

>> surviving dinner...

Here is a list of the 'veggie dishes' in non-vegetarian restaurants, their ingredients and some possible pitfalls. It's always better to ask than to have an unpleasant surprise! Make sure people know that you are vegetarian by telling them that you don't eat meat, fish, etc – otherwise you might get more than it says on the menu...

If you are a **lacto-ovo-vegetarian** you won't have any problems in eating in any restaurants. **Vegans** however will encounter problems at traditional restaurants. Their only option might be some pickled salads

Most restaurants have one or more of the following dishes:

> Vegetable/Mushroom/Cauliflower/Potato soup

Might be delicious, but might contain meat stock. You'll have to ask to be sure

> Tomato soup

There are two varieties: the Italian type, which is really nice, or the Hungarian, which is veggie but might contain tons of sugar! It's pure hell, believe me, and I really can't explain why they do that...

> Salads

Again, there's the traditional Hungarian type of salad, which can include the following ingredients:

Lettuce salad - sugar and vinegar

Cucumber salad - creme fraiche/sour cream

Bean salad – vinegar

Cabbage - vinegar or simply sauerkraut

In many cases the salad is a combination of various pickled stuff. The "new-age" type salads are really different from place to place, but you can expect things like Greek salad. Always check the ingredients as salads can contain feta cheese, hard

cheese, as well as ham, chicken, bacon, boiled eggs, etc...

> Fried Camembert, cauliflower, mushrooms, etc

Cheese or vegetables are first dipped in flour then battered eggs then breadcrumbs and deep-fried in oil (a bit like tempura or pakoras). Normally served either with chips (french fries) or white rice. For some funny reason Hungarians love to deep-fry food: there's an endless list of dishes prepared the same way like the famous 'wienerschnitzel'

> Different pasta dishes

You can buy two types of pasta in Hungary: Hungarian type and the Italian. The Italian will be eggless made of durum wheat, while the Hungarian will most likely contain eggs. So, unless you are in an 'Italian' restaurant you have a chance to be served a pasta dish that contains eggs

> Paprika Mushroom (*Gomba pörkölt*)

This is a traditional dish of mushrooms stir-fried in oil with onions and the famous Hungarian paprika, plus creme fraiche/ sour cream. Normally served with dumplings (*nokedli*), which are eggs and flour

> Lecsó

A very nice veggie dish when I make it but normally spoiled with some added meat in restaurants. It's basically tomatoes, peppers and some onion stir-fried with paprika spice. Then they might add bacon or sausages or battered eggs

> Főzelék

Again, no English name for this traditional dish. It is usually a vegetable cooked or steamed and then mixed with some flour and sometimes creme fraiche/sour cream (might contain butter or oil). Most children hate it as they are fed different type of főzeléks in the name of health. But they are really tasty (depending on the cook of

course!) The most common types are:

Krumpli / Burgonya főzelék - Potato: can include creme fraiche/sour cream

Spenót / Paraj - Spinach: contains cream or milk and sometimes garlic

Sóska - Sorrel: can be made with milk or creme fraiche/sour cream

Zöldborsó – Green peas: normally a safe option, but sometimes contains milk

Zöldbab - French beans: vegan normally, but sometimes has creme fraiche/sour cream

Bab - Beans: made of kidney beans or similar and normally vegan

Répa - Carrot: can contain milk

Lencse - Lentils: can contain vinegar and creme fraiche/sour cream

Paradicsomos Káposzta - Cabbage in tomato sauce: vegan but might have sugar

Finom - Literally 'tasty' or 'nice': a mix of carrots, peas and turnip. Contains milk

Kelkáposzta - Savoy cabbage: may include creme fraiche/sour cream

Tök - Squash: contains creme fraiche/sour cream and sugar

> possible pitfalls

Lard/Oil

Traditionally people used lard to prepare food in Hungary. Luckily nowadays people almost always use sunflower oil. However, there's always a tiny risk...

Deep-frying

Some small restaurants deep-fry everything in the same oil: meat, veggies or chips, etc

Bacon/Ham

A lot of dishes, such as creamy pasta and bean soup (*bablevés*), contain tiny pieces of bacon or ham which is not mentioned on the menu

Stock/Bouillon

Most non-vegetarian restaurants like to enrich their soups with meat stock. Ask or avoid

>> speaking Hungarian

> consonants

The following consonants are pronounced and/or spelled differently than in English:

c – pronounced like the ts in 'bats'

cs – like ch as in 'check'

gy – one sound, like the d in 'adulation'

j, ly – both pronounced as y like 'yes'

ny – like ni in the English word 'onion'

s – like sh in 'shun' and 'ship'

sz – like a regular English s as in 'sell'

ty – a soft t sound; say 'at your' fast

zs – like the s in 'pleasure'

dzs – like the j in 'jet'

> vowels

a – like the sound in 'awe' and 'hot'

á – a very open sound, between the a in 'matter' and the a in (American) 'father'

e – the sound in 'set' and 'bed'

é – like the sound in 'way' but with the back of the tongue higher in the mouth

i – like the short ee in 'feet' and 'meet'

í – a long ee as in 'feed' and 'bleed'

o – like the sound in 'stole' and 'sold'

ó – a long o, as in 'rogue' and 'rode'

u – a short oo as in 'boot'

ú – a long oo as in 'food' and 'cool'

ö – as in German ö, French 'peu' and 'le'

ő – a longer version of ö, like German 'schön'

ü – like German ü and French u as in 'début'

ű – a longer version of ü

Note: There are no diphthongs in Hungarian, so always pronounce each vowel separately

> stress

Stress in Hungarian falls on the first syllable of the word. The accent marks over the various vowels do not alter stress, but rather the quality of the vowel. And every syllable is pronounced distinctly

> useful words and phrases

jó napot – hello

jó estét – good evening

viszlát – goodbye

elnézést – excuse me

bocsánat – pardon

tessék – please

kérek... – I would like...

köszönöm – thank you

igen – yes

nem – no, not

és – and

itt – here

vagyok – I am

magyar – Hungarian

angol vagyok – I am English

amerikai – American

nem értem – I do not understand

beszél angolul? – do you speak English?

víz – water

szép – beautiful

nő – woman

férfi – man

hol van a mosdó? – where is the toilet?

Metro / busz / villamos / trolis – Metro / bus / tram / trolleybus

kérek egy jegyet – I would like to buy a ticket

vegetáriánus / vegán vagyok – I am vegetarian/ vegan

nem eszem tojást – I don't eat eggs

van benne hús? – is there meat (in it)?

hús-mentes – without meat

cukor-nélkül – without sugar

gyümölcs – fruit

zöldség – vegetable

hal – fish

tej – milk

tejtermék – dairy products

tejföl – sour cream

tejszín – cream

hagyma – onion

gomba – mushroom

méz – honey

élesztő – yeast

bio-piac – organic market



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