

What You Order for Dinner Tells a Restaurant More Than You Might Expect

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The Wall Street Journal:

Men order steak, women order salad, right?

The restaurant world has never been that simple, of course, and especially not now, when diners expect an experience and not just a meal when they go out to eat.

Yet many chefs say it is remarkable how many diners continue to order largely along gender-based lines. Restaurants and menu consultants say it pays to balance gender preferences, both when designing individual dishes and when planning the overall menu.

The Regency Bar and Grill, inside the Loews Regency Hotel on New York's Park Avenue, had some of these principles in mind when it recently expanded its meat-heavy menu. It added a new section, "From the Grill," featuring a simple protein (such as chicken, tuna, or lamb chops) served plain without typical sides like potatoes and mushrooms.

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A typical female pattern is to order a healthy, vegetable-centric entree and then splurge on dessert, while men often favor more-substantial entrees featuring both starch and meat, says Elizabeth Capaldi Phillips, a psychology professor at Arizona State University, in Tempe, who studies the relationship between food and gender.

People are more likely to order according to gender stereotypes on a first date, at a business meal or when dining in a large group of friends, Dr. Capaldi Phillips says.

Read the whole story: [*The Wall Street Journal*](#)