

## The Lunchbox Nutritionist

Kathleen Searles MS, RD, LDN



Hello! February, with Valentine's Day at its heart :) is a favorite month for dining out. But it isn't always easy to combine dining out and your personal health goals. This month's feature article gives some guidance for several popular restaurants. Not all of them are available in our area, but I think the general suggestions and principles still apply. I hope you will read on! If you're like most Americans, more of your meals these days are being prepared by restaurants and other eateries – meals that you take out and munch on while at work, bring home to share with your family, or enjoy in a restaurant.

However, restaurant diners seeking to make healthier choices often face challenges, because identifying the lighter options on a menu isn't always easy. But a website launched by Healthy Dining, a California-based team of health and nutrition professionals, has come to the rescue of those whose lifestyle or personal preferences involve frequent restaurant visits.

This month I am featuring 10 restaurants and what you can order to help stay fit and healthy all through the year! Whether for business or pleasure, convenience or necessity, Americans are enjoying more meals prepared by restaurants. Armed with some motivation and information, there's no reason you can't enjoy eating out while also maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

- Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, CSSD, LDN

### What to Eat? Menu Choices from 10 HEALTHY DINING Restaurants



\*Below are just a few suggestions, go to [www.healthydiningfinder.com](http://www.healthydiningfinder.com) for additional information.

#### Au Bon Pain:

- Mandarin Sesame Chicken Salad (310 calories, 11 grams of fat, 20 grams protein, 31 grams carbohydrates)

### New Year Special!

Take advantage of my New Year's Special, and start the year off right!! **25% discount for appointments booked in January!**

Give me a call today (978-697-2834) or send an e-mail ([ksearles@lunchbox-nutritionist.com](mailto:ksearles@lunchbox-nutritionist.com)) for more information!

### Seven Myths about Restaurant Dining and Nutrition

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- Mayan Chicken Harvest Rice Bowl with Brown Rice (510 calories, 13 grams of fat, 27 grams protein, 72 grams carbohydrates)
- Demi Turkey Sandwich (320 calories, 6 grams of fat, 18 grams protein, 49 grams carbohydrates)

#### **Boston Market:**

- Quarter Rotisserie Chicken Meal (400 calories, 10 grams of fat, 53 grams protein, 29 grams carbohydrates)
- Roasted Turkey Breast Meal (510 calories, 18 grams of fat, 45 grams protein, 42 grams carbohydrates)
- Half Southwestern Santa Fe Salad (380 calories, 20 grams of fat, 20 grams protein, 25 grams carbohydrates)

#### **California Pizza Kitchen:**

- California Veggie on Whole Wheat Crust (Serves 2) (520 calories, 18 grams of fat, 24 grams protein, 67 grams carbohydrates)
- Crispy Thin Crust Pizza: Jamaican Jerk Chicken (Serves Two) (540 calories, 17 grams of fat, 31 grams protein, 65 grams carbohydrates)
- Dakota Smashed Pea and Barley Soup (Cup) (170 calories, 0 grams of fat, 11 grams protein, 32 grams carbohydrates)
- Chinese Chicken Salad (Half) (330 calories, 10 grams fat, 17 grams protein, 41 grams carbs)

#### **Chili's Grill & Bar:**

- Lighter Choice Grilled Salmon (490 calories, 17 grams of fat, 48 grams protein, 39 grams carbohydrates)
- Lighter Choice 6 oz. Classic Sirloin with steamed broccoli (250 calories, 7 grams of fat, 38 grams protein, 12 grams carbohydrates)
- Mango-Chile Tilapia – Special request for vinaigrette served on the side (550 calories, 22 grams of fat, 35 grams protein, 55 grams carbohydrates)
- Margarita Grilled Chicken - Special Request \*no tortilla strips, broccoli instead of rice (400 calories, 7 grams of fat, 50 grams protein, 37 grams carbohydrates)

#### **Corner Bakery Café:**

- Power Panini Thin with Avocado & Spinach



**1. Chicken and fish dishes are always good choices for those watching their weight.** Chicken (specifically white meat) and fish are lower in calories, fat, and saturated fat than red meat, but other factors play a role. Portion size, preparation method, sauces and other added ingredients, like oil and cheese, can add hundreds of calories and dozens of fat grams.

**2. Red meat dishes are not good choices for health-conscious diners.**

True, the less red meat in the diet, the better. However, those who enjoy red meat can do so, keeping four guidelines in mind: Select lean cuts (like sirloin); trim the visible fat; limit red meat to once or twice a week; and finally, monitor portions. Since 3-4 ounces of protein is the recommended portion size per meal, consider the following options when dining out; share a red meat entrée with your dining companion and complement it with a white meat entrée or extra side dishes; take some of the dish home to enjoy the next day; “bank” part of your protein (and fat!) allotment from other meals during the day to allow for a larger portion during your restaurant meal. Asian dishes, which often combine protein with vegetables, provide a great way to limit the amount of red meat.

**3. Vegetarian dishes are always healthy.**

Most Americans fall short of the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables, powerhouses of good nutrition. But that doesn't mean that all vegetarian dishes are good choices. Many meat-free dishes contain a lot of cheese, oil, or nuts, and they can be very high in calories, fat, and even saturated fat (cheese). And some vegetarian dishes don't include many – or even any – vegetables! So be mindful, even when selecting vegetarian menu items.

with Egg Whites (250 calories, 10 grams of fat, 17 grams protein, 22 grams carbohydrates)

- Steel-Cut Oatmeal (350 calories, 11 grams fat, 26 grams protein, 57 grams carbohydrates)
- Asian Wonton Salad (270 calories, 8 grams of fat, 20 grams protein, 33 grams carbohydrates)
- Corner Combo: Mom's Turkey on Harvest Bread and Three Lentil Vegetable Soup (380 calories, 5 grams fat, 27 grams protein, 57 grams carbohydrates) 2 cups

#### Denny's:

- Fit Slam® (390 calories, 12 grams of fat, 27 grams protein, 46 grams carbohydrates)
- Senior Fit Fare® Omelette (480 calories, 18 grams of fat, 34 grams protein, 25 grams carbohydrates)

#### Outback:

- Appetizer: Seared Ahi Tuna (Small, Serves 2) (120 calories, 7 grams of fat, 7 grams protein, 5 grams carbohydrates)
- Sweet Glazed Pork Tenderloin (300 calories, 9 grams of fat, 42 grams protein, 14 grams carbohydrates)
- Grilled Asparagus (50 calories, 3.5 grams of fat) and Fresh Steamed Seasonal Mixed Vegetables (60 calories, 0.5 grams of fat.)
- Victoria's Filet, Seasoned and Seared (7 oz) (260 calories, 11 grams of fat, 43 grams protein, 0 grams carbohydrates)
- Steamed Green Beans (60 calories, 3 grams of fat) and Plain Baked Potato (230 calories, 1.5 grams of fat).

#### Schlotsky's:

- Pick Any Two: Cranberry Apple Pecan Chicken Salad & Vegetable Soup (420 calories, 13 grams of fat, 21 grams protein, 57 grams carbohydrates)
- Combine a bowl of Vegetable Soup and half of a Cranberry Apple Pecan Chicken Salad.
- Make it a Wrap: Turkey & Guacamole – Medium (470 calories, 15 grams of fat, 28 grams protein, 57 grams carbohydrates)
- Smoked turkey breast, guacamole, lettuce, tomatoes and red onion in a flour tortilla.
- Make it a Wrap: Homestyle Tuna Sandwich – Small (410 calories, 14 grams of fat, 22 grams protein, 54 grams carbohydrates)

#### 4. Restaurant dining is for special occasions, so why not splurge a bit?

Decades ago, restaurant dining was, indeed, reserved for special occasions. But for many people today, restaurant dining is the norm, not the exception, and therefore, most people wouldn't want to make every restaurant occasion an opportunity to splurge.

#### 5. A heart next to a menu item indicates a low-calorie selection.

Not necessarily! The heart may have been placed there because the dish contains heart-healthy olive oil...or lacks preservatives.... or contains omega 3 fatty acids..... or is vegetarian. The best policy is not to make assumptions. Restaurants that have joined the Healthy Dining Program may display the Healthy Dining logo on their website or menu. Participating restaurants agree to offer a selection of healthier menu choices, which meet the Healthy Dining Program criteria and have been reviewed and approved by Healthy Dining's dietitians.

#### 6. Fast food restaurants don't offer appropriate selections for those watching their weight.

Many fast food restaurants have joined the Healthy Dining Program and offer a selection of menu items appropriate for weight loss.

#### 7. It's easy to spot the healthier choices on restaurant menus.

Restaurant menu descriptions are not always complete, so it's unlikely you'll have the necessary information to make an informed choice. A knowledgeable server can be helpful, but diners looking for healthier choices and nutrition information should check the websites of individual restaurants or visit [HealthyDiningFinder.com](http://HealthyDiningFinder.com) for a centralized source of nutrition information for restaurant meals.

#### A Success

A success...

"A success is one who decided to succeed – and worked.

A failure is one who decided to succeed – and wished.

A decided failure is one who failed to decide – and waited."

"Have you been working, wishing, or waiting?" I hope you can answer that the past year you have been working (even small steps) towards being a better self. If you can answer that you

### Which Wich:

- Roast Beef (370 calories, 4 grams of fat, 28 grams protein, 54 grams carbohydrates)
- Chicken Cordon Bleu (360 calories, 5 grams of fat, 26 grams protein, 56 grams carbohydrates)
- Black Bean Patty (390 calories, 6 grams of fat, 22 grams protein, 69 grams carbohydrates)

### Zoes Kitchen:

- Spinach Roll ups (410 calories, 14 grams of fat, 16 grams protein, 55 grams carbohydrates)
- Gruben (460 calories, 17 grams of fat , 40 grams protein, 35 grams carbohydrates)
- Lean Turkey Pita (320 calories, 9 grams of fat, 29 grams protein, 26 grams carbohydrates)

### Recipe of the Month: Mediterranean Sea Bass from Macaroni Grill

by  
HealthyDiningFinder  
Makes 2 Servings

#### Ingredients:

For Salad

½ Cup Grape  
Tomatoes, Cut in Half

1 Cup Arugula

½ Cup Cannelloni Beans, Drained

2 Tbsp Radishes, Sliced into Matchsticks

½ Tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Pinch of Oregano

For Diavola Sauce:

1 Cup Roasted Red Peppers

½ Cup Grape Tomatoes, Cut in Half

½ Tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil

¼ Cup Water

¼ Tsp Hot Sauce (Analysis for Frank's Red Hot Sauce)

For Sea Bass:

15 oz Brazino\* (Analysis for Flounder)

1 ½ Tbsp All Purpose Flour

1 Tbsp Canola Oil

Pinch of Pepper

Directions:

Toss all salad ingredients together and set aside while the fish cooks.

Season fish with pepper and dredge both sides in flour, shaking off any excess.

To make the diavola sauce, place all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.



have been working then you will see the success you are looking for. If you find you

are still only wishing for success but something is hindering you from taking the daily action steps needed to get there - then it is time to explore and re-examine what you are working towards.

What are the obstacles in your way?

How can you overcome them?

If you need to schedule a phone call to work on how you will continue to work towards your goals, send me an e-mail and we can set something up

### Quote of the Month:

**"My definition of success is to live your life in a way that causes you to feel a ton of pleasure and very little pain - and because of your lifestyle, have the people around you feel a lot more pleasure than they do pain."**  
**- Tony Robbins**

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In a sauté pan over medium heat, add canola or vegetable oil and sauté fish until light golden brown, approximately 1 to 1½ minutes.

Flip fish over and cook for an additional 30-45 seconds, until the fish is cooked but still moist.

Place one fish filet in the center of 2 plates and top each with half of the arugula salad. Shingle second filet over each salad, leaving some of the salad visible.

Drizzle diavola sauce around each plate and garnish with lemon wedge (if desired).

Nutrition Information\*\*:

430 calories, 17 g fat, 2 g saturated fat, 115 mg cholesterol, 380 mg sodium, 23 g carbohydrates, 5 g fiber, 6 g sugar, 46 g protein

\*You may substitute any thin flaky white fish such as sole, flounder, Red Snapper or Grouper. Note that thin fish cooks very quickly. If your sautee pan is hot enough once the fish is lightly browned, you will only need a few seconds to finish cooking the fish as it will continue to cook as you make your plates.

\*\* Nutrition information may vary from the item served in the restaurant.



### **About Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, LDN**

I am a Registered Dietitian and am licensed to practice in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. The exciting field of nutrition has been my passion ever since I took a foods class with my friends in high school.

Through my work in different states and different settings I have developed my philosophy of helping people improve their diets by finding foods that fit into their particular routines, budgets, and preferences. I look forward to helping you solve your nutrition challenges with tasty and satisfying foods.