



Indian restaurant guide

Adapting your menu



Eat Out Eat Well

Indian restaurant guide

The aim of the Eat Out Eat Well award is to increase accessibility to tasty food prepared in a healthier way using good food hygiene practices and served in a healthier environment. Healthy catering is not about removing lots of existing dishes from the menu and replacing them all with healthier alternatives. Although you may decide to introduce some totally new dishes and/or increase the range of healthier options, the main emphasis is on making small changes to existing dishes. This may mean changing some of the ingredients used, the proportions of ingredients or how the food is prepared / cooked. Healthy catering is also about

promoting healthier options so customers are more aware of the choices available to them.

This information sheet is designed to provide specific advice tailored to restaurants and takeaways serving Indian and similar cuisines. This may include Indian, Pakistani, Bengali and Bangladeshi cuisines. It should be used alongside the Eat Out Eat Well Award booklet 'A Guide for Caterers', which is a detailed guide including information on how to qualify for and achieve the Eat Out Eat Well award.

Guidelines

Fruit and vegetables

A balanced diet should contain lots of fruit and vegetables, so have plenty of menu options containing fruits and vegetables. You could include tomato, onion, spinach, okra, aubergine, green beans, cauliflower, lentils, pumpkin, chickpeas, peas, fenugreek, banana, lychees, pineapple, papaya, raisins/sultanas, and mango.

Add extra fruit and vegetables into soups, starters, main dishes, side dishes, rice dishes and breads.

Have non-fried vegetable main and side dishes on the menu. Encourage customers to buy a side dish of vegetables, or have a 'special' vegetable dish of the week.

Steam vegetables or stir-fry in a minimal amount of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil). Don't fry vegetables (e.g. aubergine) before adding to curries. Add raw vegetables to the curry while it's cooking.

Where possible, add extra pulses (e.g. lentils and chickpeas) into dishes.

If using canned vegetables (including pulses), choose those that are canned without added sugar and salt. Use canned fruit in pure 100% fruit juice, not syrup.

Offer a salad starter, side dish or main dish e.g. mixed salad, Desi salad (citrus dressing), chicken tikka salad. Serve without added dressing. Low fat* dressings (e.g. those based on vinegar, lemon juice or lime juice) can be offered separately. If mayonnaise is offered, offer a reduced** fat version.

Rice, bread and potatoes

Meals should be based around starchy foods such as rice, bread and potatoes.

Rice

Offer boiled/steamed rice as an alternative to fried rice such as Pilau. When boiling avoid adding salt to the cooking water.

To make boiled rice more varied, add fruit or vegetables e.g. mushrooms, peas, pineapple.

When frying ingredients for a biryani, use a minimal amount of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil) instead of butter/ghee. Include plenty of vegetables in the recipe. If served with a separate curry, prepare this with a tomato based sauce rather than a coconut/cream based sauce.

Try offering brown rice, or half brown and half white rice mixed together.

Adjust the proportions of the meal, offering more rice/bread and less curry.

Bread

Include healthier options on the menu such as:

- Chapatti (without ghee)
- Roti (without ghee)
- Naan made with lower fat milk (semi skimmed or skimmed) and/or low fat yoghurt. Use unsaturated oil instead of ghee/butter. Offer Peshwari or Kulcha fillings prepared without added oil.

Reduce the choice of less healthy options on the menu such as:

- Deep fried Puri/Poori
- Poratha/Paratha
- Bhatura
- Keema and Paneer Naan/Nan

Cook breads in the oven (e.g. Tandoor) or on a griddle pan, without the addition of oil or butter/ghee.

Where possible, use wholemeal/whole-wheat flour (e.g. brown atta) (in chapatti, roti, paratha and puri)

When pan-frying paratha bread, use a small amount of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil) instead of butter/ghee.

Potatoes

When cooking potatoes, steam or boil in a minimal amount of water, rather than fry. If boiling avoid adding salt to the cooking water.

Potato can be used to extend main course curry dishes.

Avoid adding oil or butter/ghee, when combining potato with other ingredients in dishes such as Saag Aloo and Bombay Potato,

If chips are served use oven chips or choose thick cut chips or potatoes wedges instead of thin cut chips – they absorb less oil when cooking.

If frying potatoes, pre-blanch in steamers beforehand as this reduces the amount of oil absorbed when frying. Ensure frying temperatures are correct, (check the recipe/ packet or fryer instructions), as this will also reduce the amount of oil absorbed. Use unsaturated oils such as rapeseed, corn or sunflower oils, olive oil is not suitable for deep fat frying. Drain the oil off the chips and do not pre-salt. Customers may wish to add their own salt, and salt may be made available, but don't provide salt on customer tables.

Milk and dairy foods

Cream and Malai, butter /ghee are high in saturated fat.

Replace butter/ghee with unsaturated oils e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, olive oil.

Use lower fat milks (e.g. semi skimmed milk, 1% milk and skimmed milk) in cooking. Replace cream in dishes with semi skimmed milk, low fat* yoghurt or low fat* fromage frais. Use low fat yoghurt* in sauces, marinades and Lassi.

Paneer cheese is high in fat. If paneer is made in-house, use semi-skimmed milk and reduce the amount of salt added. Try using only small amounts of paneer and combine with generous amounts of other vegetables like peas or saag. Try using firm tofu in dishes instead of paneer. It has a similar texture to paneer, but is much lower in fat.

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Offer a range of vegetarian main dishes, such as vegetable curry/biryani and dishes with lentils and chickpeas. Tofu and nuts also provide good sources of protein in vegetarian dishes.

Where suitable, add extra beans or pulses into non vegetarian dishes as well e.g. Lamb Haleem.

Include a variety of white fish (e.g. cod and haddock), oily fish (e.g. salmon and trout) and shellfish (e.g. prawns), in your menu. Steam, poach, grill, oven bake (e.g. Tandoor) or stir-fry in a minimal amount of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil).

If omelettes are served, include some finely chopped vegetables in the omelette mix e.g. peppers, mushrooms. If milk is added, use lower fat milks such as semi skimmed milk, 1% milk and skimmed milk. Fry in a non-stick pan with a minimal amount of unsaturated oil (e.g.

rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil).

Use lean meat where possible and cut visible fat off meat such as lamb and beef.

Use lean/ lower fat minced lamb (e.g. for Keema).

Oven bake (e.g. Tandoor), grill/ barbecue or stir-fry red meats and poultry in a minimal amount of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil).

When roasting/oven baking meat or poultry, use a roasting rack to drain excess fat away.

Where possible, remove the skin from poultry, such as chicken.

Skim off fat/oil floating on the top of curries and meat soups. This rises to the surface of the dish when left to stand.

Appetisers/starters/soups

Include healthier options on the menu such as:

- Soups (without cream or coconut cream) e.g. Dal/Dahl soup, Mulligatawny
- Baked/grilled poppadum (brushed with a little unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil).
- Grilled/steamed king prawns
- Sheek/Shami kebab with lean mince, baked in a Tandoor oven or grilled /barbecued
- Seafood or fish kebabs, grilled or barbecued
- Lamb chops with visible fat cut off and grilled or barbecued
- Tandoor chicken/ chicken tikka marinated in low fat yoghurt and baked in a Tandoor oven or grilled/barbecued
- Mixed salads (with low fat*/reduced** fat dressings served separately) or Desi salad with citrus dressing
- Prawn cocktail with plenty of salad and a low fat /reduced fat dressing served separately

Reduce the choice of less healthy options on the menu such as:

- Coconut soups
- Deep fried bhajis
- Deep fried pakoras
- Deep fried samosas
- Deep fried poppadoms
- Puri (prawn/chicken)
- Fried garlic mushrooms/prawns
- Deep fried chicken wings
- Prawn cocktail with full fat dressing

Reducing fat

Limit the amount of deep fried appetisers offered and grill, barbeque, bake (e.g. in a Tandoor oven) or steam starters where possible.

If frying use an unsaturated oil suitable for deep frying (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, and sunflower oil). Use optimum frying temperatures (look at the recipe/packet or fryer instructions), as a reduced frying temperature can lead to increased fat absorption.

Deep fried poppadum are high in fat. Preferably grill or bake these. If deep frying, use a suitable unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil) and drain thoroughly before serving. Allow customers to request/ order poppadum, rather than provide them free or complimentary with meals.

When making Raita/Raitha, use low fat* yoghurt and add extra vegetables e.g. cucumber /onion /tomato. Lightly spice rather than adding salt.

Main meals

Include healthier options on the menu such as:

Sauces prepared without ghee/butter and only small amounts of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, olive oil) Sauces prepared without ghee/butter and

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Dishes with dry sauces and those based on tomato:

- Balti
- Bhuna
- Dupiaza
- Jalfrezi
- Some Korai dishes (tomato based)
- Madras (tomato based)
- Methi
- Pathia/Patea (sweetened with fruit)
- Rogan Josh
- Vindaloo

Dishes based on lentils:

- Daal/Dhal
- Dhansak

Dishes based on Spinach:

- Saag, – Prawn/Chicken
- Saag Aloo

Other:

- Tandoori chicken
- Chicken tikka (not masala)
- Plain boiled/steamed basmati rice
- Steamed/boiled/grilled/oven baked fish/shellfish
- Non-fried vegetable dishes (e.g. chickpeas, aubergine, spinach, okra, cauliflower)

Reduce the choice of less healthy options on the menu such as:

Sauces containing full fat yoghurt, cream, coconut cream:

- Korma
- Kashmir
- Madras (if creamed coconut is used)
- Makhani/Butter Chicken
- Malaya
- Masala
- Moglai/Moghul
- Pasanda
- Tikka Masala

Other:

- Battered and deep fried products
- Fried fish and shellfish
- Meat, fish or chicken prepared in Malai
- Fried paneer
- Fried (pilau) rice
- Rice cooked in coconut milk

Reducing fat

Offer dishes that are oven baked (e.g. Tandoor), grilled/ barbecued, steamed, boiled or stir-fried in a minimal amount of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, olive oil).

Ghee and butter are high in saturated fat. Replace this with unsaturated oils (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, olive oil). Unsaturated oils are a healthier choice than saturated fats, but, all fats and oils are high in calories, so also reduce the quantity of oil used.

Don't fry vegetables (e.g. aubergine) before adding to curries. Add raw vegetables to the curry while it's cooking.

Do not double/re-fry food as it increases fat absorption further.

Battered and deep fried dishes contain lots of fat. Offer a limited number of these dishes and use an unsaturated oil that is suitable for deep frying (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, and sunflower oil). Use optimum frying temperatures (look at the recipe/packet or fryer instructions), as a reduced temperature can lead to increased fat absorption.

If you offer curries with creamed coconut, replace this with a little reduced fat coconut milk as this contains a bit less saturated fat or preferably replace the creamed coconut with semi skimmed milk, low fat* yoghurt or low fat* fromage frais.

Reducing sugar and salt

Offer dishes that are oven baked (e.g. Tandoor), grilled/ barbecued, steamed, boiled or stir-fried in a minimal amount of unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, olive oil).

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If you offer curries with creamed coconut, replace this with a little reduced fat coconut milk as this contains a bit less saturated fat or preferably replace the creamed coconut with semi skimmed milk, low fat* yoghurt or low fat* fromage frais.

Replace cream and Malai with semi skimmed milk, low fat* yoghurt or low fat* fromage frais.

Try replacing condensed/evaporated milk with semi-skimmed milk, reduced** fat 'light' evaporated milk', low fat* yoghurt or low fat* fromage frais.

Sauces, stocks and pickles

Some sauces contain high levels of fat, salt and/or sugar. Ready-made (bought) sauces, stocks and pickles can have particularly high levels. Look for those that meet the salt targets for salt content (see the 'Eat Out Eat Well A Guide for Caterers'). Stocks should contain no more than 0.6g salt per 100mls (when made up with water). Where possible make sauces and stocks in-house and reduce the amount of salt or sugar added.

Try to make sauces, stocks and pickles in-house and reduce the amount of oil, salt and sugar added. Commercial pickle (e.g. achar) is high in salt, try making your own with less salt and lemon juice or vinegar.

If sauces are made by adding extra ingredients and herbs/spices to a readymade 'base sauce', it is important that this base recipe is not high in fat, sugar or salt. Check the ingredients. Use an unsaturated oil (e.g. rapeseed oil, corn oil, sunflower oil, olive oil) instead of butter/ghee, reduce the amount of oil used and do not add salt.

Sauces containing full fat yoghurt, cream and creamed coconut will be higher in fat than tomato based sauces. Try using semi skimmed milk, low fat* yoghurt or low fat* fromage frais and reduced fat coconut milk instead of full fat yoghurt, cream and creamed coconut in 'creamy' sauces.

When making sweet and sour sauces (e.g. Pathia/Patea), reduce the sugar added and where suitable try sweetening the sauce with fruits rather than sugar.

Limit the amount of sauce added to a dish and, where possible, offer the sauce separately so the customer can use as little or as much as they like.

Avoid using artificial food colourings/ food dyes

to add colour to dishes, use turmeric, paprika or tomato puree instead.

Desserts

Include healthier options on the menu such as:

- Fresh fruit
- Fresh fruit salad (made with 100% pure unsweetened fruit juice, not syrup)
- Canned fruits (e.g. lychees) in 100% pure unsweetened fruit juice
- Fruit sorbet (reduce the sugar added to sweeten this)
- Low fat yoghurt with added fruit
- Kheer/Firni made with lower fat milk (semi skimmed, 1% milk, skimmed milk) and sweetened with fruits

Reduce the choice of less healthy options on the menu such as:

- Deep fried fritters (e.g. banana/pineapple) in syrup
- Canned fruits in syrup
- Kulfi/Ice-cream
- Gulab Jamun/Rasmalai
- Kheer/Firni (made with full fat milk, condensed milk)

Reducing fat and sugar

Desserts and puddings are often high in sugar and fat. Avoid deep fried desserts and limit the use of condensed/evaporated milk (try using low fat* yoghurt or fromage frais*, or reduced** fat 'light' evaporated milk).

In milk based desserts (e.g. Kheer) replace condensed milk with lower fat milks such as semi-skimmed milk, 1 % milk or skimmed milk. Reduce the amount of sugar added and add fruits to sweeten.

The sugar content of many desserts can be halved without a detectable difference in sweetness (there are exceptions to this e.g. meringues) so try experimenting.

Include fruit based desserts, such as fruit salad, that include a range of fruit (e.g. lychees, mango, and pineapple). Use canned fruit in 100% pure unsweetened fruit juice, rather than syrup.

Offer fruit sorbet (reduce the sugar added to sweeten this/ choose those lower in added sugar/ reduced sugar varieties**) as an alternative to Kulfi /ice-cream. Try offering lower fat/ reduced fat ** ice cream.

Ensure a portion of fruit (fresh fruit or fruit salad/ tinned fruits made/canned with 100% pure unsweetened fruit juice) is cheaper than the other desserts.

Drinks – cold/chilled

Provide tap water freely

If serving sweet Lassi, try using low fat* yoghurt (or semi-skimmed, 1 % milk, skimmed milk) and sweeten with fruit rather than sugar. If serving Lassi with salt, reduce the amount of salt added and use spices (e.g. cumin) instead.

Offer a range of low calorie (includes sugar free) and no added sugar soft drinks. Low calorie drinks are drinks containing not more than 20kcal (80kj) per 100mls. No added sugar drinks are drinks that have not had sugar added to them as an ingredient (includes pure 100% unsweetened fruit juice and smoothies in a 150mls serving size).

Offer pure 100% unsweetened fruit juice and smoothies in a 150ml serving size. Fruit juice and water mixes can also be included for example a 200ml serving size, with 150mls of 100% pure fruit juice and added water.

If sugar sweetened drinks are sold, (consider hot and cold drinks) the serving size should not exceed 330mls.

Drinks – hot

Use semi skimmed milk/ 1% milk as standard for all hot drinks. Offer skimmed milk as a choice.

Do not pre- sweeten drinks

Provide low calorie sweeteners for customers to add as an alternative to sugar.

Be aware that speciality coffees that are made with sugar and topped with cream can contain high levels of fat and sugar, If served, don't promote these options on the menu/ verbally when customers are ordering after dinner drinks. Offer spiced teas and herbal teas (e.g. mint tea).

Children's meals and smaller portions

Have smaller portions available (at a reduced price) for children and people with a smaller appetite. This can help people to regulate their intake, prevent over-eating / food being wasted. Make sure there are smaller portions of the healthier options available.

If there is a dedicated children's menu, make sure it contains the healthier menu options, vegetables and fruit and only water, lower fat milks (e.g. semi skimmed milk, 1% fat, skimmed milk) and low calorie and no added sugar soft drinks.

Healthier options for children's menus could include:

- Boiled rice mixed with peas/sweetcorn
- Chicken and vegetable curry with a mildly spicy tomato sauce
- Chicken tikka 'dippas' – slices/chunks of mildly spicy chicken tikka, with a pot of reduced fat yoghurt dip/mild tomato curry dip.
- Mini chapattis/mini plain naan

Display, pricing and marketing

Include some of the healthier options in your set menus.

At buffets/self-service counters include healthier options and make sure there are plenty of starchy foods available (e.g. boiled/ steamed rice, chapattis, plain naan), and vegetable dishes. Promote the healthier options by having information cards next to the dish that state what it contains (e.g. 'Chicken Dhansak – A mildly spicy curry with tender chicken pieces, lentils and pineapple') See note.

Try promoting the healthier dishes as 'specials' or 'dish of the day', but do not increase the price as this may put customers off.

If 'Meal deals' are available, offer the healthier menu options for starters, mains and desserts. In each meal deal include a starchy food, vegetables and a portion of fruit***. If including drinks, offer pure 100% fruit juice in a 150ml serving size, no added sugar or low calorie drinks or water. Make sure staff are aware of the healthier options and promote them to customers.

Consider using some price promotions for the healthier options (e.g. offer a portion of Chana Saag (chickpeas and spinach) half price with every order, or free with every order over £15).

Note: If providing information about the food available, make sure any claims are correct and not misleading (e.g. be cautious about making claims such as 'low fat' if the dish has not been assessed for nutrient content as this claim is defined by law and must meet the criteria to be legal).

Food allergies

A small number of people suffer from allergies to food. In the UK, peanuts, tree nuts, sesame



Chinese restaurants

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