Earthbound Farm: (800) 690-3200

Ho-hum. Apparently, that’s what many IHOP diners think of the chain’s Original French Toast.

After all, its “six fluffy triangle-shaped slices topped with whipped butter and powdered sugar” have a mere 1,120 calories, 13 grams of saturated fat, and 13 teaspoons of added sugar (if you use the usual four tablespoons of syrup).

Maybe that’s why the chain came up with CINN-A-STACK French Toast—“A stack of three slices of thick-cut French toast layered with a luscious cinnamon roll filling, then drizzled with rich cream cheese icing and topped with whipped topping.”

Now you’re talking. What’s French toast without filling and icing and whipped cream? With the syrup, the CINN-A-STACK delivers 16 grams of sat fat and the calories (1,340) and added sugar (20½ teaspoons) of 1½ Cinnabon Classic Rolls. Urp!

Still bored? Get your CINN-A-STACK as part of IHOP’s Create Your Own Viva La French Toast Combo, which adds two eggs, hash browns, and two bacon strips or pork sausage links to a French toast two-stack. Pick sausage and use the syrup, and you leave the table with 1,700 calories and more than a day’s sat fat (26 grams), sodium (1,900 mg), and added sugar (18 teaspoons).

IHOP does offer a SIMPLE & FIT Whole Wheat French Toast Combo, which comes with sliced banana (so you can skip the syrup), scrambled egg substitute, and turkey bacon. It’s still too high in sodium (930 mg), but with 490 calories and only 4 grams of sat fat, it’s IHOP’s version of diet food.

IHOP: (866) 444-5144

Photos: Jorge Bach/CSPI.

Lemon-Parsley Pesto
Combine 2 Tbs. each of extra-virgin olive oil, lemon juice, and wine with ½ cup of Parmesan cheese, ½ cup of flat-leaf parsley, ¼ cup of walnuts, ¼ tsp. of salt, and a few grinds of black pepper in a food processor. Pulse until smooth. Mix with white beans, pasta, bulgur, or steamed broccoli or other vegetables.

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“Powerfully Delicious, Complete & Ready-to-Eat,” says the label of Earthbound Farm Organic Tomatillo Black Bean Protein Energy PowerMeal.

Okay. So you won’t feel more energetic or powerful than you would after eating any other salad. And the protein (8 grams) is low for a meal. But it’s more than you’d get in many packaged salads.

Earthbound starts with organic baby lettuces (like red and green romaine, oak leaf, red leaf, lollo rosa, and tango), and adds organic corn, black beans, bell peppers, onion, and spices. Then come the five-seed corn strips and sunflower seeds. Imagine the crunch!

Without the dressing, it’s got 240 calories, 210 milligrams of sodium, and less than 2 grams of saturated fat. Then there’s the 6 grams of fiber, 150 percent of a day’s vitamin A, 30 percent of a day’s vitamin C and iron, and 10 percent of a day’s calcium. The dressing kicks the sodium up to 550 mg, but use just a third of the packet and it drops to 320 mg.

Earthbound’s Blueberry Quinoa Protein Balance PowerMeal—baby spinach, quinoa, roasted sunflower kernels, dried wild blueberries, and balsamic dressing—has similar Nutrition Facts. The Cranberry Wheat Protein Boost PowerMeal, which mixes baby lettuces with wheat berries, bulgur, garbanzo beans, dried cranberries, and red wine vinaigrette, has less protein (5 grams), but also less sodium (310 mg with the whole packet of dressing).

Did we mention that they’re delish? Organic? Convenient? And powered by plants?

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