

Your family can eat out on a budget and still stay healthy. These ten chains are embracing organic foods (with menu items from \$0.90 to \$26!).

BY ELIZABETH BARKER
ILLUSTRATION BY HEADCASE DESIGN

It started in specialty health food stores, then spread to grocery chains and home kitchens. Now the organic movement has arrived at restaurants all over the country, which means you and your family can be healthy and satisfy your cravings at the same time. Plus, you can stay within your budget without lifting a finger in the kitchen.

"We shape the world with what we eat, and that includes the food choices we make while dining out," says Alberto Gonzalez, founder of GustOrganics (gustorganics.com), the first eatery in New York to be certified organic, and the first restaurant in the country to use 100% organic ingredients. "Organics aren't just good for your health," Gonzalez continues. "They're good for future generations, since these foods do very little or no harm to the environment."

In addition to embracing the benefits of organic foods, many of these restaurants also practice environmental responsibility. Some venues use renewable energy, while others donate leftover cooking oil for biodiesel conversion or serve food in biodegradable or compostable containers.

All-organic menus used to be a rarity, but now many restaurant chains are jumping on the bandwagon. At dinegreen.com, you'll find a national listing of restaurants deemed "Certified Green" for their comprehensive recycling systems, shunning of Styrofoam and commitment to the Green Restaurant Association's environmental guidelines (including the use of nontoxic cleaning products and green power). Here, KIWI reviews ten budget-friendly chains that offer delicious organic fare for the whole family. ▶

change

IS ON THE MENU

① Burger Lounge

LOCATIONS: Southern California

PRICE RANGE: \$2.00 to \$7.95

All of the beef served at this certified-green burger joint comes from the same source—a small farm that shuns antibiotics, hormones and animal byproducts. As an alternative to grass-fed beef patties, customers can tuck into grilled turkey burgers with fresh basil or veggie burgers with organic quinoa. Committed to composting and using locally grown foods, Burger Lounge pairs its kid's meals with either French fries (cooked in 100% peanut oil) or salad. And to satisfy your child's sweet tooth, the energy-efficient restaurant bakes fresh red velvet and "Hostess-style" cupcakes every day. (burgerlounge.com)

② Burgerville

LOCATIONS: Oregon, Washington, Vancouver

PRICE RANGE: \$1.19 to \$11.99

This 39-location chain whips up gourmet-inspired goods such as an Oregon Harvest Burger (featuring organic black rice, sweet potatoes, veggies and flax meal) and a Wild Smoked Salmon and Hazelnut Salad. The kids' menu includes hormone-free milk and apple slices, and each children's meal comes with an educational, eco-friendly "toy" such as a biodegradable garden pot and vegetable-seed packet. Burgerville selects locally sourced, seasonal ingredients for its salads, sides and desserts and uses only antibiotic-free beef. The restaurant offsets 100% of its electricity use by purchasing wind-power credits. (burgerville.com)

③ Chipotle

LOCATIONS: Throughout the U.S. and Canada

PRICE RANGE: \$0.90 to \$7.60

Chipotle is the country's largest chain restaurant to embrace organic; it stuffs its burritos, tacos and salads with chicken and beef raised without the use of growth hormones or antibiotics. All cheese and sour cream are free of the synthetic hormone rBGH, and 30% of Chipotle's beans are organic. With more than 500 locations across the country, this Mexican eatery is now pursuing LEED certification for its partially wind-powered Gurnee, Illinois restaurant. (chipotle.com)

④ Elevation Burger

LOCATIONS: Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia

PRICE RANGE: \$1.49 to \$5.99

Featuring patties for all manner of burger lovers (meat eaters, vegetarians and even vegans), Elevation uses organic, grass-fed, free-range beef and locally sourced ingredients whenever practical. After cooking its fries in heart-healthy olive oil, the restaurant donates its leftover grease for conversion into biodiesel. Elevation is currently pursuing LEED certification for each newly constructed restaurant. The chain also employs eco-friendly equipment, low- or no-VOC paints and finishes, and energy-efficient lighting. (elevationburger.com)

Check out these resources for a green eatery near you:

GREEN RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION:

dinegreen.com

EAT WELL GUIDE:

eatwellguide.org

LOCALHARVEST:

localharvest.org/restaurants

⑤ O'Naturals

LOCATIONS: Florida, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, North Carolina

PRICE RANGE: \$3.09 to \$20.99 (for a pizza to feed up to three people)

O'Naturals, which was deemed an environmental leader by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection in 2007, works with organic ingredients whenever possible and sources its meat from animals raised without the use of antibiotics. What's more, the eatery donates 10% of revenue from all evening sales to local nonprofits. Menu options for kids include turkey sandwiches and pasta with tomato sauce, while grownups can dig in to flatbread sandwiches (such as the naturally raised chicken with pesto, Brie and root vegetables) and Asian-inspired noodle dishes (including udon with veggies and smoked tofu or beef). (onaturals.com)

⑥ Organic to Go

LOCATIONS: California, Washington, Washington, D.C.

PRICE RANGE: \$0.99 to \$8.29

This café chain serves its healthy fast food in biodegradable and compostable packaging. Its menu features good-for-you salads, wraps and "spa snacks" (such as a veggie pita and a fruit and cheese plate). With a sandwich list that includes grilled cheese, ham and

Swiss and other kid-pleasing options, your whole family's tummies are sure to leave full and happy. The restaurant uses natural foods (defined as "minimally processed and free of irradiation, artificial additives and ingredients that do not occur naturally in food") whenever organic alternatives are unavailable. (organictogo.com)

7 Le Pain Quotidien

LOCATIONS: California, Connecticut, New York, Washington, D.C.

PRICE RANGE: \$3.25 to \$16.85

Bread breakers gather around Le Pain Quotidien's reclaimed-wood communal tables to enjoy such foodie-approved fare as organic quinoa salad and ricotta tartines with organic acacia honey and mission figs. The menu also includes kid-friendly sandwiches, soups and an organic granola parfait. Le Pain Quotidien, which is in the process of becoming certified green by the Green Restaurant Association, uses nontoxic cleaning supplies, recycled paper products, water-conserving appliances and a composting system for food waste. (lepainquotidien.com)

8 Panera Bread

LOCATIONS: Throughout the U.S. and Canada

PRICE RANGE: \$3.87 to \$6.49

This popular sandwich chain serves only antibiotic-free chicken in its salads, sandwiches and soups. Panera recently reworked its kids' menu to include organic juice, yogurt and milk, as well as grilled cheese sandwiches made with organic cheese and a PB&J with natural peanut butter and whole-grain bread. (panerabread.com)

9 Pizza Fusion

LOCATIONS: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington

PRICE RANGE: \$6.00 to \$26.00 (for a pizza to feed up to three people)

The best planet-friendly pie is at Pizza Fusion. In addition to offsetting 100% of its power consumption, the company uses hybrid cars for deliveries, gives customers discounts for returning their pizza boxes and hosts free monthly classes to educate kids about the importance of eating organic and recycling. Several of the 27 locations are LEED-certified, and all stores have a menu that's 75% organic. The chain also boasts gluten-free, organic alternatives for crust, plus 17 organic toppings. (pizzafusion.com)

10 TerraBurger

LOCATIONS: Texas (with more locations opening soon)

PRICE RANGE: \$2.25 to \$9.15

All beef, produce, veggie burgers, cheese, milk, ice cream and fruit at TerraBurger are 100% organic. In addition to slinging fast-food classics such as bacon cheeseburgers and chocolate shakes, this burger joint also features sweet potato fries, grilled chicken sandwiches and smoothies. Its kids' menu offers an organic fruit cup as an alternative to fries. And in an effort to replace greasy with green, all locations use rainwater collection systems, compostable packaging and utensils, eco-friendly cleaning products and uniform shirts made from organic cotton. (terraburgerrestaurants.com)



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