



UNIVERSITY OF  
SAN FRANCISCO  
Health Promotion Services

# TIPS FOR NAVIGATING THE USF DINING HALLS

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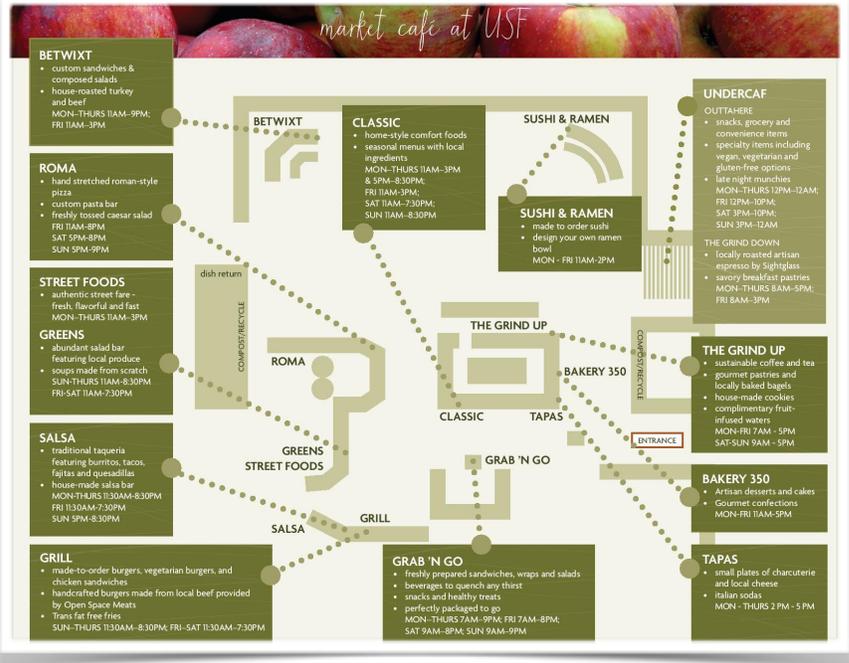
## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Madeline Cacho, currently a sophomore at USF, is studying business administration and lived on campus for her freshman year. She is also a student assistant in the Health Promotion Services department.

## EXTRA TIP

Did you know that your flexi money (which is prepaid and non-refundable) can be used to purchase more than just meals in the dining halls? Take the long hike up to Lone Mountain and visit the café / convenience store located on the first floor – where you can buy many of the items you use every day – using flexi! Everything from toothbrushes and deodorant to cleaning supplies and medicine are available for purchase.



## LIVING & EATING ON CAMPUS

We all know that living in the dorms can be a huge challenge. Between cramped quarters, shower stalls and bunk beds, along with the new influx of schoolwork that you are now dealing with, eating healthy, well-balanced meals is likely to be the least of your worries. Fear not! There are ways around this that require minimal time and financial means. Having lived in Hayes-Healy Hall for a year as a freshman, I picked up all of these tips & tricks through mere trial and error, and am pleased to report that I did, indeed, survive my year in the dorms.

### *Look Up the Menu in Advance*

Let's be honest. The café can be overwhelming. The lunchtime crowds are no joke, so be sure to scope out the menu online before you enter the craziness – that way you can make a beeline to the correct station with minimal wandering. This is not only a huge timesaver, but an effective meal planner because the online menus display information on dietary restrictions!

### *Supplement Café Food with Other Groceries*

There are exactly three Trader Joe's locations in all of San Francisco, and one of them happens to be down the street from campus. USE THIS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE. Many of the foods found in Trader Joe's are delicious and on the healthier side, and are most often cheaper than the food in other grocery stores. (Keep in mind, though, that campus is also within walking distance of a Lucky Supermarket and a Target!)

Set aside \$20 every now and then to buy yourself (and possibly a friend) some groceries – I recommend non-perishables or things that you can keep frozen. That way, you'll be able to add some interesting alternatives to the same old stuff that is offered in the café, while also making sure that you're eating healthy foods that will provide you with the energy you need to get through your day. This is also a great safety net if you're anything like me, and are the type of person who eats later at night. The café closes around 8pm, so if you miss out on dinner for any reason, it's always helpful to have some food in your room that you can eat when the café is closed.

### *Don't Be Afraid to Visit More than One Station*

The great thing about flexi is that it doesn't confine you to a certain number of "meals." Instead, you are able to spend it like money on a credit card, and therefore you can take as much – or as little – of something as you like. It became a habit of mine to plan out what I wanted to eat before visiting the cafe, and by the time I left I usually had food in my hands from three or more stations.

For example, the "Roma" station often had plain steamed broccoli, a great basic ingredient to mix with many different types of cuisines; the "Street Food" section usually had plain brown and white rice, another staple for many meals; and the "Greens" station offered tons of salad toppings that can also double as great filler ingredients, including edamame, garbanzo beans, and carrots. You'll be charged nominal fees for each of these items from their respective stations, so while saving money you're also able to make each meal truly your own.