

Eating in the Fast Lane

Americans Top International Survey List for Eating at Restaurants, On the Run, Alone, As Well As Getting Takeout

September 15, 2003, NEW YORK, NY—After surveys found Americans prone to nesting and comfort tendencies after September 11, in reality, we're eating in our cars more than by candlelight, according to *Ipsos World Monitor*, a global reporting service owned by Ipsos, the worldwide market and public opinion research firm. The latest survey, conducted in May and June 2003, compared eating habits in ten countries: the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the Ukraine, the U.K., Romania, Russia, and the U.S.

Most Americans are still eating three times a day but where, when, and whom with no longer follows tradition. Frequently Americans are letting someone else do the cooking: one-third of Americans (32%) eat at restaurants at least a few days a week and a further 29% of Americans do so once a week. Italians are the next-most likely (18%) to eat at restaurants at least a few days a week, then the Czechs (12%). Meanwhile, more than half of the respondents in Hungary, Poland, Romania, urban Russia, and the Ukraine said they never eat at restaurants—compared to only 5% of Americans.

Not surprisingly, given the busy schedules of most Americans, the survey revealed that Americans are big on take-out: one-third (33%) reported picking up lunch or dinner at least a few days a week, and nearly another third (27%) get take-out food bought from a restaurant, deli, or food-stand once a week.

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