

by Lisa R. Young, Ph.D., R.D.

Are You Dining Out— or Pigging Out?

Sauces. Croutons. Jumbo-size portions. You won't believe how many calories lurk in some 'healthy' menu choices

Ever wonder why most restaurants don't give calorie counts on their menus? Maybe they don't want to scare us away. The Tennessee-based steak chain Chop House is one of the few eateries brave enough to post their nutritional information online. We applaud them for that—and for offering downsize portions. But take a look at dishes on their menu (right); they're typical of American restaurant fare. We deconstruct high-cal meals that appear to be healthy, such as salads and grilled fish. Read this before you eat out again...

Can Salad Make You Fat?

Chicken Tender Salad 2,067 calories

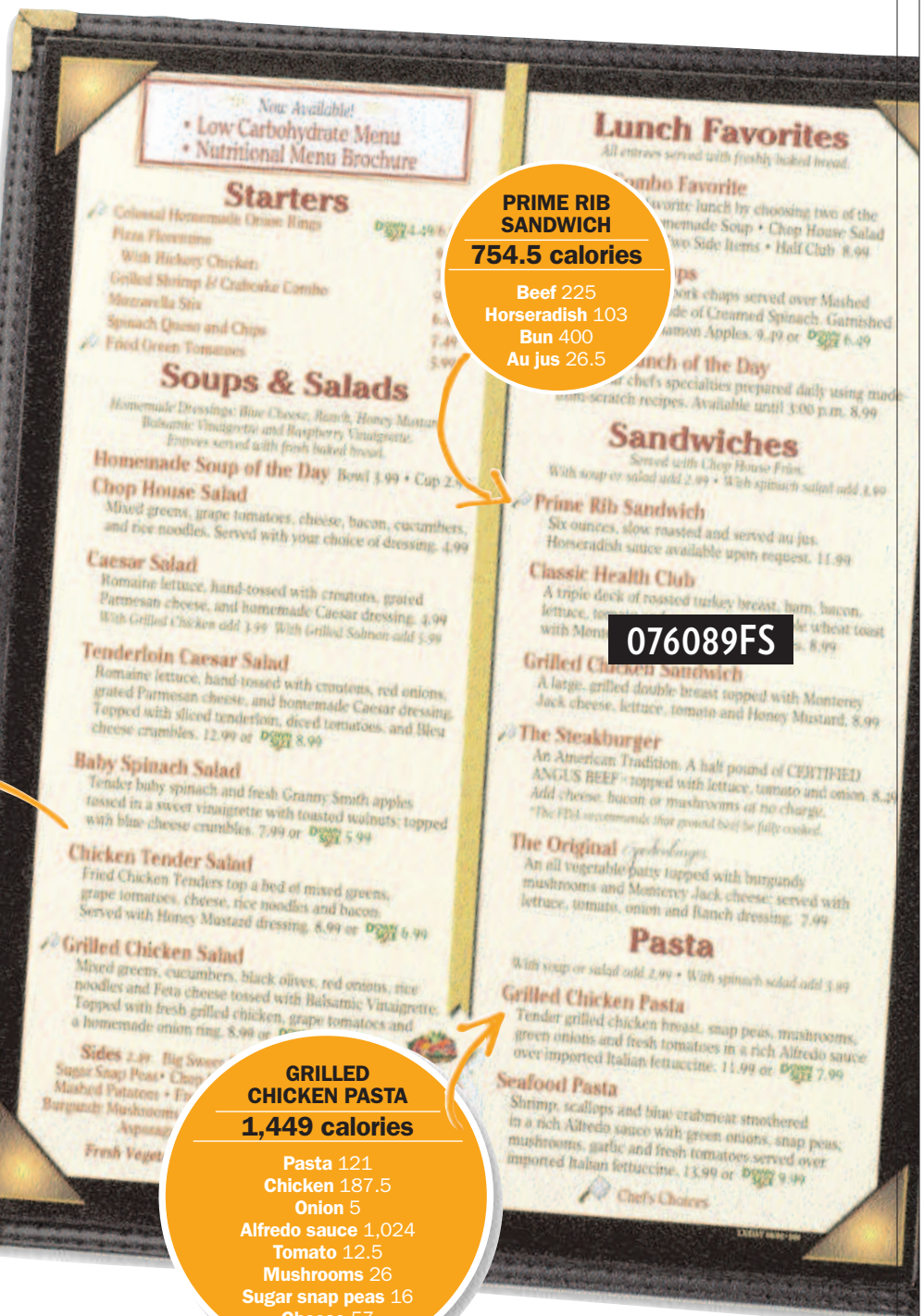
(four cups of salad 40; tomatoes 2.5; cheese 227.5; bacon bits 120; rice noodles 392; chicken tenders 343; dressing 942)

Tenderloin Caesar Salad 1,711 calories

(lettuce 40; croutons 250; Bleu cheese 266; Parmesan cheese 130; tenderloin medallions 360; tomatoes 11; onions 14; dressing 640)

Baby Spinach Salad 1,112.5 calories

(spinach 40; cheese 200; apple cinnamon walnuts 190; apples 32.5; dressing 650)



PRIME RIB SANDWICH
754.5 calories

Beef 225
Horseradish 103
Bun 400
Au jus 26.5

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GRILLED CHICKEN PASTA
1,449 calories

Pasta 121
Chicken 187.5
Onion 5
Alfredo sauce 1,024
Tomato 12.5
Mushrooms 26
Sugar snap peas 16
Cheese 57

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Eating-Out Strategies

Stop sabotaging your diet and take control

Beware Oversize Portions

“Big Orange Potato” (17 oz., 486 calories) That’s even without butter or sour cream. Baked potatoes are a healthy, low-cal option, but a 7-oz. spud—200 calories—is plenty big enough.

BBQ Ribs (1 lb., 2,160 calories) This is more calories than most women need for an entire day.

Side of House Fries (7 oz., 672 calories) This side order is larger than the largest size available at McDonald’s.

Don’t Rely on a Name

“Classic Health Club”

What the menu doesn’t tell you: At 926 calories, this isn’t exactly health food. Regular mayonnaise and ham are both high in fat. And “wheat” bread is not the same as “whole wheat” bread.

“Asparagus Spears”

What the menu doesn’t tell you: This side dish contains 333 calories (asparagus: 38; steak butter: 295).

Ask your server . . .

- **How is this dish prepared?** Does it contain butter? Cream? Sauce?
- **How big is it?**
- **What else is in this salad?** Dressing? Croutons? High-fat cheese? Bacon?

Lisa R. Young is a New York City nutritionist, a faculty member at NYU and the author of *The Portion Teller: Smartsize Your Way to Permanent Weight Loss* (Morgan Road Books, 2005).



Five Ways to Beat Restaurant Bulge

- 1 Order appetizers or have the server wrap up half to go.
- 2 Request salad dressings and sauces “on the side.” They often contain more calories than the food they’re flavoring.
- 3 Avoid dishes with cream, mayonnaise, sour cream or butter.
- 4 When in doubt, order a small steak or grilled chicken. Both are fairly low in calories and taste good without added butter.
- 5 Order off the menu. Many chefs will prepare steamed vegetables. And fresh fruit is always a great option for dessert.