

MCDONALD'S PHENOMENON. IS IT POSSIBLE TO EAT HEALTHY FOOD IN A FAST FOOD RESTAURANT?

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Fast food firmly established in our life, and not everyone can resist the temptation to taste it. Nowadays we can see the two sides of fast food: increasing interest in healthy eating, and an increase in the number of fast food restaurants. It is a paradox. But each of us is under the influence of two opposite poles: common sense and health on the one hand, and lack of time, the influence of advertising, and a pleasant taste on the other.

So the relevance of the research topic lies in the fact that in spite of all harmful effects of fast food people do not want to give up such tasty food, what is more they think that fast food is great for many things (convenience, affordability, fries).

The aims of this study are to investigate a global phenomenon of McDonald's restaurants, to determine how fast food influences our life.

The Objectives:

- To study the history of McDonald's restaurants;
- To find out the steps they took that contributed to their success;
- To define the advantages and disadvantages of fast food;
- To study the menu at McDonald's in Brest and reveal the lowest-calorie menu options
- To carry out the survey "Teenagers and Fast Food" and study the results.

The first McDonald's restaurant was started in 1948 by brothers Maurice ("Mac") and Richard McDonald in San Bernardino, California. They bought appliances for their small hamburger restaurant from salesman Ray Kroc, who was intrigued by their need for eight malt and shake mixers. When Kroc visited the brothers in 1954 to see how a small shop could sell so many milk shakes, he discovered a simple, efficient format that permitted the brothers to produce huge quantities of food at low prices.

Seeing great promise in their restaurant concept, Kroc offered to begin a franchise program for the McDonald brothers. On April 15, 1955, he opened the first McDonald's franchise in Des Plaines, Illinois, and in the same year launched the McDonald's Corporation, eventually buying out the McDonald brothers in 1961. The number of McDonald's outlets would top 1,000 before the end of the decade.

The public face of McDonald's was created in 1963 with the introduction of a clown named Ronald McDonald, while the double-arch "m" symbol became McDonald's most enduring logo in 1962, lasting far longer than the tall yellow arches that had once dominated the earlier restaurant rooftops. Other products and symbols would define the McDonald's brand, including the Big Mac (1968), the Egg McMuffin (1973), Happy Meals (1979), and Chicken McNuggets (1983).

The chain continued to expand domestically and internationally, extending to Canada in 1967, reaching a total of 10,000 restaurants by 1988, and operating more than 35,000 outlets in more than 100 countries in the early 21st century. Growth was so swift in the 1990s that it was said a new McDonald's opened somewhere in the world every five hours.

McDonalds is an excellent example of the potential of franchising. The well-known brand started out as a humble hamburger restaurant and eventually grew to become a global presence. Today, it's considered one of the most successful and recognisable franchises in the world with a presence in over 119 countries. We've listed some steps they took that contributed to their success: they standardized their menu, assembly line kitchen, the fast food formula, branding, adaptability.

The term "fast food" was first mentioned by a publishing company Merriam-Webster from the United States of America in the middle of the last century (in 1951). Fast food is a kind of dishes that can be cooked and served within 15 minutes. Pizza, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hotdogs, shawarma, French fries, doughnuts, pan-cakes, calamari and onion rings, chicken and fish nuggets are made of pre-cooked ingredients preliminary stored in a fridge. All these dishes are served hot.

There are advantages and disadvantages of fast food. Advantages of fast food:

1. Fast food is cheap.
2. It saves time.
3. There are healthy options.
4. There are a plethora of choices.

5. Fast food tastes good.
6. Fast food locations provide local jobs and skill training.

Disadvantages of Fast Food:

1. Its lower quality.
2. Fast food can be unhealthy.
3. Obesity.
4. It's easy to spend too much money.
5. It can minimize time to socialize.
6. It offers food products that offer addictive qualities.

We studied the menu at McDonald's in Brest and the lowest-calorie menu options have been revealed, for example, vegetable salad (170 calories), Caesar salad (183 calorie), carrot sticks (178 calories), oatmeal (136 calories), hashbrown (147 calories). But, in spite of low calories these options can contain much salt, fat, sugar.

McDonald's makes the nutrition information of its menu readily available online. You can even search according to specific ingredients or food allergens.

We carried out the survey "Teenagers and Fast Food", so, we see that fast food looks attractive for young people although they know the truth about its harmful effects.

In Belarus we couldn't find any statistics on the consumption of fast food and its consequences, we think we are not a fast food nation.

Fast food culture is an emerging trend among the younger generation. The ready availability, taste, low cost, marketing strategies and peer pressure make them popular with children and adults. Fast food restaurants are primed to maximize the speed, efficiency and conformity. The menu is kept limited and standardized essentially to minimize the waiting time so that the customers eat quickly and leave.

In this fast-paced world fast food is a permanent part of our lifestyle. To sum it up, the argument for fast food advantages and disadvantages will never end. If someone wants to eat fast food, there are always justifications for it. What is vital is to make healthy food choices. If you can't quit eating fast food, at least minimize its harmful effects.

Literature/Resources

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