

Fast Food Doesn't Have To Mean Fat Food!

Thursday 24 October, 2013

From burgers and pizzas to chips and Chinese, saving time on the evening meal by opting for a fast fix more often than not leads to a widening of the waistline! But now, thanks to the new Fast Food Index commissioned by The Saucy Fish Co., kitchen shirkers can salve their conscience with an evening meal that's as healthy as it is fast to prep.

With new research revealing that 80 per cent of Brits won't spend more than 35 minutes making their evening meal*, not to mention the nights drawing in as British Summer Time comes to an end, the Fast Food Index promises to help battle the winter bulge before it's even begun.

By ranking meals on preparation time and health, the Fast Food Index uses scientific data worked out by nutritionist and dietician Azmina Govindji to rate 12 popular British dishes, with those that are quicker and lower in bad fats topping the list.

Salmon is revealed as the new fast food for busy Brits, swimming into the top spot with an index rating of seven due to the fact that it can be grilled in just 10 minutes and is low in saturated fats, closely followed by sweet and sour chicken with steamed rice.

Meanwhile, the British favourite of chicken tikka masala with rice and naan bread sneaks in at number five - perhaps surprisingly faring better in the ranking than some of our traditional regional specialities including haggis, Lancashire hotpot and Irish stew.

The Fast Food Index included a microwavable spag bol ready meal, which is often considered a staple for those looking for the simplest meal to make in the fastest time. Despite containing the highest amount of saturated fat and calories of all meal options, it features third on the list as it only takes minutes to get to the table..

The full Fast Food Index, as commissioned by The Saucy Fish Co., is below. Meals with the lowest score performed better in terms of the speed of preparation and fewer saturated fats and calories.

The Fast Food Index was commissioned by The Saucy Fish Co. and researched by Azmina Govindji, Consultant Nutritionist & Registered Dietitian. To provide comparable results Govindji based her research on a main meal with two accompaniments, each with a medium portion size, based on Food Standards Agency data.

Preparation and cooking times were taken from a consistent BBC recipe resource, and each element of the meal was individually analysed for kcal, kj, total fat, saturated fat, mono-unsaturated fat and poly-unsaturated fat. The resulting Fast Food Index is an indicator of how easy the meal is to prepare and how low it is in unhealthy fats and calories, with the lower the index score the better.

Simon Smith, Head of Brand for The Saucy Fish Co. who commissioned the Fast Food Index comments: "We wanted to understand the Fast Food Index to reveal which dishes were the quickest and healthiest to cook for today's busy aspiring chefs. The Saucy Fish Co. understands our customer value us for convenience and inspiration so there's a real demand out there for quick and nutritious meals. It's not surprising that salmon has topped the index. Fish is a really healthy option and can be quick to prepare, so it's an ideal midweek meal."

Azmina Govindji RD MBDA, Consultant Nutritionist & Registered Dietitian, who conducted the research for The Fast Food Index comments: "It's widely known that people today are working longer hours than ever, and that inevitably means they have less time to spend in the kitchen. A recent report by Mintel suggests that only one in five people are prepared to spend more than 35 minutes in the kitchen*, but being time poor doesn't mean you have to load up on calories and unhealthy fats, as is shown by this Fast Food Index that compares medium portion sizes."

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Fast Food Index	Dish	Saturated Fat & Calories	Time (mins)	Fast Food Index
1	Grilled Salmon fillet served with baked new potatoes and green beans	4.3	2.6	7
2	Sweet & sour chicken with steamed rice	6.8	3.5	5.3
3	Microwave Spagbol (Spaginese ready meal with ground beef in the tomato)	16.9	1.0	12
4	Burgers & fries with onion gravy	4.7	5.7	12
5	Chicken tikka masala with rice and naan bread	9.7	6.5	16
6	Chicken & chips with cheese and cake salad	9.7	6.8	16
7	Fraggs with haggis and tatties	8.5	7.2	16
8	Lancashire hot pot, bread and pickled red cabbage	6.5	14.5	21
9	Irish stew with traditional pudding and rosin	6.9	14.8	21
10	Chilli con carne, rice and corn	7.2	14.8	22
11	Hot date	7.4	15.5	22
12	Homemade Lasagne, green salad and garlic bread	9.8	17.0	27

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* Mintel's Prepared Meals Report, May 2013

About The Saucy Fish Co.

Prices from: £4 Fish and Sauce / £4 Foil bake bags / £3 Fishcakes / £4 Ready to Enjoy

For more information about The Saucy Fish Co. and its expanding range, visit www.thesaucyfishco.com or find us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/TheSaucyFishCo>

The Dock - <http://dock.thesaucyfishco.com/> is an online portal for novice and experienced cooks alike to download recipes, or cook along to the handy how-to videos.

About the Fast Food Index

Nutrition information and portion sizes were taken from the Food Standards Agency 'Food Portion Sizes' publications in 1990 (Crawley, 1990) and 1993 (Food Standards Agency, 2002; data unchanged from 1993)

Preparation and cooking times were taken from www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes

Estimated Average Requirements were taken from the 2010 report by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

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