

Take Control

It's time to dine out the smart way.

By Sarah Gleim

Who among us doesn't like to dine out? (If you raised your hand, then you're lying.) But sometimes eating at a restaurant can be a real challenge if you're trying to maintain a healthy diet. The amount of menu options can be overwhelming—especially when you're hungry, the portions are often huge, and inevitably you succumb to the temptation of appetizers and desserts.

Nonetheless, you can walk into just about any restaurant and walk out having eaten a healthy meal, if you go in with a plan of attack. “The first thing you want to do is look at the menu before you go and know what you're going to order,” suggests certified personal trainer and nutrition counselor Dan McGrath, who owns Body Solutions in Buckhead. “And select dishes with leaner meats like fish, turkey and chicken, and dishes that are baked, broiled and steamed.”

McGrath also says with portion sizes so large, eat only half of your entrée and take the rest home for lunch the next day. “Sometimes I even ask for the doggy bag upfront, and as soon as I get the food I put half of it in the to-go box,” he says.

Cliff Bramble, managing partner of Kevin Rathbun's Steak, suggests a similar strategy when dining at a steak house. “Order a 12-ounce filet and eat just half, and take the other half home,” he says. “The 12-ounce filet has the least amount of calories compared to the rib-eye and New York strip.” Just be sure to have it cooked without butter because most steak houses brush butter on the filet before serving. In addition, skip the loaded potato in favor of the steamed veggies with lemon as a side. In fact, make sure you request all sauces and condiments on the side so you have control over the amounts on your food.

McGrath also says to avoid eating breads because they are loaded with carbs and calories. “If you can avoid eating the bread, you've done yourself a service,” he says. Plus, go ahead and have an appetizer or dessert, just not both.

Of course, we also wanted to highlight several fantastic healthy entrée options around town that we love, and, believe it or not, we've included everything from seafood and curry dishes to crab salad and pizza—yes, pizza!



This crab salad is full of rich avocado, which provides vital nutrients and phytochemicals.

Parish

We love the idea of this hearty and healthy crab and avocado salad from Parish. It's chock full of rich avocado, which provides vital nutrients and phytochemicals, as well as monounsaturated fats, and is topped with loads of crabmeat and pickled beets. All of this is tossed in a white wine tarragon vinaigrette, so there's no heavy or creamy salad dressing. parishatl.com or 404.681.4434.

C&S Seafood and Oyster Bar

It's pretty obvious why this sea bass dish at C&S Seafood and Oyster Bar landed on our list of healthy dishes. First, it's steamed with shiitake mushrooms and bok choy, which is loaded with vitamin C and fiber. And instead of a creamy sauce, this sea bass is served in light miso broth that's just as filling. 770.272.0999 or candsoysterbar.com.



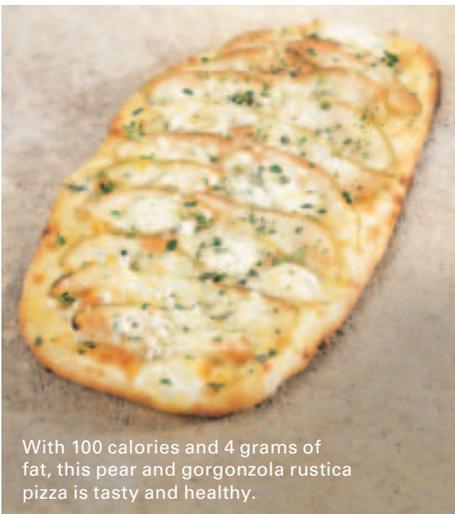
A light miso broth paired with this sea bass is both flavorful and filling.

Rathbun's

The West Coast halibut at Rathbun's is a great healthy choice. The 8-ounce filet is sauteed in just 1-ounce of olive oil, and you can have it topped with a field pea succotash that includes corn, peas and okra, so it's light and good for you. If you order just the halibut and 86 the succotash, it's less than 400 calories. 404.524.8280 or rathbunsrestaurant.com.



Get your meat and veggies with this field pea succotash made of corn, peas and okra.



With 100 calories and 4 grams of fat, this pear and gorgonzola rustica pizza is tasty and healthy.

Z Pizza

Yes, you *can* have pizza and still eat healthy, *if* you order the pear and gorgonzola rustica pizza at Z Pizza. Each slice has only 100 calories and 4 grams of fat, plus the crust is made with 100-percent certified organic wheat flour. Two other rustica pizzas, the curry chicken and yam and the chicken sausage and arugula, have less than 4 grams of fat per slice, as well. Alpharetta, 678.205.4471, and Johns Creek, 770.817.0526, or zpizza.com.

P'cheen International Bistro & Pub

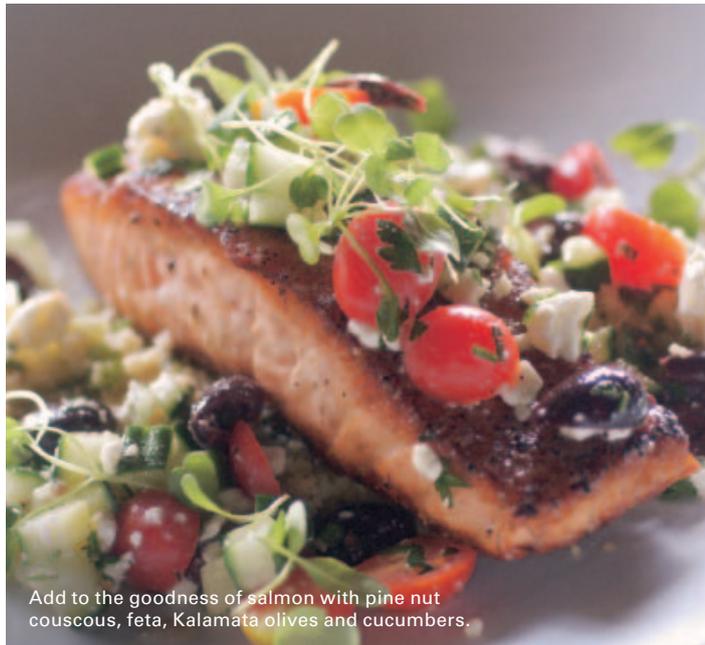
Nobody can deny P'cheen's Guinness beer-battered fish and chips are sinful, but the chef's curry trio is a much healthier option. It includes fresh grilled meats like panang lamb and cardamom chicken, plus vegetables, fruits and spices, and the options change several times a week according to what's fresh. Everything is served with pita, and the best part is you're in total control of your portions. 404.529.8800 or pcheen.com.



The chef's curry trio fills you up with grilled meats, vegetables and fruit.

Haven

The truffled potato hay is one of our favorite apps in town, but, let's face it, there's nothing good about this stack of fries except the taste. But equally delish is the roasted Scottish salmon entrée. This piece of the omega-3 fatty acid-rich salmon is topped with pine nut couscous, feta, Kalamata olives and cucumbers, so it's light and flavorful but hearty enough to fill you up. 404.969.0700 or havenrestaurant.com. ▶▶



Add to the goodness of salmon with pine nut couscous, feta, Kalamata olives and cucumbers.

Fast Food Finds

Fresh to Order Several hearty salads and sandwiches here are light and healthy options. fresh2order.com

MetroFresh Chefs here make daily breakfast, lunch and dinner, plus healthy soups, salads and sandwiches. metrofreshatl.com

Evos This fast food spot features soy, veggie, turkey and salmon burgers, plus Airfries™ and fruit smoothies. evos.com

Zoës Kitchen The menu here features fresh vegetables, chicken, fish, olive oil and feta cheese. zoeskitchen.com

Dressed Here you can get tons of different salads made to order, all with homemade dressings. dressedsalads.com

Fuego Mundo Wood-fired meats, chicken and fish infused with Latin spices make Fuego Mundo's menu fast, healthy and delish. fuegomundo.com

Frozen Yogurt Forgo the ice cream, and hit a Yoforia, The Yogurt Tap, Yogli Mogli, Yogurberry, or the new Pinkberry or Menchie's that opened this month for a frozen yogurt instead.