

AN ESSAY OF COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

McDonald's vs. Wendy's

*Introduction
(Uses statistics to
hook the reader on
the topic)*

In today's era of low-carbohydrate diets and obsessive exercise routines, people are more careful with food choices. The 21st century necessitates convenience where fast food restaurants accommodate the need for cheap food quickly. Unfortunately, these foods are not always the healthiest choices. Historically, fast food restaurants offer processed high fat foods. In rejection to this stereotype, two fast food restaurants, Wendy's and McDonald's, now offer healthy menu choices low in saturated fats and carbohydrates without sacrificing taste. These restaurants fall under the same umbrella of fast food, yet possess noticeably different characteristics in healthy choice menu items. Despite differing considerably in the variety and presentation of healthy alternatives, both Wendy's and McDonald's offer numerous salad choices as the healthy food staple.

*Thesis statement
(Narrows the broad
subject into one topic for
comparison)*

Perhaps the most incredible breakthrough in these two fast food restaurants was the introduction of healthy burger alternatives to the menu. Wendy's has one healthy choice sandwich to offer - the Ultimate Chicken Grill that boasts only 6.5 grams of fat when loaded with all savoury toppings. Although Wendy's offers only this one item as a healthy choice sandwich, Wendy's has always been a leader in the provision of various healthy meals. Its small order of chili, containing only 5 grams of fat, is a healthy alternative favourite. As well, the baked potatoes, minus large quantities of fatty toppings, are a great choice to satisfy the healthy appetite. For example, a baked potato with chives and sour cream has only 5 grams of fat; whereas, the hot-stuffed baked potato with cheddar cheese and bacon has a high 25 grams of fat. A Wendy's patron, however, wanting to make a healthy conversion in his or eating habits can successfully do so at Wendy's.

*Point One (Body
uses point-by-
point method to
develop the essay)*

While Wendy's has had a selective healthy choice menu for some time, McDonald's only recently began to offer healthy meal choices. Today, McDonald's provides a wide variety of healthy alternatives including a fruit yogurt parfait, made of all natural ingredients with only 2.1 grams of fat. At some McDonald's locations, green apple slices also adorn the kid's menu. McDonald's new shift to healthier sandwich choices also redeems its menu by offering delicious choices such as the McVeggie Burger, Chicken Fajitas, and Whole Wheat Chicken McGrill. These lighter choices range in fat content from only 4.2 grams to 6.5 grams. This is considerably lower than McDonald's Big Mac, which boasts 33 grams of fat or the Double Quarter Pounder that has a startling 44 grams of fat - one hundred percent of a person's daily intake of saturated fats.

*Continuation of
Point
One*

In addition to excellent meal options at Wendy's, presentation of healthy menu choices is superior. Wendy's salads are large and fresh with plentiful toppings sized appropriately. Wendy's salads have only one hindrance: excess water at the bottom of the bowl. This occurs in the salads that use iceberg lettuce and sometimes dilutes the salad dressing. This, however, is a small inconvenience compared to the faults against McDonald's salads.

Point Two

McDonald's, however, fails at establishing a superior presentation of healthy food choices. McDonald's salads lack in appearance and freshness. These salads appear thrown together and often look wilted. The chicken pieces in the Garden and Caesar selections are sliced but not separated and, therefore, need to be broken down for easier consumption. Without a knife, eating these salads can be daunting. In addition to this, even though the salads are relatively water free, the toppings are sparse. Overall, McDonald's salads lack a consistent, fresh, visual appeal.

Point Three

It can not be overlooked that Wendy's assortments of tasty salads have become popular menu choices. Wendy's was the first major fast food chain to offer fast food salad as a meal's main course. Side salads had previously existed at Wendy's, but never as large and varied as the new "Garden Sensations" salads available today. Wendy's offers four salad choices ranging from possessing 3 grams of fat to 30 grams depending on the salad toppings. The variety and quality of these salads has assisted in establishing an excellent reputation for the restaurant.

*Conclusion
(Makes a
prediction)*

In reaction to the popularity of these salads, McDonald's is now also offering salads as a main course menu choice. As well, in attempt to boast a healthy image, McDonald's briefly offered a "stepometer"—a small contraption placed on a person's belt to count steps taken—with a salad order. The fat content of McDonald's salads is also comparable to that of Wendy's. It is obvious, then, that McDonald's successfully boasts a variety of decent tasty salads.

Several salad choices, meal variety, and good presentation are all considered when evaluating a fast food restaurant. People constantly seek easy ways to gain nourishment, and with fast food restaurants such as Wendy's and McDonald's available, making healthier food choices is considerably easier. The need to slim down has finally become a key selling point for many restaurants; hence, it is inevitable that Canada will experience an increase in healthier meal choice trends.