

Walt Disney World Menus Evolving With Healthful Choices

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – “Do you want apple slices or fries with that cheeseburger?”

It’s all about healthful choices as Walt Disney World quick-service and fast-casual restaurants continue to refine menus. French fries aren’t going away, but menus are being revised with well-balanced options – at least one low-fat and one vegetarian entrée at all table service restaurants, and side options including salads and fresh fruit.

And chefs keep tinkering with recipes, such as smoothies, now made with non-fat yogurt and fresh fruit purees.

Disney’s Parks & Resorts standard kid’s meals feature healthy side dishes and beverages, and the overwhelming majority of guests opt for healthy options, said Ed Wronski, director of Food and Beverage Concept Development for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.

“Healthier choices on kids’ menus are now the standard instead of the ‘alternate,’ ” said Wronski. Grapes, apples, carrot sticks and unsweetened applesauce take the place of French fries, and 1 percent milk, or bottled water instead of soda, for instance. Guests must request fries and sodas (at no additional cost). Surveys show that 60 percent of all quick-service kids’ snacks served healthy option choices.

The number of fresh fruit carts at the parks is steadily increasing while other nutritious snacks like nuts and trail mix are also more readily available. More than 20,000 tons of fresh fruits and vegetables are consumed annually at Walt Disney World Resort and Disneyland Resort.

“The new healthful menus expand the options for our guests,” said Wronski. “The reaction, both from the chefs and the guests, has been very, very positive.”

Constantly looking for ways to improve the nutritional profiles and tastes of popular entrées, Disney changed to a guest-tested hamburger with fat content less than 20 percent and buns with 10 percent whole wheat. Quick-service pizzas now have added whole grain to the crusts and lower-fat cheese.

Even desserts get a makeover: anywhere they are served, guests will find options such as reduced fat, low sugar and fresh fruit.

Disney continues to phase out added trans-fats, working with manufacturers to reformulate recipes for candy, packaged food and bakery items sold in the parks, or identifying replacement products. Portion-controlled snacks and treats and packaging to promote nutritious food are part of the changes.

Catering to Dietary Needs

For lifestyle dining options, or for requests from guests with food allergies or intolerances, there are a wide range of choices, from kosher to gluten and sugar free. Walt Disney World Resort and Disneyland Resort tracked more than half a million requests for special dietary needs and allergies.

In 2011, Walt Disney Parks and Resorts was honored by the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) and

received the FAAN Corporate Leadership Award for recognizing that “families with food allergies deserve to feel safe while on vacation.”

With a call three days in advance, Walt Disney World full-service restaurants can accommodate special dietary needs such as allergies to gluten or wheat, shellfish, soy, lactose or milk, peanuts, tree nuts, fish or eggs.

Lifestyle diets – sugar free, low fat, low sodium, vegetarian or vegan – are easily accommodated. When guests call 407/WDW-DINE, they can make the request and then talk with their server or the manager when they arrive at the restaurants.

Information for guests also is available online at <http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/guest-services/special-dietary-requests/> or <http://disneyland.disney.go.com/plan/guest-services/special-dietary-requests/>.

Kosher meals are available at most full-service restaurants and need to be ordered at least 24 hours in advance by calling 407/WDW-DINE. Meals are Glatt Kosher, prepared in Miami and flown to Walt Disney World Resort.

If you don't order in advance, kosher meals are always available at the following quick-service locations: Cosmic Ray's Starlight Cafe in Magic Kingdom, World Premiere Food Court at Disney's All-Star Movies Resort, Intermission Food Court at Disney's All-Star Music Resort, End Zone Food Court at Disney's All-Star Sports Resort, Everything Pop Shopping and Dining at Disney's Pop Century Resort, ABC Commissary at Disney's Hollywood Studios, Riverside Mill Food Court at Disney's Port Orleans Resort and Pizzafari at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

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