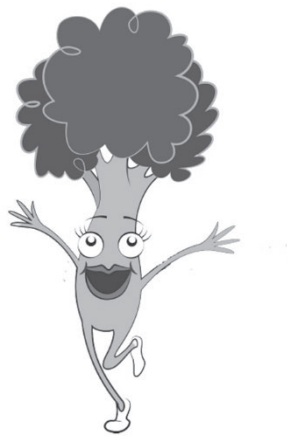


Feeling Good:

Living Low Toxin in Community and Everyday Life



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Living Low Toxin in Community and Everyday Life.
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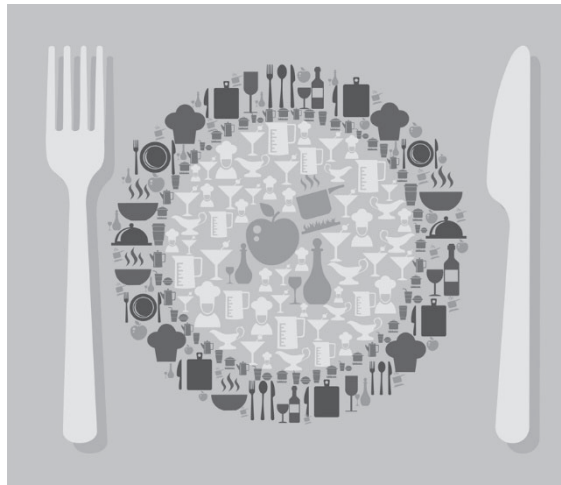


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Chapter 7 - Eating Healthy Out in Restaurants



THE BIG TAKEAWAYS ON EATING OUT IN RESTAURANTS:⁴¹

- Learning about what foods my body was sensitive to, and then avoiding them, was my first big step back to a world without pain.
- Whether or not you have sensitivities of your own that you avoid (see my chapter on sensitivities in my first book for a full explanation), or you have autoimmune disease, or you are a cancer survivor, or you have heart disease or even if you are healthy or a parent who wants to feed her children healthy food, understanding restaurants and how to eat out healthy is also important for you.
- I have 15 food sensitivities, so to start, I have printed a business card with all my sensitivities. (Vista Print. My picture is on it so that the waiter remembers who gave it to him.) These are foods

that make me have a “flare,” which in autoimmune terms means I react to them, and they make me gain a lot of weight overnight. They used to also bring me horrific pain.

- I check out menus online before we head out to any restaurant, and then I call them before we go to make sure I am safe.
- I do my research before I choose a restaurant; first, I get to know the owner over the phone, and then I am not afraid to ask for what I want.
- Keywords to look for when researching for a restaurant:

- Organic
- Farm to Table
- Vegan, but sometimes those are problematic because Soy is a sensitivity. (and 95% GMO)
- Happycow.net Happy Cow is a website that allows you to find vegan and vegetarian restaurants and health food stores across the world.
- Grass-Fed/ Pastured
- Wild fish

- See my additional tips to determine a restaurant so you can eat healthily.
- You don’t want to be ravenous. You will make poor food choices, so eat something small ahead of going out.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for exactly what you want. Be polite but

be forceful.

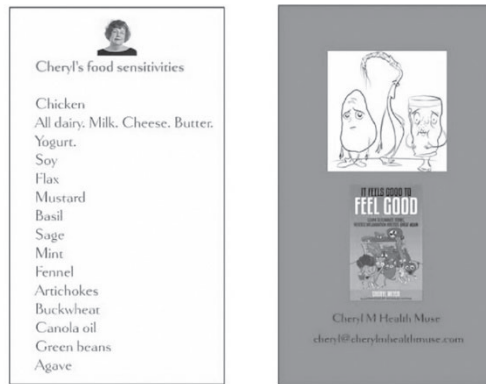
Learning how to eat out at restaurants has been an important skill for me to relearn. I will admit, I am hard to feed. I have 15 food sensitivities and won't eat ingredients that I know to be harmful to my body. Eating out is easiest when it is just John and me, and we get to control where we are going to eat. But we are both very social, so eating out with friends has also been an important skill to learn.

Learning about what foods my body is sensitive to, and then avoiding those foods, was my first big step back to a world without pain. So, I will always need to avoid these foods even when we eat out at all restaurants. I call my sensitivities my kryptonite, and I avoid them like the plague.

So why is this chapter important for everyone else to read?

Whether or not you have sensitivities of your own that you avoid (see my chapter on sensitivities in my first book for a full explanation)⁴², or you have autoimmune disease, or you are a cancer survivor, or you have heart disease or even if you are healthy or a parent who wants to feed her children healthy food, understanding restaurants and how to eat out healthy is also important for you.

I have 15 food sensitivities, so to start, I have printed a business card with all my sensitivities. These are foods that make me have a "flare," which in autoimmune terms means I react to them, and they make me gain a lot of weight overnight (water weight-inflammation). Until recently, the flare also was accompanied by pain in my joints and muscles. The "flare" is inflammation. Now that I have cleaned up what I put into my body and healed my leaky gut, I no longer get the pain, but I still don't want the flare, so I am very careful what I eat no matter where I am. This is what my card looks like⁴³:



This is probably the single smartest thing that I have done since I got autoimmune disease. I have so many sensitivities, sometimes I don't even remember to tell someone what they are, so I keep these in my purse in a separate business card holder and then hand them out when I need to. (These cards save the waiter from running back and forth from the kitchen to me.)

If you want to eat healthily, even if you don't have sensitivities, I recommend you print a card with things you truly want to avoid. It might be agave and canola oil for you, or things that are GMO, whatever it is, restaurants will react to a printed list and steer you away from unhealthy ingredients on your card.

When I hand these out in a restaurant or to a friend, I get a very positive reaction. Before I had the cards, I was sending the waiter back and forth to the kitchen as I remembered things, so this helps a lot.

As I have shared, I cook 90% of what John and I eat. That way, I KNOW what has gone into my food and its self-defense to make our food myself.

John has his own set of 13 sensitivities.

Despite all our restrictions, John and I are Foodies, and we love to eat good clean food.

I like to eat out as much as the next gal, so I want to share with you how we do that. This is especially tricky since neither of us eats the "SAD" any longer, which is the Standard American Diet⁴⁴. (And it is a very sad diet and the way that most of America eats and the SAD is why I believe chronic illness is on the rise.)

To start, we live in Los Angeles, and we will travel for food. We go 40 miles north to Simi Valley to get a great fish dinner from our fishmonger (Marilyn's Mediterranean Kitchen) that sells us our fresh fish at our local farmer's market. We know she buys her vegetables organic from our farmer's market, and we trust that her "wild" fish is wild. Her family has been in the fish business for 30 years, and she knows her fish. If we do eat farmed fish from her, it is because we know it is sustainably farmed in the ocean without all the hormones and fake substances. We trust her.

Or, we might drive 1 hour across town to Venice to a vegan restaurant (Plant and Wine) that makes the most visibly beautiful meals I have ever seen.

There is a restaurant in Toluca Lake (Aeirloom Bakery) close to my Functional MD's office where I go for breakfast and lunch (closed for dinner). It is an organic bakery and does everything right. They use pastured eggs and bison and grass-fed, grass-finished beef and organic vegetables, and organic bakery goods. The baker will even bake me a pie at the holidays with ghee instead of butter and with maple syrup for the sugar and half the amount of sweet that the recipe calls for. These are standbys where I know I can get a delicious meal and not react. There is also a fantastic vegan restaurant in Studio City called Sun Café, which we enjoy, and it's the restaurant where we get takeout for guests at the Hollywood Bowl. (It is considered one of the top 10 restaurants in LA.) Many of their offerings are non-soy. All their food is clean and delicious.

Pasadena, close by, has a couple of restaurants I can enjoy carefully. I take my olive oil to have a salad at one because they use organic canola oil, which I do NOT want in my body⁴⁵. They carry organic salads and grass-fed beef, so only the oil there is an issue. (Tender Greens)

There is also a vegan restaurant where there are a couple of dishes without Soy that I can eat. (Sage Plant-Based Bistro). Before I discovered that artichokes were a sensitivity for me, I used to order their artichoke appetizer and it is to die for.

I check all this out online before we head out to any restaurant, and I call them to make sure I am safe. We are also lucky to have a True Foods restaurant, which is Dr. Andrew Weil's restaurant, and there are offerings there that I can

enjoy. His restaurant is beautiful, and his food is always delicious and clean.

We were given a gift certificate for a beautiful restaurant in South Pasadena, and I called the chef/owner ahead of time; he made sure that he could feed me organic and pastured meats, and he was thrilled to do it. We had a lovely meal there. I just had to give him a 24-hour warning that we were coming.

In Sedona, AZ, there are twelve restaurants that I can walk into right off the street, where the produce is organic, and farm to table and the meats are pastured. This doesn't mean that I can eat everything on their menus, but I can eat something very enjoyable at these establishments, and it is a pleasure to go out to eat there. My choices in Sedona range from organic vegan pizza⁴⁶ to healthy Mexican⁴⁷, to a new burger joint⁴⁸ close to where we live with organic buns and pastured beef. There is a restaurateur in the town named Lisa Dahl, and she has five restaurants⁴⁹ now where I can find something to eat that is clean. Her restaurants are also quite lovely, so she makes eating out something special. There is also a vegan restaurant⁵⁰ in town with all organic offerings and a beautiful garden in the back for dining. Feeding me in Sedona is easy, which is one of the reasons I am so happy we bought our second home there.

Mago, which is the Dao retreat outside of Sedona, is all organic and pescatarian, fish.

For very special occasions in Sedona, we go to the Enchantment Resort⁵¹. We are surrounded by red rocks there, that I feel I could almost touch from my table, and the food is farm to table and pastured. I had a beautiful meal there. We have not tried L'Auberge de Sedona yet, and although I could not order directly off their menu, I am sure that if I called ahead since they are farm to table, they could accommodate me.

The thing all the food above has in common is that I do my research; first, I get to know the owner over the phone, and I am not afraid to ask for what I want.

Now the question becomes, what do we do to scout out someplace new, or that is in a location where we haven't been before? These are the tips that I think will be most useful to you.

It starts with research.

Before I choose a restaurant, I research to see where I think I might be able to eat out. I am not shy about what I need and let everyone know this is for my health.

So, where to begin? The first thing that I Google are organic restaurants. Depending upon what comes up, I then check them out one by one. Often, they are NOT organic, or there is nothing to eat at that restaurant, so next, I google Healthy Food. Each step of the way, I look at the menus and see if there are things that I can eat at that restaurant. As I go, I make a list of possibilities.

Keywords I am looking for:

Organic
Farm to Table
Vegan, but sometimes those are problematic because Soy is a sensitivity. (and 95% GMO) and many vegan restaurants are also heavily soy.
HappyCow.net Happy Cow is a website that allows you to find vegan and vegetarian restaurants and health food stores across the world.
Grass-Fed/ Pastured
Wild fish

I realize just because restaurants pop up in any of these categories; my research is not finished. Organic and Farm to Table are my best bet, but now I look at menus.

Tips when you are researching restaurants:

- Ask to speak with the chef, the owner, or the manager. Ask where the restaurant buys its produce.
- Ask what is made ahead and what is made to order. You can get a chef to change made to order items.
- Ask if they have any organic or grass-fed meat options.
- What are their healthiest dishes? It may or may not be something that you want to eat, but it's a great place to start.
- Ask what whole foods are available. This way, you know what you can order where they haven't added any unhealthy ingredients.
- Ask for steamed, poached, or roasted preparation
- Ask for wild-caught, pastured, organic, sustainable, locally sourced, or

farm to table

- Don't be shy about asking if you can order "off" the menu. Let them know you will be requesting something simple and easy to make but clean. Explain that you eat very healthy. I share that I have autoimmune disease and sensitivities.
- I am not gluten sensitive. If you are, then you need to be asking about that too. I know that gluten sometimes is greater than just wheat, so learn about the cross sensitivities and add them to your list to inquire about.

Organic

If I can get an organic salad at the restaurant, I then call and ask about oils. Many restaurants use a canola/olive oil blend. 80% of canola oil is GMO. However, even if the canola oil is organic, it is not good for your health.⁵² I read that the Canadians named it Canola because it comes from Canada and rhymes with Granola to make people think it is healthy. Read the note below. I call the restaurant and ask what they use. If it is a blend, then I take my olive oil in a small container or bottle. If I am in a restaurant and have not asked ahead of time, I ask to see the bottle. Remember, real olive oil has a greenish tint. The blends do not. In the worst-case scenario, I ask for lemon wedges and eat my salad with fresh lemon.

Farm to Table

These restaurants are usually a safe bet that there will be things I can eat. I still peruse the menu and, if necessary, call ahead and ask to speak to the owner or the chef.

Once we have chosen a restaurant, when we arrive, I give my sensitivity card to the waiter. I put my photo on it so that when he returns from the kitchen, he remembers who I am. The waiter will come and comment on what they have that might be ok, and since restaurants don't want a problem with allergies, they are especially careful.

Just a note: sometimes, they are overly cautious. John and I went to a Nobu in San Diego because I can always eat sashimi. I knew Nobu when we were both

young, and he was starting out. I have enjoyed watching his amazing success. Well, they sent the chef to me to make sure that I wouldn't die if I came in contact with Soy. I assured them it was a sensitivity, not an allergy. (An allergy can kill. Where a sensitivity is a slow burn.) Then they sent the assistant manager over to talk to me - the same conversation. Finally, the manager approached me to tell me they couldn't feed me. Good grief, I pointed out they are a fish restaurant; of course, they could feed me. He still hesitated, so I pulled my "I know Nobu card." In the end, I had a marvelous dish that was soy-free and just wonderful. You must be pushy about what you want in both directions.

Sushi

Sushi is always a possibility, but I carry my non-soy soy sauce by Oceans Halo. It's not as good as soy sauce, but it doesn't have soy in it, which I react hostility to, so it works for me. It's also not GMO. When I eat out for sushi, I try for brown rice in my rolls, and then the fish. I don't eat things with cream cheese. I avoid the mayo, again usually made with Soy. I don't eat edamame. (GMO) or the miso (GMO). I avoid California roll unless it is made with real crab. The fake crab is not healthy for you. Sushi and sashimi are good choices.

"Do not order the seaweed salad, unless you know it does not contain food coloring. Food coloring is added to make that bright green color, as are additional harmful preservatives. Yellow #5 has the strongest link to severe allergic reactions, and Blue #1 has caused brain cancer in lab animals."⁵³

How to Eat Healthy at Chinese Restaurants

- Ask for brown rice
- Ask for beef and broccoli with steamed veggies. Carrots are good, snow peas are good, without the sauce
- If you can eat chicken, then that is a good choice with the veggies too.
- Buddha's Feast with brown rice
- Ask what they can make for you without soy sauce.
- Ask if they use MSG in their food, and if they do, ask if they can make something without MSG.
- Carry your Dirty Dozen list with you at all times and avoid veggies on the list in your restaurant food.

We have a Chinese restaurant close that has soup dumplings. I eat those, and they are yummy. They also have many veggies which we order and are yummy. My most favorite thing is steamed dumplings. If they can make them without Soy, I go for it. I eat them with white rice wine vinegar. They are a treat. This restaurant does not use msg in their cooking. Ask.

Mediterranean

Mediterranean restaurants are usually a good bet because they have lamb and sheep eat grass. They also have hummus, which I can eat, and they have an eggplant dip that I can usually eat. Still important to ask what ingredients go into it. We recently went to one Mediterranean restaurant, and the eggplant dip had feta in it. Different countries call the eggplant dip different things. Sometimes it is called moutabel; sometimes, it is called Babaganoosh. SHIRAZI salad and tabbouleh are also good choices.

Greek salad full of fresh spinach, grilled chicken, or calamari with lots of fresh lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil drizzled on top. (I don't eat the chicken since I am sensitive to it, but you can. Chicken is an unusual sensitivity. I substitute calamari or shrimp if available.) If I'm really hungry, I order more grilled vegetables on the side. Since I am sensitive to dairy, I have them remove any feta. If I am going from home, I take a small glass container with my vegan feta crumbles in it to add to the restaurant dishes.

I recently had quail in a Mediterranean restaurant. They also offered frog legs. Both were done in olive oil, so they were both good choices. I wasn't crazy about the taste, but they were both "clean."

They also had grilled cauliflower on the menu, which reviews say is wonderful. That is something to try on another visit. Their rice was made with vegetable broth and was amazing.

Perk up grilled calamari, salmon, shrimp, or even a grilled whole fish with freshly squeezed lemon juice. Common fishes available in Mediterranean restaurants are Atlantic Salmon and Cod. Both are farmed and raised disgustingly, so I do not eat either.

"Souvlaki, plural souvlakia, is a popular Greek fast food consisting of small pieces

of meat and sometimes vegetables grilled on a skewer. It is usually eaten straight off the skewer while still hot.”⁵⁴ Souvlaki is another good choice.

Leg of lamb or lamb chops are a good choice.

Stay away from sauces.

You can usually find chicken, lamb, fresh fish, and shrimp dishes at a Mediterranean restaurant.

Mexican

A little harder to find healthy selections. There is a Mexican restaurant in Sedona that uses grass-fed beef, so I enjoy their Mexican food a lot. This Mexican restaurant is the exception to the rule. In other Mexican restaurants, a Fajita would be one of the better choices. Skip the sour cream and eat the guacamole instead. Ask for extra roasted veggies. I would skip the meat unless it is pastured. This is a time that I would eat beans for my protein. If you are dairy sensitive, you want to avoid the cheese. Ceviche is also a possibility in a Mexican restaurant.

Italian

A nice green salad with lots of roasted veggies would be a great start.

Pasta Fagioli is a good choice. I would need to ask if the soup base was chicken, at which point I would avoid it.

Fresh fish or seafood cooked in olive oil is a lovely entrée. You would want it to be wild fish or not fish that is farmed in chemicals.

Ask if the pasta is organic. Italian pasta does not have glyphosate in it.

Pasta Primavera good choice.

Pasta with marinara sauce is good. But the tomatoes are probably GMO. No cheese for me. If the cheese is imported, it will be without hormones, so go for it.

Di Mare - Shelled clams, black tiger shrimp, fresh garlic, Roma tomatoes, angel hair pasta, served in an olive oil white wine sauce. This is a possibility to ask the

waiter about.

Ask for plain Italian pasta drizzled with olive oil, salt, pepper, and topped with steamed veggies.

Ask for a cheese-free pizza loaded with vegetables

I have found a wonderful vegan cheese with a strong parmesan flavor by VioLife. I have taken it with me to eat out. I shred it ahead of time and take it in a small jar.

Seafood

Unless it is a fine restaurant, most seafood has now been corrupted with chemicals. I do not eat Atlantic or Scottish salmon, which is farmed. The shrimp would be a better choice. They could also be farmed. Ask where they are sourced. You want them sourced in the Gulf of Mexico. I love Petrale Sole. Any wild fish is fabulous, like wild salmon or wild halibut. We love boiled crab type restaurants where they put the crab pieces right on the butcher paper in front of me. Eat vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots that are not on the dirty dozen list.

Note - If I am with a group of people, it helps if I have done my research ahead of time, and I then lead the group to a restaurant that I can eat at that they will enjoy too.

How to order food at a restaurant in general:

Once you are at the restaurant, you want to make sure you get a healthy meal.

Make sure you are not overly hungry. In my travel chapter (Chapter 12), I have listed travel food to have available to stave off that uncontrollable hunger feeling. Have a snack before you go out to dinner that is healthy, like an organic apple, and take the edge off before you even walk in the door.

You don't want to be ravenous. You will make poor food choices, so eat something small ahead of going out.

Don't be afraid to ask for exactly what you want. This is especially important if you haven't had a chance to call ahead.

Ask all the questions that you need to have answered about sourcing and preparation. I have found that restaurants will go out of their way to make me happy. Is it uncomfortable? A little at first, but it's your responsibility to know what you're putting into your body and your waiter's responsibility to know what goes into the food they're serving. The more you ask, the easier it gets, I promise!

I start by handing the waiter my card. I send him to the kitchen and ask him for the chef's recommendations.

Focus on eating REAL FOOD. Many restaurants now buy their food in baggies, and they warm up the food and arrange it on your plate. That food tends to be saucy and loaded with chemicals. Keep it simple. I have even carried ghee in a small jar in my handbag to whip out and use on steamed veggies. Ghee is butter that has had the milk solids removed, so there is no whey or casein in it, which is what I am sensitive to in dairy. Without the milk solids, it is very stable and doesn't spoil, so it travels well. And ghee is a healthy oil for autoimmune diseases.

Always ask if the soup is made from scratch. Avoid soups that use a pre-made base or even worse are straight out of a can. Pre-made bases can be full of MSG, loaded with salt and other artificial ingredients. In my case, I also ask if the base is chicken broth. Zoot, I can't go near chicken, since it has become a sensitivity.

Set your mind to stick to the principle learned from Blue Zones that you only want to eat until you are 80% full. You will be much better off, and your body will be happy. The easiest way to do that is to eat until you are just at the line of no longer being hungry. If you eat until your brain recognizes you are full, you probably have overeaten.

Instead of bread, ask the waiter for raw cut up veggies to start the meal. You don't need a dip, but it helps to have something crunchy to munch on.

Ask for water right away and get lemon to put into your water. Not all restaurants will automatically bring you water now unless you ask.

Once you know what the restaurant chef recommends for you to eat, ask for simple food preparation. Grilled or steamed preparation is great. Poached is

also a good choice for fish whenever possible or grilled. Steamed, baked, roasted, braised, broiled, and seared are all good preparation methods.

Avoid any menu description that uses the words creamy, breaded, crisp, sauced, or stuffed as they are likely loaded with saturated fats. Other “beware of” words include buttery, sautéed, pan-fried, au gratin, Thermidor, Newburg, Parmesan, cheese sauce, scalloped, and au lait, à la mode, or *au Fromage* (with milk, ice cream, or cheese). Also beware of pan-fried, crispy, dipped, scalloped, breaded, creamed, and alfredo as they are not healthy cooking methods for you to eat.

Ask for olive oil to use on your food, but again ask to see the bottle to make sure it is truly olive oil. Nine times out of 10, it is a canola/olive combo 90/10, so make sure you know what you are using. Again, real olive oil is a green-tinged oil. I often carry my own in a small bottle, double bagged.

Instead of starches, ask for double veggies. I hesitate to eat even a baked potato out because of the 39 pesticides used on a conventional potato. I try to avoid the veggies on the Dirty Dozen (Strawberries, Spinach, Kale, Nectarines, Apples, Grapes, Peaches, Pears, Tomatoes, Celery, Potatoes, All Peppers, Cherry Tomatoes, Lettuce, Cucumbers, Blueberries, Plums) or the GMO list (Corn, Soy, Sugar (refined sugar (beets)), Papayas (from Hawaii), Canola).

Avoid sauces, dressings, and dips. These are usually laden with hidden sugars, unhealthy oils, gluten, and dairy.

Stick to reasonable portion sizes. If your plate has too much food on it, get a takeout box right away and put the extra food aside where you won't fiddle with it and end up eating it. (My father was one of those people who always told us people in Europe were starving, so I had to eat what was put on my plate as a child. It took me years to figure out that wherever the starving people were, they were starving whether I overate or not. I still catch myself moving food around my plate until it is gone. Better for me to remove it from my plate upfront.)

Eat mindfully and eat slowly. I used to end my day at the office at full speed and then sit down to eat my evening meal at full speed as well. Relax, enjoy the company of who you are with and be mindful of each bite and how delicious the natural flavors are.

I just read that one of the benefits of saying grace is that we slow down and signal our body that it is safe to eat and for our bodies to put attention on digesting our food. It is a form of gratitude, and either praying or gratitude are lovely traditions to have before a meal.

The other suggestion is to eat something bitter before the meal, like parsley or cilantro. That wakes up our stomach enzymes so that we get the maximum benefits from what we are eating.

Focus on protein and vegetables, no matter where you are eating.

Ask for berries for dessert.

Drink water or iced tea (unsweetened) with lemon - no colas, or sugary drinks

Hot tea is a good choice but be aware that paper bags are best. (Or loose) Those cute little triangular bags are plastic and emit toxins.

Now, if you are thinking I don't want to be this pushy when I go out to eat, I want to tell you a story.

John and I traveled to Ohio to visit with his family. We still stayed in hotels, so that we could control some of our food and our time. (See my chapter on traveling healthy (Chapter 9).)

There was a very special hotel, and restaurant that John wanted to share with me called The Golden Lamb in Lebanon, Ohio. The hotel and restaurant are 200 years old, and 12 US Presidents have stayed there. John knew how much I loved old places with history, so this was a must.

Besides, I had a friend from my jewelry days who lived just a little bit north, so we invited him to join us for dinner. We were going to eat there, so I was nervous about what the restaurant might be able to feed me.

As soon as we arrived (the day before our dinner), I spoke to the front desk about my dilemma and asked if I could speak to the head chef. He arranged a meeting that day.

When we met, and I gave the card to the chef, I will admit I was awkward and nervous. My company was coming no matter what.

He read the card, looked at me and smiled, and said, “Oh goodie, I get to cook something new and fresh and interesting. I get so bored always cooking the same thing. Just leave it to me.”

So, we met our guest, and John and Michael ordered, and then the chef bought out our dinners himself. My meal was sensational and gorgeous and clean. Michael commented he wished he had known; he would have ordered my meal as well. But we all had a sensational meal, and everyone was thrilled.

There was nothing to be hesitant or embarrassed about, after all. So, ask. The worst thing that can happen is that they say no. My book coach is always saying, “get your ask on⁵⁵.” Don’t be afraid to ask for what you need. Let them surprise you.

Since I have learned that eating out with friends is about enjoying their company and not about what I am eating, had he said no way, I would have eaten something ahead of time, and then enjoyed a salad while my friend and hubby ate.

I have similar stories to tell when I get to the chapter about traveling in Europe. The point is, ask for what you want, and then adjust accordingly.

Finally, sometimes I don’t control where the party eats. Since I eat “clean” the rest of the time, I make the best possible choice from the menu as I can. Remember, it’s all about toxic load. Don’t get twisty. One meal won’t kill me, and it won’t kill you. If you are eating with friends, it’s always about community, so enjoy the people you are with and don’t make them uncomfortable about their food choices. Don’t lecture them or judge what they choose to eat. Just eat as clean as possible. Remember, you always have your emergency food pack if you are hungry when the meal is over.