

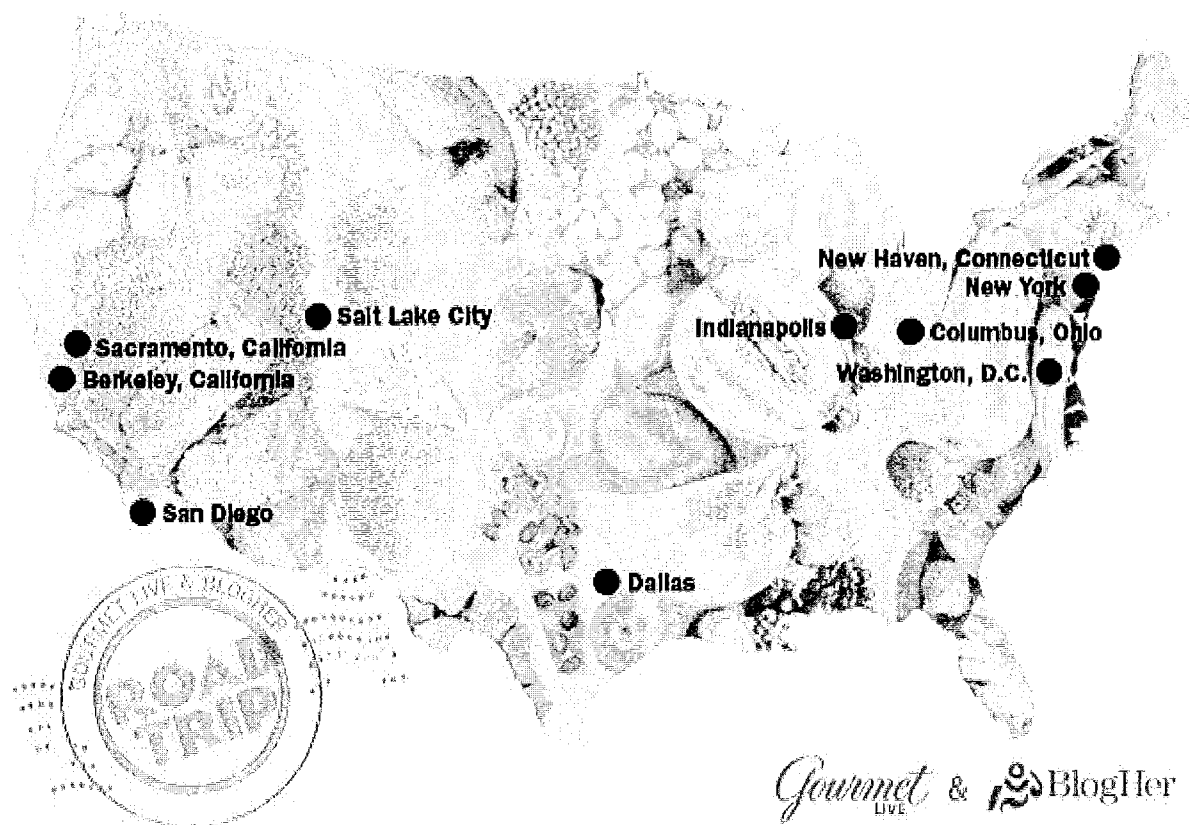
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ROAD TRIP: TOP 10 HEALTHY RESTAURANTS

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As part of our monthly collaboration with BlogHer, we're celebrating the start of 2012 with the bloggers' top 10 healthy restaurants from coast to coast



Berkeley, California: Gather

Vegetarian restaurants in Berkeley might once have signaled a dreary approach to eating—one that focused on health above taste—but Gather shows us just how much veggie-centric cuisine has grown up. Their menu isn't strictly vegetarian, yet all of their dishes highlight beautiful, seasonal produce in a way that lets the ingredients speak for themselves. The menu changes frequently, but their unique pizzas are always top-

notch, and the salads are beautifully composed and balanced. This is food that shows that eating for health doesn't have to mean leaving behind taste or joy in eating, and in fact, it can bring a new appreciation for real, whole, healthy foods.



— Laura, **Kitchen Illiterate**

Columbus, Ohio: Northstar Café

Healthy eaters, whether vegan, vegetarian, or seekers of all-natural whole foods, will find delicious dishes at the Northstar Café, a local mini-chain with three locations in Columbus. The star of the Northstar menu is the burger, made with black beans, brown rice, and beets—a veggie burger never tasted so indulgent or so similar to the real deal. Opt for a Buddha bowl, loaded with bright Asian vegetables in a peanut sauce with brown rice and tofu, or choose their chicken and avocado sandwich topped with roasted red peppers. And don't miss Northstar's seasonal salads (an amazing winter root vegetable salad is currently on offer), daily soups, and fresh juices like the Shooting Star, made with oranges, carrots, lemon, and ginger.



— Jessica, **Sweet Peas and Pumpkins**

Dallas: Cosmic Café

The Cosmic Café is a funky little vegetarian café in Dallas, serving not only wonderful traditional Mediterranean fare like hummus and dahl but also fresh takes on Southwest-inspired dishes, such as spinach enchiladas or the Taco Trinity (three soft tacos filled with onions, mushrooms, zucchini, bell peppers, and Cheddar). My personal favorite is the Portobella Trance, which combines portobella mushrooms with garlic, spinach, and onions in a cream cheese sauce served atop naan. The Cosmic Café is a great place to have an easygoing, healthy lunch with friends and it even offers yoga and meditation classes upstairs.



— Kelly, **The Meaning of Pie**

Indianapolis: Café Patachou

Since I moved to Indianapolis two and a half years ago, Café Patachou has been one of my favorite restaurants. I love that they pride themselves on fresh, local, and often organic ingredients, which is what I look for in choosing healthy places to dine. Some of my favorite dishes include their broken yolk avocado sandwich (a breakfast treat), any of their salads (including the Green Goddess), the turkey chili, and the house-specialty chicken salad. Café Patachou is known as a "Student Union for Adults" that offers not only healthy fare but also self-serve coffee along with an energetic and attentive waitstaff.



— Kim, **Recipes to Run On**

New Haven, Connecticut: Miya's Sushi

As a vegan, I am always on the lookout for restaurants that can accommodate my dietary needs and one of my favorites is Miya's Sushi. Known for their sustainable sushi, Miya's features a huge menu of creative vegetarian offerings, like the Kiss the Smiling Piggie roll (sweet potato tempura, mango chutney, and pine nuts), the Rikki Tikki roll (roasted garlic, mushroom, cauliflower, Chinese black beans, scallions, hot peppers, and pine nuts), and the Warm Grapes Falling on a Happy Head (a grape leaf wrapped around eggplant, avocado, pickled radish, scallions, and hot peppers). Miya's cooks with ingredients that are natural and local when in season, and they also make their own sake and pickled ginger.



— Mary, Well on Wheels

New York: Candle 79

Candle 79 is an inviting restaurant on the city's Upper East Side that proves that eating vegan is easy, healthy, and delicious—and can be special. I take my nonvegan friends there to dazzle them with healthful, gorgeous meals, and my nonvegan husband and I even enjoyed a festive, healthy vegan Thanksgiving Dinner at Candle 79 this year. The seasonal, healthy menu includes raw and cooked dishes ranging from an incredible grilled kale salad to my all-time favorite dish, seitan piccata.



— JL, JL Goes Vegan

Sacramento, California: Café Capricho

Café Capricho is an unpretentious eatery in an older residential area that nips the heels of downtown Sacramento. Chef proprietor Marina Winchester is a stickler about fresh ingredients, and she prepares almost everything herself using a wide variety of unassuming spices (there are no canned sauces, heaps of lard, or artificial ingredients in sight). The Mexican-American café specializes in a variety of enchiladas, and two of my favorites are the butternut squash and poblano versions, which Marina prepares by sprouting the almonds for the poblano sauce; and the creamy spinach (without cream) and shrimp enchiladas, which are wrapped and then topped with a piquant green sauce and dollops of goat cheese. The Strand's salad, made with butter lettuce, fennel, avocado, strawberries, sunflower seeds, and citrus vinaigrette, refreshes me when weary.



— Lynn, Sacatomato

Salt Lake City: Piñon Market and Café

More than just deli-style lunches, Piñon Market and Café serves up seasonally fresh and healthy takeout dinners, all made with gusto by chef and owner Victoria Topham. The café's take-home meals feature a favorable ratio of carbs, proteins, and fats to help maintain a well-balanced diet, including dishes such as Spanish vegetable roulade, pan-seared halibut, and pork tenderloin medallions with apricot chutney. The café's innovative dishes appease the cook in me while satisfying my need for efficiency after a long, hectic day.



— Becky, **Vintage Mixer**

San Diego: Rancho's Cocina North Park

Yes, healthy Mexican food does exist, and Rancho's consistently delivers with a range of fresh seafood options featuring everything from lobster burritos to grilled salmon tacos, plus a variety of vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options as well. The waitstaff is extremely knowledgeable about diet restrictions and the house-made salsa and chips and soy vegan chorizo tacos are consistently excellent. The newly renovated exterior lends additional charm and sidewalk seating to the Frida Kahlo-inspired interior.



— Stephanie, **The Recipe Renovator**

Washington, D.C.: Founding Farmers

Founding Farmers is one of my favorite restaurants because they offer a delicious variety of seasonal foods and are committed to getting their ingredients from local farmers whenever possible. The restaurant serves a popcorn of the day, with such flavors as spicy buffalo, savory rosemary, and sweet cinnamon sugar. You'll also find healthy options like salmon, flatbreads, and fresh salads, but my favorite dish is the roasted vegetable and avocado sandwich, which comes with creamy goat cheese, eggplant, and peppers.



— Jessica, **Jess Runs**

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The 10 Most Allergy-Friendly Restaurant Chains

The Huffington Post | By Sarah Klein (sarah-klein/) ([use @sarklein on Twitter](https://twitter.com/sarklein))

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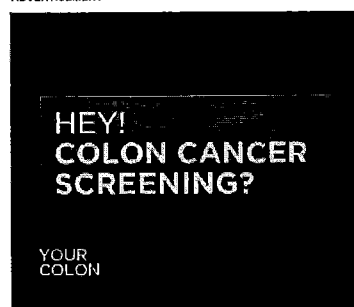
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Thanks to growing awareness of and willingness to accommodate a wide variety of dietary restrictions and sensitivities, [navigating a restaurant menu when you have food allergies](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/14/food-allergies-eating-out_n_4745796.html) (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/14/food-allergies-eating-out_n_4745796.html) is only getting easier.

To help allergic diners make more informed decisions, [AllergyEats](http://www.allergyeats.com/) (<http://www.allergyeats.com/>), an online guide to allergy-friendly restaurants, has released its annual ranking of chain restaurants that best serve customers with food allergies.

"These chains have demonstrated a superior willingness and ability to accommodate guests with food allergies, and we congratulate them for earning a place on this esteemed, well-respected list," Paul Antico, founder and CEO of AllergyEats, [said in a statement](http://www.allergyeats.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/AllergyEats-Release-Best-Rated-Restaurants-FINAL-) (<http://www.allergyeats.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/AllergyEats-Release-Best-Rated-Restaurants-FINAL->

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[150223.pdf](#). "The establishments on our list have proven themselves to have best-in-class food allergy procedures & protocols, training and knowledge, receiving high overall ratings and positive feedback from food-allergic diners that have comfortably eaten at their restaurants."

The rankings are calculated based on feedback from AllergyEats website and app users. AllergyEats lists over 750,000 restaurants, and the top 10 have been categorized by size: Large chains have 50 or more restaurants, while small chains have under 50.

Aside from being welcoming to allergic diners, offering allergy-friendly options is also a smart business move, Antico said. "When restaurants accommodate food-allergic guests, they experience increased customers, sales, loyalty and profits," he said. "We encourage other restaurants to study and replicate these establishments' successful food allergy protocols, as we expect the trend toward greater allergy-friendliness in the restaurant industry to continue to grow."

Here are the top 10 choices, according to AllergyEats (<http://www.allergyeats.com/>).

Large: Chipotle Mexican Grill



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Users gave Chipotle a 4.41 rating out of five stars.

Large: P.F. Chang's



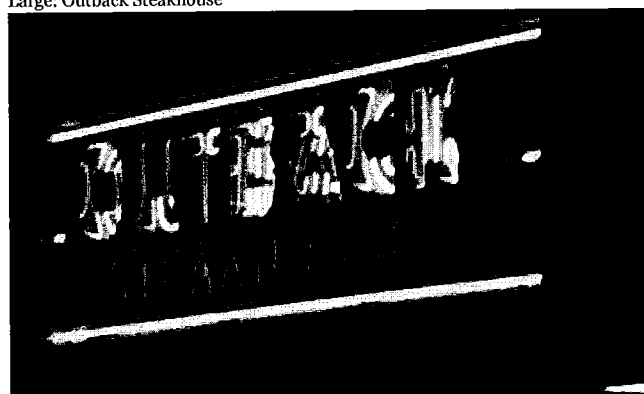
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Users gave P.F. Chang's a 4.39 rating.

Large: Red Robin



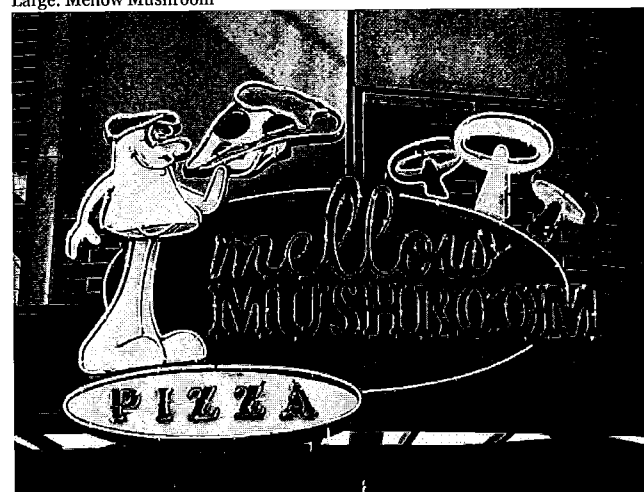
Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/95030217@No8/9003652735/>)
 Users gave Red Robin a 4.39 rating.

Large: Outback Steakhouse



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 Users gave Outback Steakhouse a 4.32 rating.

Large: Mellow Mushroom



Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/29009620@No7/5519987663/>)
 Users gave Mellow Mushroom a 4.29 rating.

Small: Maggiano's Little Italy

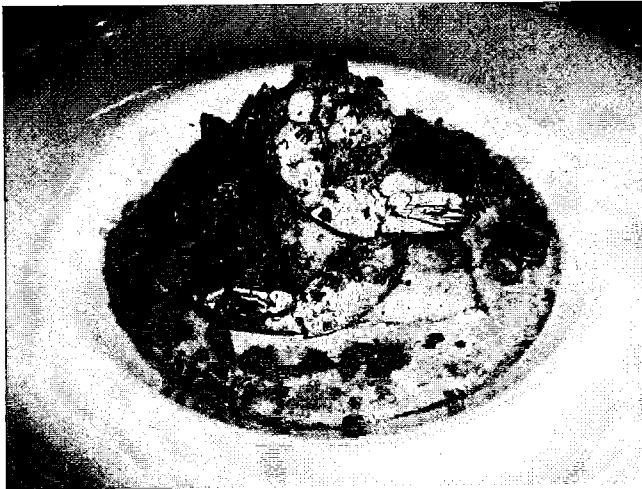
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Users gave Maggiano's a 4.74 rating.

Small: Burtons Grill



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Users gave Burtons a 4.69 rating.

Small: Legal Sea Foods



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(<http://www.flickr.com/photos/66404974@N00/5304203415>)
Users gave Legal Sea Foods a 4.64 rating.

Small: Joe's American Bar & Grill



Thomas Hawk/Flickr

Users gave Joe's American Bar & Grill a 4.63 rating.

Small: Not Your Average Joe's



Facebook.com/notyouraveragejoes

Users gave Not Your Average Joe's a 4.63 rating.

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