

Walt Disney World Menus Evolving With Healthful Choices

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – 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 with healthful sides and beverages and at least one vegetarian entrée in all quick-service and table-service restaurants.

Disney’s Parks & Resorts standard kid’s meals feature healthier side dishes and beverages, and an 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’ complete meals are served with healthy option choices.

The number of fresh fruit carts at the parks is steadily increasing while other nutritious snacks like nuts and trail mix also are 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 low sugar offerings 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. Walt Disney World Resort and Disneyland Resort tracked more than half a million annual requests for guests’ special dietary needs.

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.”

Many Walt Disney World restaurants can accommodate special dietary needs such as allergies to gluten or wheat, shellfish, soy, lactose or milk, peanuts, tree nuts, fish or eggs. For guests with multiple allergies or less common special dietary requests, guests can email special.diets@disneyworld.com after booking a restaurant reservation.

Lifestyle diets – sugar free, low fat, low sodium, vegetarian or vegan – can also be 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/>.

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. Kosher meals are also available at a number of quick-service locations.

###