

eating out the healthy way

We've all been there before. You start a strict diet and then attend a social gathering to find nothing but deep-fried hors d'oeuvres. Never fear as help is at hand.

FOR most of us, living and working in the inner city means networking functions, dinner parties and lots of eating out.

If you've put a new year's resolution in place to get smarter about what you eat and are scared to tackle the social outing or restaurant date for fear of breaking your pact, dietician Desi Carlos, of Tree of Life Nutrition Services at the Gabba, has some sensible eating tips to offer.

"Most of us eat out two or three times a week – it's just a sign of the times," she says. "Eating healthy while out can still be enjoyable."

"Plan ahead and try to choose restaurants that serve a wide variety of foods. You can also have a light snack before you go out to help satisfy your hunger.

"Try to limit alcohol to one or two glasses and choose low-joule soft drinks, water or soda water as beverages. Not only

can you take the dedicated driver's seat with confidence, you can avoid any nasty hangovers and remember all the great conversation at the table."

A Coorparoo resident, Desi graduated from QUT in 1989 as a clinical dietician and has since worked as a locum at the PA and Princes Charles hospitals, and on the Gold Coast.

She says two major events in the early '90s led to the creation of Tree of Life, which now has satellite practices at Morningside, Carina and Mt Gravatt among others – the death of her sister to lupus and a Federal Government grant.

"We are the second fattest nation in the world," she says. "(At Tree of Life) we try to offer real solutions. We really listen, we set realistic goals and make changes for life."

Tree of Life Nutrition Services is at 40 Annerley Rd, Gabba. Phone 3891 6199. 

DESI'S ADVICE FOR EATING OUT



Hors d'oeuvres

- Choose vegetables (eg. carrot and celery sticks)
- Try salsa/tomato-based dips instead of creamy dips
- Try pretzels or rice crackers instead of potato crisps
- Mix drinks with low-joule soft drinks or soda water
- Try to stand away from the food table to help resist temptation
- Minimise indulging in fried and pastry foods

Entrees

- Choose vegetable, minestrone or tomato-based soups and avoid any cream or butter and flour-based varieties
- Salads are a good choice. You can always ask for dressing to be served on the side
- Try a small serve of pasta in tomato-based sauce
- Avoid foods that are either fried or served with lashings of butter or margarine. Herb and garlic breads are very high in fat

- Octopus, prawns, squid, oysters, lobster, crab and mussels can also be good choices – char-grilled or fresh

Main meals

- Choose grilled, poached or steamed meats
- Choose pasta with neapolitana, marinara or vegetable-based sauces
- Choose barbecue meats served with fresh salad and bread
- Ask for the extras – cream sauces, butters, gravy and dressings – to be served on the side or not at all
- Steamed or stir-fried vegetables and salads are fantastic accompaniments

Desserts

- Fresh fruits are the best choices but skip the cream if possible
- Choose fruit sorbets or gelati
- Try a small serve of pavlova or meringue with fresh fruit salad but minus the cream
- Avoid cream and chocolate-based desserts