

[IMAGE]

## Looking to Cut Calories? Beware of the Restaurant

By Editorial Staff

While you can certainly find a place to eat out these days that focuses on healthier fare than your standard fast-food or chain restaurants, in general, all restaurants can do a disservice to your bottom line – in this case, your efforts to maintain a healthy weight. That's the finding from a recent study that concluded meals at non-chain restaurants are pretty much just as calorie laden as similar meals from chain restaurants.

For the study, researchers "determined the calorie content of the most popular dinners at independent eateries around Boston, San Francisco and Little Rock, Arkansas. In each area, they included about a dozen restaurants across a range of cuisines, from American burger joints to Italian trattorias and Greek cafes." Unfortunately, the average calorie count for a meal at one of these eateries topped 1,200 calories – more than half the recommended daily calorie total for a woman age 19-30 and nearly half the daily count for a man in the same age range.

restaurant - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark The lead researcher on the study illuminated the findings by emphasizing that although many people consider fast-food / chain restaurants (the latter of which are required to post nutritional information / calorie totals on their menus as of late 2016, although many have already done so) the culprits when it comes to caloric excess, non-chain restaurants can be equally as guilty. We just can't always tell because independent restaurants aren't required to post the information for customers to review.

What's the takeaway from this conversation? Two points: 1) If you're trying to lose weight / cut calories, try to limit the amount of times you eat out. After all, it's much easier to control the nutritional quality and calorie counts of your meals if you're the one preparing them. 2) When you're eating out, think about smart substitutions (for example, taking your salad dressing on the side, requesting no butter on toast / bread, or inquiring about low-calorie options on the menu) that can cut calories while still allowing you to enjoy a meal out with friends and family. It's all about finding a healthy balance.

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