

[Desserts](#) to die for [chocolate](#) truffles and caramel tortes.

Instead, boldly ask the server for the dessert menu first.

You might get a weird look, but you need to choose your sweet destination before you can map out the meal. If you decide the chocolate cheesecake or coconut cake with pineapple ice cream is irresistible, skip the fried calamari appetiser or the creamy New England clam chowder. Save yourself for your true love, dessert!

Sure, dessert can be part of a healthy lifestyle, but don't forget the rule of thumb: everything in moderation. That means not ordering a slab of 'serves six' cheesecake unless you're going to share. Know what you're getting into. A typical restaurant serving of full-fat cheesecake is 457 calories and 34 grams of fat.

Often the biggest challenge is deciding which dreamy dessert to order. Fortunately, there's a trend in offering a tapas-type selection of small desserts. Top eateries in the US like Houlihan's has added mini-desserts to its fun-and flavour-focussed menus.

Several Atlanta restaurants—including Kyma, Rathbun's and Repast—also feature mini-desserts. "We know that many of our customers are trying to push away from the table and say 'no to dessert', but they'd stay for a bite or two if possible," says Rathbun's executive pastry chef Kirk Parks. Each dessert is about 2 ounces — the perfect amount to allow four people one bite each.

And, finally, if you're going to dive into dessert, relax and enjoy it! Savour the flavours and banish the pleasure-robbing guilt.

Slow down, and let your body and soul appreciate small portions of delicious desserts.

### **Sensible sweets**

Best bets for calorie-conscious dessert lovers. Nutrition bonus: Choosing fruit adds nutrients to your meal.

- Bowl of berries: 1 cup of blueberries, strawberries or blackberries — 70 calories (Add a tablespoon of real whipped cream — only 10 calories.)
- Frozen fruit sorbet: 140 calories per cup
- Frozen yogurt: 130 calories per cup
- Angel cake: nice slice (one-sixth of a 12-inch cake) — 140 calories

### **Fit to split**

You should share these sweet splurges. Calorie caution: including ice cream adds an extra 300 calories.

- Brownie: A four-inch square equals 486 calories
- Pecan pie: One-eighth of a 9-inch pie equals 503 calories
- Apple pie: One-eighth of a 9-inch pie equals 411 calories.

—*NY TIMES* / Carolyn O'Neil

