

MEALS AND EATING OUT

FOOD; AT THE RESTAURANT

I usually eat three times a day. On weekdays I have just a small snack for breakfast. I have lunch at the school canteen at around two and dinner in the evening together with my family. At weekends I have a bigger breakfast when I get up, we have lunch at one o'clock, and dinner at seven.

When I have more time for breakfast, I usually have a slice of bread or a roll with margarine. I put some cold cuts and cheese on it, and sometimes I add some ketchup or mustard on the top. I eat this sandwich with some tomatoes and pepper. I usually drink a mug of cocoa or milk. On some days I feel like eating a croissant with butter and jam or honey.

My lunch usually consists of some soup: tomato soup and potato soup are my favourites. Then I eat grilled chicken or pork with garnish and pickles for the second course. On some days I have pasta with cottage cheese.

For dinner I usually have something light, for example yoghurt or buttered toast, but sometimes we order a pizza.

Many students complain about the canteen food, saying that it is tasteless and full of fat. I think the situation is not that bad. The kitchen provides food for several hundred students a day and can't afford to use the best ingredients. There are some dishes that they cook really well.

When I eat out with my family, I prefer places where we are served. My favourite restaurant is in the centre of the town and it has a terrace where it's very pleasant to eat. The staff is polite and they cook well. When I meet my friends we often go to a fast-food restaurant.

When people are in a hurry and they don't have time to wait for meals, they go to self-service restaurants. They don't offer many kinds of dishes, but the service is quick and the food is acceptable. There are cheaper and some more expensive ones. They can offer international food as well, such as Greek, Chinese and Italian.

I think the most important factors are the taste and the price of the food and that the place is clean. Of course, the atmosphere should also be pleasant, and I hate impolite and slow service. If we are satisfied with the food and the service, we tip the waiter or waitress. The tip is usually about ten per cent of the bill.

My favourite food is fish soup. We often prepare it because my brother and my father go fishing quite often, and they bring home some fresh fish.

A foreigner might find Hungarian cuisine a little strange because there's red paprika in almost every dish, which makes it hot. Not only is Hungarian food spicy, it is also quite fatty. Hungarians often fry meat and cheese in breadcrumbs and eat a lot of pickles.

The most popular national Hungarian dishes are fish soup, chicken soup, goulash, stuffed cabbage and all kinds of stews.