

Study evaluates how consumers view ordering desserts when dining away from home

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A new study from **Culinary Visions**, Chicago, takes a deep-dive into the psychology of choices made by consumers who are ordering desserts when dining away from home.

Culinary Visions surveyed 2,000 consumers from the United States, Italy, France, UK and Germany, and found that **global consumers associate dessert with indulgence and are reluctant to adopt lifestyle diets (such as vegan and gluten-free) that would remove the option of ordering desserts.**

“Desserts are strongly associated with happiness and celebration. Our research found that while consumers want to eat healthfully, they do not want to adopt strict lifestyle diets,” says Sharon Olson, executive director. “Consumers will try to balance their idea of healthy eating with indulgence by looking into other aspects of healthiness in their foods such as the limiting of certain ingredients, eating less processed foods and balancing indulgence with physical activity.”

The study found that consumers globally are attempting to balance dining out with a more holistic approach to health. In fact, 59% of consumers in the study said they are ready to limit certain ingredients in their diets, but not eliminate them, while 75% of consumers said that eating less processed foods is important to them and 61% of consumers said they use physical activities to balance their food indulgence.

When it comes to limiting certain ingredients in their diets to maintain healthiness, Italian and American consumers are the most conscious about using this approach. For instance, 64% of Italian consumers and 63% of American consumers will limit the intake of certain ingredients in order to eat healthier. Similarly, British (58%), French (57%) and German (51%) consumers are willing to limit certain ingredients rather than adopt a lifestyle diet that would completely eliminate them.

A vast majority of consumers are interested in cutting down on processed foods and introducing fresher foods in their diets. Case in point: 82% of French consumers said that eating less processed foods was important to them with Italian (79%), British (78%) and American (74%) consumers not too far behind in stating the same. German consumers (64%) felt the least strongly about eating processed foods, but even then more than half said they would rather eat less processed foods than limit dessert.

Out of all the consumers, Americans (66%) are the most enthusiastic about hitting the gym to balance out indulgence with physical activity. British (65%), French (62%) and Italian (58%) consumers follow closely behind in that sentiment with German consumers (52%) feeling the least strongly about using exercise to balance out indulgence.

But, are lifestyle diets a thing of the past? Not completely. **When asked if they would stop eating dessert while on a diet, a majority of Americans (54%) and Italians (52%) agreed with the statement.** Similarly, 48% of both British and German consumers also said that they would not eat dessert if they were on a diet. French consumers showed the lowest inclination to skip desserts if on a diet (38%), mostly because they did not think of desserts as a treat but rather an integral part of a meal.