

10 Healthy Options

Binghamton’s most famous time of year, Restaurant Week, is back and in full swing. With more than 20 participating restaurants offering great deals on (mostly) great food, mobs of students and locals alike have their forks and knives ready. Yet, with three courses being the standard of Restaurant Week, it’s easy to get carried away quickly and forget about everyone’s favorite word: calories. After all, Binghamton isn’t America’s second most obese city for no reason. The Downtown restaurants offer a huge selection of delicious foods, many of which are loaded with fat, sugar and yes, calories.

Yet it’s not hard to see the healthier alternatives if you’re willing to look for them. Of course, there are a few exceptions. There are some restaurants, including Burger Mondays, Café West 46 and Czech Pleeze to name a few, which do not offer the healthiest meals on their Restaurant Week menu. If you wish, you could always order something that’s not on the Restaurant Week menu. But, who wants to do that?

In an effort to keep Binghamton from becoming No. 1 on American’s fattest cities list, here is a list of 10 healthy dinners from 10 different Restaurant Week locations, in no particular order. Now all you have to worry about is the willpower.

1. Whole in the Wall

Course 1: Organic Mixed Green Salad (with seasoned oil and vinegar)

Course 2: Stir-Fried Vegetables (with organic tofu over brown rice)

Course 3: Fat-free Blood Orange Sorbet

2. Cortese Restaurant

Course 1: Breaded Mushrooms

Course 2: Fresh Salmon (with honey mustard glaze)

Course 3: Espresso

3. Lost Dog Café

Course 1: Sugarcane Shrimp Cocktail

Course 2: Dog House Salad

Course 3: Kale Pesto Salmon

4. saké-tumi

Course 1: Edamame

Course 2: Miso Salmon

Course 3: Green Tea Ice Cream

5. Galaxy Brewing Company

Course 1: Rocket Salad

Course 2: Soup du Jour

Course 3: Quinoa Barley Chili

6. Water Street Brewing Co.

Course 1: Blackberry Salad

Course 2: Corn Chips (with butternut squash salsa)

Course 3: Apple Cider Chicken

7. Number 5 Restaurant

Course 1: Apple Pecan Salad

Course 2: Stuffed Peppers

Course 3: Homemade Ice Cream Sandwich

8. Zona & Co. Grille

Course 1: Black Bean Soup

Course 2: Ancho Citrus Grilled Fish Tacos

Course 3: Rice Pudding

9. The Loft at 99

Course 1: Kale Caesar

Course 2: Grilled Salmon and Beefsteak Tomatoes

Course 3: Gorgonzola and Walnut Stuffed Apples

10. The River Bistro

Course 1: Spinach Salad

Course 2: Pan-Seared Salmon

Course 3: Warm Apple Turnover à la Mode

Rebecca Porath | *Release*

Little Venice

Alexandra Wolff | *Release*

It’s everyone’s favorite week (or 10 days, rather) here in good old Binghamton ... Restaurant Week! That’s right, it’s time to ditch the ramen noodles, the Night Owl burgers and the failed homemade concoctions for a great-value lunch or dinner at one of the local restaurants. Personally, this is one of my favorite things about living in Binghamton, and I think every student should head out and explore the local cuisine.

Don’t know where to start? Everyone loves Italian, so head over to Little Venice Restaurant. Little Venice is one of the best restaurants Binghamton has to offer, and it all comes down to one thing: home cooking. The pasta is juicy and made on-site. The tomato sauce is hearty,

and you’ll find yourself licking the plate just to savor every morsel of it. The gelato is creamy and comes in so many varieties, you won’t know what to do.

Opening the door to Little Venice, you’ll nearly fall over from the smell of the food being cooked in the kitchen. The welcoming atmosphere and the friendly staff will usher you to a table as you admire the paintings on the wall. If you weren’t starving already, you’ll feel your stomach start to growl as you glance at the plate of everyone you pass, trying to scope out what dish looks the best.

From my experience, you can’t go wrong.

Zachery Szkolnik, a senior majoring in philosophy, politics and law, is also a big fan of Little Venice.

“I really liked both my meal and the atmosphere of Little Venice

because it really seemed to be truly authentic ... Everything was clearly handmade and had taken time to prepare, and I really enjoyed it because of that,” Szkolnik said.

For my appetizer, I got the bruschetta, which was prepared traditionally with olive oil, garlic and tomato. The portion was very generous, and I had to make sure to save room for the main course. For my entree, I chose eggplant parmigiana. I’m not a huge fan of eggplant, but I wanted to try it because it was a dish I don’t usually have. And from all the reviews I had heard by word-of-mouth, if I was ever going to enjoy eggplant, it would be here.

Let’s just say I’m very glad I took the risk. The ratio of sauce-to-cheese-to-eggplant was well-balanced, and I loved that it came with a side of pasta because I really wanted to try

the famous homemade pasta I had heard so much about. I really got the best of both worlds.

Elizabeth Eng, a senior majoring in psychology, loved the food as well.

“My favorite part was definitely the homemade pasta. It was so fresh and delicious!” Eng said.

For dessert (not that I had room for much of it), I chose the gelato, which was rich, creamy and fresh. With nearly 10 flavors — including vanilla caramel brownie fudge, cappuccino and mint chip — you have choices.

Freshmen, head down to Chenango Street and bring your friends for great, first-semester memories. Seniors, if you haven’t been, put this one on your bucket list! When you get tired of your own food and miss a quality meal, this is the place to be.