

# Compared Cost Of Home And Restaurant Lunches For Feminine Workers

There Is A Striking Contrast Between What The Lunch-  
room Gives The Feminine Wage-Earners For Fifty  
Cents And What Mother Can Provide Her  
With At the Comparatively Small Cost  
Of 19 To 30 Cents A Day.

By EMILY EMERSON LANTZ.

**“THE HUNGRY HEART”** furnished the late David Graham Phillips with the title for a yearning novel, but what the office girl and business woman is confronted with at the present time is a hungry stomach. Jason, of classic legend, set out with spirit to search for the Golden Fleece and was rewarded by finding it, but the pretty girls who trip so smilingly and so prettily gowned through business thoroughfares between noon and 2 P. M. are most of them in quest of a “fifty-fifty” proposition in the matter of quick lunch, and most of them return to their office tasks bitterly admitting defeat in the matter of securing anything adequate for the price each is able to pay.

The business woman is hampered by limited time and purse. Carfare is an item to be considered. Any lunchroom patronized by her must be close at hand, since it is fatiguing to walk far, and she must conserve time; her lunch hour is often the only time she has at her disposal for any little personal errands to shops.

A business man remarked the other day: “I never pay less than 60 cents for lunch and never get anything I like to eat. I notice an increasing tendency on the part of clerks to revert to the old-fashioned custom of bringing a little lunch box with them, and I have no doubt they have better lunches at less price than the young ladies who patronize lunchrooms.”

## Lunches Not Adequate.

Discussing the subject informally with a group of young wage-earners, most of them confessed, with bitterness, that 50 cents is the average sum each allows for luncheon and that what they obtain for that sum is as they expressed it, “inadequate.”

“You see,” remarked one, “a girl can’t eat even a sandwich just anywhere. Some environments take her appetite away, and she simply cannot eat beans, beans, beans—they give her dyspepsia. Also she does want a taste of something sweet for dessert. At a tearoom I pay for:

1 Cup chocolate.....	.20
Salad .....	.15 to .50
Slice cake or ice-cream..	.15

Total ..... .50 to .85

## Square Deal At Y. W. C. A.

Everyone agreed that they got their money’s worth at the cafeteria of the Young Women’s Christian Association, but its distance from the center of the city prevented many patronizing it who would like to do so.

“The Woman’s Exchange offers foods prepared according to high standards of cooking and greater variety than I find elsewhere,” remarked another girl, but she is an ethereal-looking creature and her luncheon that day did not seem exactly filling or substantial. It was:

Chicken soup, 1 cup.....	.15
1 egg sandwich.....	.15
1 slice devil’s fruit cake.....	.15

Total ..... .45

“I patronize an inn,” laughed another girl, “but except on high days and holidays, I try to keep within 50 cents and that has to include a very modest 5-cent tip to the waitress. Today I starved upon:

One sandwich.....	\$ .20
Coffee .....	.15
Cake .....	.10
Waitress .....	.05

Total .....\$ .50

A young Episcopalian, who appears to be keeping Lent, said she found it cheaper to pay 14 cents car fare and go home to a hot dinner, but if detained down town she usually purchased a

Fish salad, from.....	\$ .15 @ .30
Graham rolls.....	.10
Ice-cream .....	.15 @ .20

Total .....\$ .40 @ .60

Another, with reckless disregard of possible indigestion had indulged her whim for strawberry shortcake. Her lunch had been:

Soup .....	\$ .15
Bread .....	.05
Strawberry shortcake.....	.20
Coffee .....	.05

Total .....\$ .45

One girl, who apparently has studied the food problem intelligently and who looks well and rosy, explained that she usually tried to keep within 30 cents for luncheon, but exceeded or decreased that cost in relation to other meals. “Formerly I ate little breakfast,” she said, “now I try to eat more at that meal. If I have to get dinner, as well as lunch, down town, I try to make the luncheon less than 30 cents. Usually I include a glass of milk and try to balance the foods, simple as they are, so as to secure variety and nutrition. If I have ice-cream or custard I omit the milk. If I have soup, I make the dessert pie, or something with substance. An average lunch for me would be:

Milk .....	\$ .10
Soup .....	.10
Cake .....	.10

Total .....\$ .30

Or, perhaps:

Salad and rolls.....	\$ .25
Milk .....	.10

Total .....\$ .35

Another girl, who had tried most of the tea rooms and cafes, said about the best she could do (and that left her hungry), was:

Soup .....	\$ .15
Meat sandwich on rolls.....	.25
Cake .....	.15

Total .....\$ .55

## Mother’s Magic Touch.

Contrasted with these prices and food products two housewives of Baltimore, who daily give light luncheons to members of their families and then supplement them with substantial breakfasts and dinners, have given the writer the cost and kind of lunches they prepare.

One homemaker said: “One large loaf of bread, cost 15 cents, will make about 15 sandwiches. Butter, if soft and evenly spread, one-quarter of pound or more, butter being at present from 70 to 75 cents a pound. Slices of baked or boiled fowl, roast beef, lamb or veal, sprinkled with a small quantity of finely chopped parsley, a dash of patrika, if agreeable, or a little salt, make nourishing sandwiches; or ham or tongue can be used. With the above, slices of layer cake, small or plain cake, which would cost 8 or 10 cents. An apple or orange. The former are 30 or 40 cents a quarter of a peck (about eight apples). Naval oranges, 5 cents a piece. Indian River

oranges, 40 or 50 cents a dozen. A few small radishes are refreshing.

Lettuce sandwiches are dainty. Mayonnaise dressing (20 cents for a small jar) is good for emergency, spread upon the leaves and placed between the bread; cake, bananas, which cost about 15 or 20 cents per dozen. A tomato, which can be bought 3 for 20 cents—when in season much cheaper.

A good sandwich can be made of hard-boiled eggs sliced or chopped with a little parsley and celery and olives and moistened with either mayonnaise dressing or melted butter and seasoned well. Or the olives can be used whole. Eggs at present about 60 or 70 cents a dozen. Doughnuts, crullers and fruit in season—apples, pears, peaches or grapes.

Snappy cream or Pimento cheese make tasty sandwiches, sprinkled with nuts. Crackers can be used in place of bread; deviled eggs, pie or turnovers of pastry or buns. Fruit in season—apples, peaches, pears or grapes.

Jellies and marmalade spread between bread, milk rolls or quick biscuit are good. Small cucumber pickles or pickled onions are appetizing. Fruit in season and cake.

Peanut butter for a variety can be spread upon bread and crackers, also cheese sliced or grated if it has become hard. Season well. Crab cakes in season make delicious sandwiches.

“Any of these menus can be filled, said the home mother, for 25 or 30 cents and will be sufficient to satisfy the cravings of the inner man until the evening meal, whereas sandwiches for which you pay 10, 15 or 20 cents are merely a bite.”

## Exceedingly Dainty Lunches.

With a view to economical pricing the second housekeeper suggests the following lunches:

Several cheese and cracker sandwiches, a cup cake and an apple—price 23½ cents.

Three bread and olives sandwiches with mayonnaise dressing, an orange and fancy crackers—price 27½ cents.

Two roll sandwiches with ham, a

banana and a slice of cake—price 21½ cents.

Three bread and jelly sandwiches with dates and fancy bun—price 18½ cents.

It would seem from these figures that the box lunch brought from home offers greater variety and very appetizing food at distinctly lower cost than can be secured for twice the money in the average lunch room, and the thermos bottle will easily provide hot chocolate at less than 20 and coffee at less than 15 or even 5 cents a cup.