

A Night on the Town: Looking at Family Restaurant Entrees

Nutrition Comparison of Family Restaurant Entrees

As with all EN comparisons, this is only a sampling of what's available. Products are listed alphabetically. Entrees marked with an "*" do not include side dishes.

✓ = EN's Picks. Entrees contain no more than 700 calories, 29 grams of fat, 9 grams of saturated fat and 980 milligrams sodium. Keep in mind, however, for those not including sides, your choice will affect the nutritional content of the meal.

Family Restaurant Entrees	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)	Sodium (milligrams)
BEEF				
Bob Evans Pot Roast Beef Stew Deep Dish	727	34	14	2900
Chili's Fire Grilled Jalapeno Beef Quesadilla	1780	126	42	4540
Denny's Country Fried Steak w/gravy *	1000	65	22	2580
Denny's Prime Rib Sizzlin' Skillet Dinner	900	42	17	2480
Friendly's Homestyle Meatloaf *	850	49	18	2280
✓ Longhorn Steakhouse Flo's Filet (7oz) *	420	28	8.5	330
Longhorn Steakhouse Ribeye *	910	69	25	1260
Longhorn Steakhouse Sirloin & Shrimp Scampi *	630	34	12	1650
Mimi's Café Grilled Meatloaf & Gravy	493	30	11	1725
On the Border Classic Chimichunga Beef w/rice, w/o sauce or beans	1410	87	27	2450
On the Border Grilled Smoky Beef Brisket w/rice	1050	48	19	3140
Ruby Tuesday Bayou Sirloin *	387	16	n/a	n/a
Ruby Tuesday Petite Sirloin *	298	15	n/a	n/a
CHICKEN				
Bob Evans Chicken-n-Noodles Deep Dish (Dinner)	785	38	13	2312
✓ Bob Evans Slow-Roasted Chicken-n-Noodles	289	16	3	695
Chili's Crispy Honey-Chipotle Chicken Crispers	1930	108	17	4390
Chili's Margarita Grilled Chicken	680	14	2	2430
Denny's Fit Fare Grilled Chicken w/vegetables & tomatoes	380	10	2	1280
Denny's Grilled Chicken Sizzlin' Skillet Dinner	770	34	12	2020
Friendly's Cheddar Jack Chicken *	640	34	17	2000
Friendly's Honey BBQ Chicken Strips (5) *	910	32	5	1450
Longhorn Steakhouse Sierra Chicken *	410	12	3	1240
✓ Mimi's Café Just Enough Sweet and Sour Chicken	555	19	3	209
✓ Mimi's Café Slow Roasted Turkey Breast served with jasmine rice and steamed vegetables	610	13	3	138
Olive Garden Venetian Apricot Chicken	280	3	1	1180
On the Border Grilled Fajita Chicken w/black beans & grilled veggies	570	9	2	1910
Romano's Macaroni Grill Honey Balsamic Chicken Dinner	640	15	3	2380
Ruby Tuesday Chicken Bella *	387	17	n/a	n/a
✓ Uno's Chicago Grill Grilled Rosemary Chicken	260	21	2.5	630
SEAFOOD				
Bob Evans Garden Vegetable & Salmon Alfredo	975	54	20	1715
Chili's Grilled Shrimp Alfredo	1320	76	38	3560
Chili's Southwest Cedar Plank Tilapia	600	31	4.5	1750
Denny's Fit Fare Grilled Tilapia	600	11	3	1560
Denny's Lemon Pepper Tilapia *	640	27	14	1520
Friendly's Grilled Flounder *	520	32	6	1870
Friendly's New England Fish 'n Chips *	660	44	7	1700
Longhorn Steakhouse Golden Fried Shrimp *	880	48	9	3180
✓ Mimi's Café Just Enough Petite Citrus Salmon	326	15	3	292
Olive Garden Shrimp Primavera	510	9	1.5	1130
On the Border Jalapeno BBQ Salmon	590	21	6	1120
✓ Romano's Macaroni Grill Jumbo Shrimp Spiedini	230	5	1	670
Romano's Macaroni Grill Parmesan Crusted Sole, Dinner	1710	105	39	2830
Uno's Chicago Grill Lobster & Shrimp Scampi	590	32	12	1030
OTHER/PASTA				
Bob Evans Garden Vegetable Alfredo	809	48	20	1860
Chili's Mushroom Jack Fajitas w/ 3 flour tortillas	1100	51	15.5	4370
Olive Garden Cheese Ravioli with Marinara Sauce	530	18	9	1160
✓ Olive Garden Linguine alla Marinara	310	4	1	670
✓ Romano's Macaroni Grill Capellini Pomodoro	390	14	2	980
Romano's Macaroni Grill Layers of Lasagna, Dinner	1030	57	26	2640
Romano's Macaroni Grill Mushroom Ravioli	790	44	19	990
✓ Uno's Chicago Grill Tuscan Roasted Vegetable Penne	490	29	4.5	590

Source: Restaurant websites

Note: oz=ounce.

There are those of us who save eating out for special occasions—perhaps dining out only a few times a year, at which time we look forward to a more extravagant meal than usual. And then there are those of us who find ourselves enjoying a restaurant meal once or twice a week, or more. If you find yourself in the latter group, choosing the higher fat- and sodium-containing meals more often than not is not the best idea for your health or your waistline. To help you narrow down the vast choices restaurants offer, we've scoured several family-style restaurant menus to get the low-down on just what you're getting when you order.

Making the Most of Your Menu Selection. Here are just a few tips to ensure your evening out doesn't wreak havoc on your health:

- **Know the lingo.** Often the description on the menu gives some insight as to how healthy the dish may be. For example, dishes that are grilled, baked and roasted are usually lower in fat and calories. Choosing fried or crispy foods, or foods with creamy sauces, like Alfredo, are certain to raise calorie and fat intake.
- **Don't be afraid to special order.** Most restaurants have no problem leaving off sauces and gravies or putting them on the side so you can control how much you use. You can also substitute the veggie of the day in place of a side of fries.
- **Bring home lunch for tomorrow.** The recommended serving size of a piece of meat is 3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards), while that of pasta and grains is 1/2 to 1 cup. Most restaurant meals are double, if not triple, that size. Packing up half or more for another meal is a great way to combat this problem. And, if you don't trust your will power to stop at half, ask your server to package it up before you even start eating.
- **Skip the salt shaker.** Many restaurant entrees provide almost all or more than a day's worth of sodium. There's no need for you to shake on extra.

—Heidi McIndoo, M.S., R.D.