

Lean Green Entrée Salads



When you're scanning a restaurant menu and see "salad," you usually think "healthy eating." A big bed of greens topped with colorful peppers, tomatoes, carrots—of

course salads are healthy. But when you toss in cheese, creamy dressings, crunchy bits of bread, and bacon, that so-called healthy restaurant meal can easily become the calorie, fat, and sodium equivalent of a deluxe fast food burger.

That doesn't mean you have to forego making a meal of salad when you're eating out—you just need to be aware of the ingredients going into your garden-based meal. As long as you choose appropriately, your salad can be all the things you want it to be: rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, fiber, and lean protein, without high levels of calories, fat, saturated fat, and sodium.

Helpful hints. Keep the following tips in mind and reap all the benefits you desire when choosing a salad over an artery-clogging fast food burger.

- **Less is best.** When it comes to dressing, that is. Just one packet of creamy dressing at a restaurant can easily add more than 150 calories, 15 grams fat, and 500 milligrams sodium. Your best bet is to choose vinegar and oil-based dressings. And keep them on the side, dipping your salad bites into the dressing rather than slathering it over the salad.
- **Downsize.** Many restaurants offer their salads in both whole and half sizes. The petite portion is a great option to let you enjoy a salad and stick to your healthy eating guidelines. Another strategy is to eat half and take the other half home for another meal.
- **Balance.** While choosing a salad made completely of leafy greens and veggies may provide a good amount of vitamins and minerals, it may be lacking whole grains and protein. For a balanced meal top your greens with lean protein, such as cottage cheese, beans, or shrimp, and consider adding whole grains crackers and fresh fruit on the side. **EN**

—Heidi McIndoo, MS, RD



Restaurant Entrée Salad Nutritional Comparison

✓ = **EN's Picks.** As with all *EN* comparisons, this is only a sampling of products. Quick service picks contain no more than 800 mg sodium (33% DV), 17 g fat (26% DV), and 4 g saturated fat (20% DV). Full service picks contain no more than 930 mg sodium (39% DV), 36 g fat (55% DV), and 10 g saturated fat (50% DV).

Salad (*with Dressing; **without Dressing)	Serv Size (g)	Calories	Fat (g)	Sat Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)	Carb (g)	Sugar (g)	Fiber (g)	Protein (g)
QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANTS									
Burger King Tendergrill Chicken Caesar Garden Fresh Salad*	1 (348)	450	27	4.5	1150	20	6	3	35
Burger King Tendergrill Chicken BLT Garden Fresh Salad*	1 (357)	440	29	8	1080	11	5	3	33
Burger King Tendercrisp Chicken BLT Garden Fresh Salad*	1 (390)	640	45	11	1610	30	8	4	28
Burger King Tendergrill Chicken Apple Cranberry Garden Fresh Salad*	1 (363)	480	26	7	480	34	34	4	28
McDonald's Premium Bacon Ranch Salad w/ Crispy Chicken**	1 (319)	390	22	6	870	24	7	4	26
✓ McDonald's Premium Bacon Ranch Salad w/ Grilled Chicken**	1 (306)	230	9	4	700	10	5	4	30
McDonald's Premium Southwest Salad w/ Crispy Chicken**	1 (350)	450	21	4.5	820	42	13	7	23
✓ McDonald's Premium Southwest Salad w/ Grilled Chicken**	1 (335)	290	8	2.5	650	28	11	7	27
Panera Chicken Cobb Salad**	1	550	39	10	970	11	3	2	40
✓ Panera Classic with Chicken**	1	290	13	2	310	19	12	3	27
Panera Greek Salad**	1	360	32	8	1140	13	4	4	8
Panera Fuji Apple Chicken Salad**	1	550	34	7	620	35	21	6	32
✓ Panera Fuji Apple Chicken Salad**	½	280	17	3.5	310	17	11	3	16
✓ Panera Strawberry Poppyseed & Chicken Salad**	1	350	13	1.5	290	33	21	6	29
Starbucks Chicken & Greens Caesar Salad Bowl	1	340	25	n/a	n/a	10	n/a	3	19
Starbucks Hearty Veggie & Brown Rice Salad	1	430	22	n/a	n/a	50	n/a	8	10
Starbucks Zesty Chicken & Black Bean Salad	1	360	15	n/a	n/a	38	n/a	8	19
Wendy's Apple Pecan Chicken Salad*	1	590	27	8	1330	54	40	7	37
Wendy's Apple Pecan Chicken Salad*	½	350	18	4.5	700	30	22	4	19
Wendy's Asian Cashew Chicken Salad*	1	380	13	2	960	33	18	6	35
Wendy's Spicy Chicken Caesar Salad*	1	780	51	16	1570	40	4	7	41
FULL SERVICE RESTAURANTS									
✓ Applebee's Grilled Chicken Caesar*	½	400	28	6	810	12	n/a	3	26
Applebee's Fiesta Chicken Chopped Salad**	1	700	38	9	1470	66	n/a	12	40
Applebee's Grilled Shrimp 'N Spinach Salad**	1	640	46	7	2080	21	n/a	10	44
Applebee's Seasonal Berry & Spinach Salad	1	620	31	9	1620	35	n/a	6	53
California Pizza Kitchen Classic Caesar w/ Sautéed Salmon**	½	590	46	9	540	13	3	4	29
✓ California Pizza Kitchen Quinoa & Arugula Salad	1	590	36	4.5	730	58	13	9	17
California Pizza Kitchen Roasted Veggie w/ Grilled Chicken Breast**	1	910	58	6	1080	61	26	21	48
✓ California Pizza Kitchen Original BBQ Chicken Chopped**	½	550	33	8	930	45	12	7	20
Chili's Boneless Buffalo Chicken Salad	1	1030	68	14	3730	55	8	6	51
Chili's Caribbean Salad w/ Grilled Chicken	1	680	27	4.5	1150	79	64	8	35
Chili's Santa Fe Chicken Salad	1	700	49	9	1700	32	8	9	38
✓ Outback Steakhouse Aussie Chicken Cobb Salad Grilled**	1	465	23	10	887	15	5	3	49
✓ Outback Steakhouse Caesar Salad Shrimp	1	404	29	7	882	14	4	5	24
Outback Steakhouse Sesame Salad with Salmon	1	714	50	7	1045	25	17	6	43
Outback Steakhouse Steakhouse Salad	1	959	67	19	1288	48	25	7	45
TGI Friday's Balsamic Glazed Chicken Caesar	1	490	26	6	1960	25	n/a	5	40
TGI Friday's Chipotle Yucatan Chicken Salad*	1	850	59	21	1950	46	n/a	10	38
TGI Friday's Pecan Crusted Chicken Salad*	1	1080	71	16	1650	76	n/a	11	39
TGI Friday's Strawberry Fields Salad*	1	610	47	10	580	39	n/a	6	10

Note: g=gram, mg=milligram, sat fat=saturated fat, carb=carbohydrates, DV=Daily Value, Daily requirement based on 2,000 calorie/day diet. Source: restaurant website.