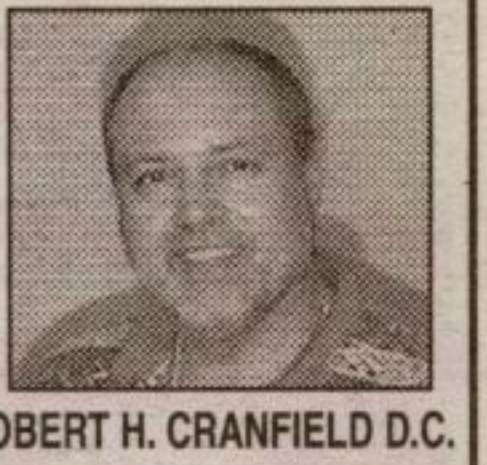


# Health Care

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## Dining out doesn't have to mean a diet disaster

**D**iets are hard enough to stick with, but when you throw in taking the kids out for pizza, celebrating an event at a restaurant or that necessary fast-food lunch, they're nearly impossible.

While it may not seem possible to stay with your diet while dining away from home, the following suggestions will help you trim the fat from your average restaurant fare.

**Avoid the buffet line:** When choosing the restaurant yourself, by all means don't invite the demise of your diet by going to an all-you-can-eat place. If you've been invited, note where the salad bar is and visit it early and often. Fill yourself with the greens and fresh veggies, and go for the lemon wedges and fat-free dressing.

At the entree station, pick a cut of lean prime rib, a broiled chicken breast or baked fish.

Steer clear of the au gratin potatoes and choose a starch like steamed rice or a baked potato instead.

**Fast food can be fine:** If you avoid the obvious fat-laden side dishes, a trip to a fast-food place can pose little risk to your diet. You can even have a small order of fries, if you avoid the fried meat or

beef sandwiches.

The major fast-food chains have done well in accessorizing their menus with lower-fat foods these days, so take advantage of them. Order broiled or grilled chicken sandwiches and turkey subs, and ask that they hold the mayo and cheese. Pile on the low-fat condiments like lettuce, onion and tomato instead.

**P**izza can be great, and healthy: Though a tricky area, pizza can be ordered in a way that doesn't use up all your allotted calories in one sitting.

First, order the thin crust, as the thick crust and deep-dish pizzas are much higher in fat. Tame your craving for spicy sausage or pepperoni and order the low-calorie veggie items like mushrooms, peppers and onion. You can even be a real Spartan and ask that they cut down on the cheese.

**Restaurant menus are a minefield:** When faced with choices like Chicken Cordon Bleu, Fettuccine Alfredo or Enchiladas Rancheras, the vast

majority will throw up their forks and surrender. Actually, watching the calories in a French, Italian or Mexican restaurant can actually be easy.

First of all, pretend that the basket of bread and butter, bruschetta or fried tortilla chips doesn't exist in the center of the table, inches from your hand. Then, concentrate on the menu.

With French or Continental

normal order with, and the same goes with salad dressings. The diner generally ends up eating just as much, if not more, than normal.

In an Italian restaurant, antipasto plates are loaded with healthy and low-fat items like artichoke hearts, peppers and mushrooms.

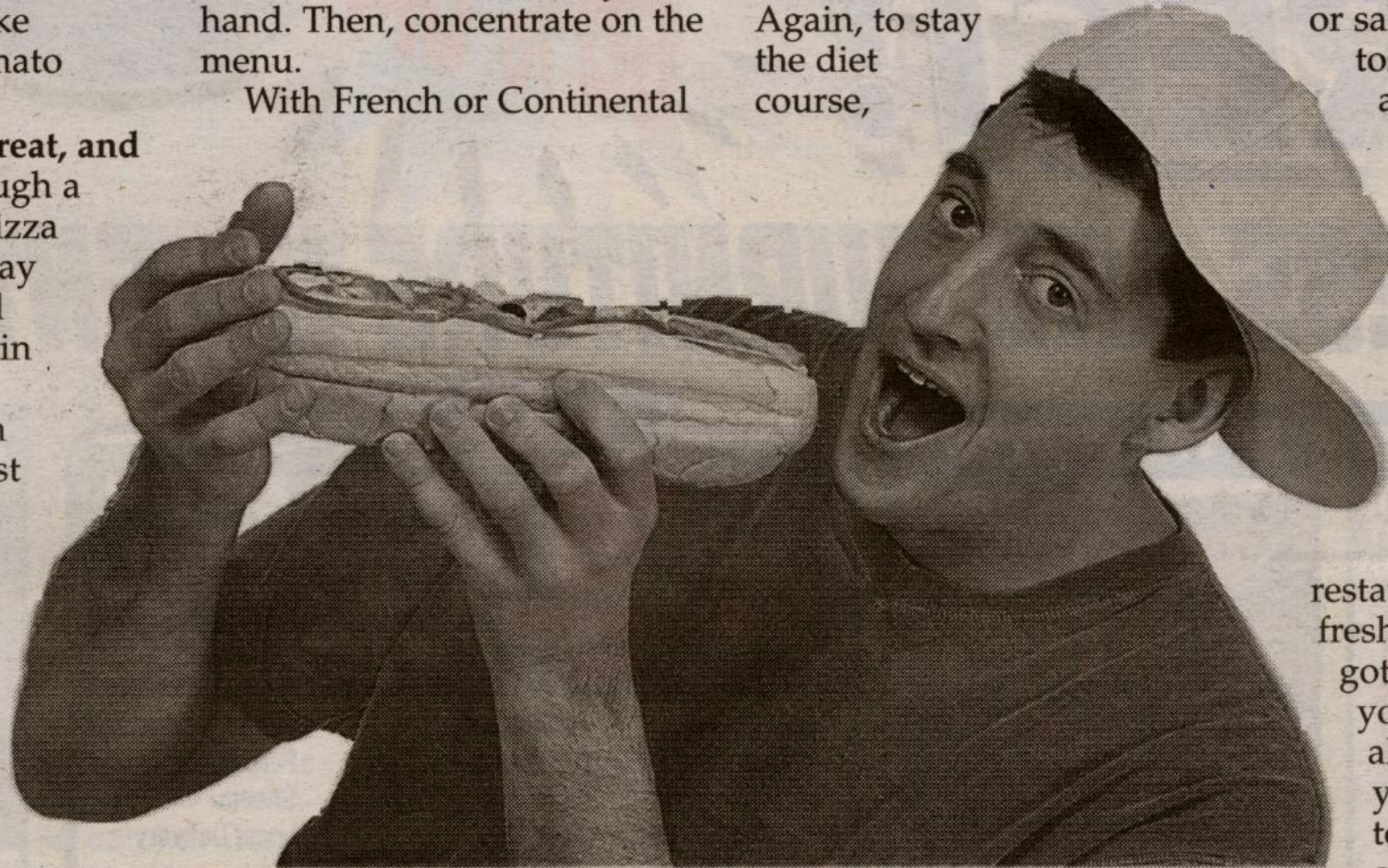
Again, to stay the diet course,

salsa is fine, it's the deep-fried stuff that sends the diet south of the border. Order the soft tacos and burritos rather than the crisp, fried variety, and tell them to hold the sour cream. Since many traditional items arrive with cheese added, ask your server to have the kitchen leave cheese off the beans, rice or salad. Chicken tacos or tostados, instead of beef, are a further way to cut calories.

**N**ow, for the final course: What can we order when a dessert is calling us by name and we're sure that our fat grams limit is pressing the envelope?

Well, if you're lucky enough to be in a restaurant that serves sorbet or fresh fruit for dessert, you've got it made. If not, and if you're fairly sure you've already exceeded what your diet allows, simply go to your car. Get in and open the glove box, retrieving that little piece of candy you've put aside for this occasion. Savor it on the way home, knowing that you've won a round in fighting restaurant fat!

—By Daniel Aspell  
Multi-Ad Services, Inc.



cuisine, shun the cream sauces or anything that arrives au beurre (with butter). And beware of the "I'll order the sauce on the side" trap. Many chefs supply more sauce on the side than they would top a

find a tasty dish that doesn't involve a cream or butter sauce. Better to stick with a marinara sauce and munch on a bread stick rather than an order of garlic bread.

When going Tex-Mex, the

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