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Introduction

Access and availability of healthy foods and beverages plays an important role in an individual's overall health and well-being. The link between diet and health has been well documented in scientific literature for many decades, and there is continuously growing evidence showing that food and beverage environments conducive to healthy dietary patterns can help individuals achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases throughout different life stages.

The USC WorkWell Center and USC Hospitality is pleased to share the Healthy Dining on Campus guide to support the USC community to choose healthier food and beverages on campus and improve overall health and quality of life. Recommendations in this guide are based on 2020-2025 USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Menus of Change, and reviewed by Lindsey Pine, MS, RDN, CLT, Registered Dietitian.

PLEASE NOTE: Some meals ordered on the Campus Dining app and kiosks may not allow for customization. If this is the case, please talk to a staff member at the venue about customization immediately after placing your order on the device.

We encourage you to use this guide as reference when dining at the many eateries on campus. If you have any questions, suggestions, or feedback, please contact:

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Campus Center

**Burger Crush**

**Burger Crush**
- **Healthier entrée options**: single crush instead of a double crush; lettuce wrap option for beef patty or meatless Impossible patty

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**Seeds Marketplace**

**Seeds Marketplace**
- Avocado toast – order without the butter
- Grab n’ Go Veggie Breakfast Burrito
- Made to order salads & grab n’ go salads
- **Positive Foods** - breakfast & main meal options
- **Café Gratitude** - plant based grab n’ go options
- **FitBites Meal** grab n’ go entrees & yogurt bowls
- Grab n’ Go Kikka sushi with brown rice
- Mediterranean dips such as hummus, tapenade, tzatziki, & baba ghanoush
- **Healthier snack options**: Sunnie Fresh Snacks, fresh fruit, Rhythm beet chips, trail mix, pistachios in the shell and unsalted almonds

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**Panda Express**

(Polygons listed on corporate website)
- **Healthier entrée options**: Mushroom Chicken, String Bean Chicken Breast, Kung Pao Chicken and Broccoli Beef are “Wok Smart”
  - Wok smart = entrees that are less than 300 calories and at least 8g protein
- **Healthy Tips**: Choose Mixed Veggies Super Greens (mixed veggies, broccoli, kale, and cabbage) as the side
C&G Juice Co

- **To lower the calories and sugar:** Create your own acai bowl instead of ordering one of the suggested combinations

- **To create a better-for-you bowl:**
  - Order without granola
  - Add nutrient-rich spinach, kale, cacao nibs, chia or flax seeds

- 24 oz smoothies are all under 400 calories, except the Protein Power smoothie

- **Healthier juice option:** ‘Mother Nature’ due to higher amounts of veggies

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**TacoTaco**

- **Healthier entrée options:** Instead of a burrito, try grilled chicken, carne asada or veggie bowl/street tacos/salad

- **Healthier mix-in options:** Mixed greens, black beans (instead of refried), brown rice, fajita veggies, onions, corn, cilantro, salsa, pico de gallo, & shredded lettuce

  - **Healthy Tip:** Instead of cheese and sour cream, choose guacamole which has fiber and heart healthy fats
East Campus

**Law Café**

**Law Café**

- **Customize** your rice bowls to create a healthier option:
  - Choose house salad or brown rice as the base, heavy on the veggies, light/omit teriyaki sauce, and light/omit sriracha mayo
  - Order an extra side of veggies
  - A smaller “lighter portion” of the Chicken Teriyaki Bowl is offered
  - Make a meal from the “Sides” menu that includes salmon, rice, avocado & veggies

**Fertitta Café**

**Fertitta Café**

- **Healthier salad options**: Chinese Chicken Salad with dressing on the side, fried wontons omitted or order the “Lighter Portion” option
- **Customize your Bibimbap bowl** with tofu for a plant-based protein option
  - Choose house salad or brown rice as the base
  - A “Lighter Portion” of all Bibimbap bowls is offered

**Popovich Café**

**Popovich Café**

- **Healthier entree options**: Chicken Caesar, easy on the dressing or Hummus Vegetable Sandwich
- **Healthier smoothie and acai bowl option**: Mango Kale Acai Smoothie or acai bowls with light or no granola
West Campus

The Café featuring Illy

- **Healthier side option:** White bean and farro soup
- **Healthier entrée options:** Roasted Chicken Salad or Farro Kale Salad

Tutor Hall Café

- Customizable bowls & salads
- **Healthier salad options:**
  - Salmon Salad, easy on dressing
  - Chinese Chicken Salad, easy on dressing (omit wontons)
  - Chicken Fajita Salad, easy on dressing
- **Healthier entrée options:**
  - Chana Masala & white basmati rice with a smaller serving of rice (or save some for later!) and add toppings like cilantro chutney, pickled carrot/jalapeno/red onion, and kachumber
    - If you don’t want the rice, you can order just a side of Chicken Masala
  - Miso Salmon Bowl with plain basmati rice, omit the crispy wontons; add extra veggies
Residential Dining

USC Village Dining Hall, EVK and Parkside

• Check out daily online menus prior

• Perfect opportunity to use the “plate method”
  • ½ plate veggies, ¼ protein, ¼ grain/starch

• Choose the salad bar with veggies, whole grains, beans, and lean protein

• Healthier sides: hot veggies, legumes, whole grains, and fruit

• Drink water instead of soda

• Vegan and vegetarian entrees are available

• Large plant-based station at USC Village Dining Hall
EATING HEALTHY AT STARBUCKS

Light Bites

- **Berry Trio Grain Parfait**
  - Good source of calcium!
- **Sprouted Grain Bagel & Avocado**
  - Complex carbs & healthy fat!
- **Strawberry Overnight Grains**
  - Whole grains & fiber
- **Veggie Egg White Bites**
  - Protein & veggies
- **Whole Oatmeal**
  - Hearty, warm whole grains!

Salads & Sandwiches

- **Southwest Veggie Wrap**
  - Protein filled breakfast
- **Bistro Asian Chicken Salad**
  - Full of veggies
- **Roasted Tomato Mozzarella Panini**
  - Calcium rich lunch
- **Bistro Chicken Caesar Salad**
  - Classic Caesar salad
- **Spinach Feta Wrap**
  - Full of protein & iron

Boxes & Bowls

- **Cheese & Fruit Box**
  - Great afternoon snack
- **Grilled Chicken & Hummus Box**
  - Protein & healthy fat
- **Chickpea Bites & Avocado Box**
  - Tasty plant based option
- **Egg & Cheddar Box**
  - Comes with peanut butter
- **Chicken Quinoa Bowl**
  - Packed with protein

Questions? Please visit [https://hospitality.usc.edu/ask-the-dietitian/](https://hospitality.usc.edu/ask-the-dietitian/)
ORDERING A HEALTHIER STARBUCKS DRINK

Mind Your Milk

Almond
Almond milk offers a light nutty flavor

Coconut
Coconut milk makes for a rich, creamy drink

Low-Fat
Low-fat milk is a healthier version of classic dairy milk

Oat
Oat milk is a tasty allergen friendly option

Soy
Soy milk has 8 grams of plant protein per 1 cup!

Adjust Sweetness

Ask for unsweetened or “half-sweet”
A typical 16oz Starbucks drink had 40g of sugar. Excess sugar has been associated with chronic disease

Opt out of whipped cream & artificial sweeteners
Although lower in calories than sugar, artificial sweeteners have been linked to weight gain and health issues

Choose a smaller size

Tall
Grande
Venti
Trenta
Ordering a smaller size can save you both calories and money. “Tall” is 12 oz, “Grande” is 16 oz, and there’s even an 8 oz size (“Short”)

Questions? Please visit https://hospitality.usc.edu/ask-the-dietitian/
Health Science Campus

Verde
Same recommendations as UPC campus center except a few extras offered at HSC:

Healthier breakfast options: Veggie Omelet

Healthier lunch/dinner options:
• Homemade Chicken Tortilla Soup with extra cilantro and omitted fried tortilla strips
• Grilled Salmon Soft Tacos
• The Salad Spot @ Plaza Marketplace
  • Freshly prepared made to order salads are customizable
  • Options include Mediterranean, Sesame Ginger, Southwestern, and Apple-Walnut
• Healthy Tips: Go light on add-ins such as wonton strips, tortilla strips, candied walnuts & cheese. Use half of the dressing

Panda Express
• String Bean Chicken, Mushroom Chicken, Kung Pao Chicken, Broccoli Beef (Wok Smart)
• Choose mixed veggie & brown rice sides

Plaza Marketplace Grab n’ Go
• Grilled Salmon Tacos
• Selection of salads – go easy on fried toppings and dressing; choose vinaigrette when possible

For more information and support, please visit: USC Hospitality or The WorkWell Center
Appendix

Map of UPC Dining Locations
Map of HSC Dining Locations
WHAT IS A HEALTHY PLATE?

- **Grains & Starchy Vegetables**
  - Rice, Quinoa, Couscous, Pasta
  - Oats
  - Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Peas, Corn, Butternut Squash

- **Non Starchy Vegetables**
  - Salad
  - Raw Veggies
  - Steamed, Roasted & Sauteed

- **Protein**
  - Poultry & Meat
  - Seafood
  - Beans, Lentils, Chickpeas
  - Soy (Tofu, Tempeh, Soymilk)
  - Dairy
  - Nuts, Peanuts, Seeds

DON’T FORGET TO ADD:

- **FRUIT**
  - Focus on whole fruit instead of fruit juice

- **HEALTHY FATS**
  - Plant based oils (e.g. olive oil)
  - Avocado
  - Nuts / Peanuts/ seeds

- **CALCIUM RICH**
  - Dairy
  - Almonds
  - Broccoli & Dark Leafy Greens
  - Oranges
  - Tofu
  - White Beans

- **GUT HEALTHY**
  - Probiotics: Sauerkraut, Yogurt, Tempeh, Miso, Kefir, Kombucha, Kimchi
  - Prebiotics: Onions, Garlic, Apples, Bananas, Asparagus, Beans, Wheat, Barley, Flax

COMPLEMENTS TO A HEALTHY PLATE

- Fun Fitness
- Reduce Stress
- Stay Social
- 7-8 Hours of Sleep/Night

For more information go to our dietitian page: hospitality.usc.edu/dietitian/