



Seven Ways to Save Money When Eating in a Restaurant

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Published

March 31st, 2011

Eating out can be expensive - especially if you are feeding a family. There are a few ways, however, that you can save money so that the bill isn't more than you want or can afford to pay.

1. Do not order beverages - Often we think that we are getting a good deal with "bottomless cup" offers but, the price of drinks can add up to almost as much as a basic meal if we aren't careful. Try ordering ice water (not bottled) and notice how your restaurant bill quickly becomes more manageable.
2. Be careful with the desserts - Like beverages, the dessert orders can quickly add up. You might want to plan a meal out with a reminder to everyone that dessert will be served at home afterwards. Or, for a different type of treat, eat at home and then go out for dessert!
3. Watch for ordering tricks - Many years ago, a co-worker told me that instead of ordering a steak, he always orders a steak sandwich. His reasoning was that he still received a good portion but paid several dollars less and only gave up the potato for doing so.
4. Look for buffets that have a set price but unlimited options. This way everyone can choose what they want to eat and in the proportions that they can handle but you know before you even enter the restaurant what the dining will cost.
5. Stick with the appetizers - You might find that having a light snack at home before the meal and then ordering from the appetizer menu will offer you just the right amount to satisfy.
6. Share a meal with a friend - So many times I have gone out with another person and we have been very pleased to share a meal. Sometimes the kitchen staff will even plate it equally before it is served. By the time we have finished eating, we are both contented not only with the reduced calorie intake but also with half of the bill.
7. Ask for containers - Years ago people would ask for "doggie bags", but it is now common practice to just state that you would like to take the remainder of your meal home for later (or the next day). Some restaurants will package the food for you and others will gladly bring suitable containers to the table for you to fill on your own.

I travel a great deal and find that using the above tips help to not only reduce my expenses but also keep me satisfied and not bloated or uncomfortable during my meetings.

With a little bit of creativity, you will likely find that changing a few things might even allow you to eat out more often!