

Industry News - PM

Consumers will ditch healthy for tasty, filling and cheap

By [Rita Jane Gabbett](#) on 6/23/2009

Consumer research firm Mintel found that only 20 percent of American diners rank food health as an important factor when ordering dinner.



Far more essential are taste (77 percent) and hunger satisfaction (44 percent) when scanning a dinner menu. Although more than three-quarters of adults claim they'd like to see more healthy items on the menu, barely half (51 percent) said they usually order them.

"There's definitely a dichotomy between what people say they want and what they actually do when it comes to healthy restaurant eating," Mintel Menu Insights Director Maria Caranfa said in a news release. "Over eight in 10 adults told us it's very or somewhat important to them to eat healthy, but when it comes to dining out, most people are really looking for taste, texture and experience. So, healthy menu items need to perfect the balance between nutrition and flavor."

Price remains a deterrent to healthy restaurant fare, especially as the economy weighs down people's finances. Over half of Mintel's survey respondents (54 percent) said eating healthy at restaurants is more expensive than not eating healthy.

Mintel surveyed 2,000 adults online in February.