sure that the oil is a good fat source. You can also bring your own oil or dressing.
- Another good option is a boiled, broiled, grilled or baked protein along with vegetables.
- Ask for no chips/salsa or bread. Substitute cut veggies, nuts or olives. If trying to stay gluten free, ask for recommendations and be careful of sauces.
- Substitute non-starchy vegetables for starchy vegetables (French fries, rice, pasta, etc.).
- American – skip the bun on burgers/sandwiches, order grilled meats with veggies or a salad with meat.
- Indian – choose tandoori meats and vegetables. Skip the naan.
- Italian – avoid pasta and breaded meats, follow above recommendations. Choose soup, antipasto platter, grilled veggies & meats etc. Many restaurants also offer spiralized vegetables as a substitution for pasta noodles (Wash Park Grill, Stella Trattoria)



- Mexican – skip the tortilla, chips and shells. Order a salad or bowl option with grilled shrimp, chicken, etc. Fajitas are another good option, but skip the tortilla. Have guacamole and salsa with raw veggies.
- Japanese – order more sashimi over sushi or chose one roll/nigiri and get the rest as sashimi. Request gluten-free tamari over soy sauce and avoid MSG in the sauces.
- Indian – Order tandoori meats with grilled or roasted veggies.
- Thai – skip the rice. Curry dishes are good but be careful with all the ingredients in the sauces.
- Pizza – try to have one slice with a salad and opt for gluten free (Beajous, Pasquinis, Paxtis)
- Chinese – order the bamboo steamed protein and veggies, skip the rice. Soups and salads are also good options.