Erin Caldwell

Mrs. Caldwell

Composition 1

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Chipotle Mexican Grill vs. Panera Bread

There are so many fast food restaurants around these days, but with over 1 million locations each, Chipotle and Panera are two of the most popular choices. They differ, however, in three major ways: cuisine, variety, and atmosphere.

The first difference is that Chipotle and Panera differ in the types of cuisine they offer. Chipotle serves strictly Mexican fare. They have traditional Mexican dishes such as burritos and tacos. Customers then choose accompanying spicy and mild salsas and spiced meats like carnitas, barbacoa and grilled chicken. Chipotle also serves typical Mexican beverages such as margaritas and Dos Equis beer.

Panera, on the other hand, offers mostly American foods. They are well-known for their soup/salad/sandwich combinations, many of which are typically American choices like grilled cheese, chicken noodle soup, and cobb salad. Panera also has comfort food items like bagels and pastries. The beverages vary but consist of the typical American drinks like sweetened iced teas and hot chocolate.

Another difference between Chipotle and Panera is the amount of variety offered on the menu. Chipotle offers a very limited menu with only three real categories: tacos, burritos or salad. Within those categories, there are only four meats, four salsas and limited other fillings that customers can include. Chipotle neither offers dessert nor breakfast.

In contrast, Panera offers a myriad of food items to choose from. They have pasta, salad, soup, sandwiches, pastries and a number of other specialty items. Within each of those categories are even more choices including type of bread, cheese, meat, dressing and more. Each meal has a choice of three side items, and there are also many kinds of bakery desserts to choose from. Panera even has a different menu for breakfast with different items than they offer for lunch or dinner.

The third difference between Chipotle and Panera is in the restaurant’s atmosphere. Chipotle’s eating area is industrial-looking with their stainless steel table tops, corrugated metal wall coverings and wall art that usually has a lot of screws and steel. Their chairs and booths are hard wood, and they also offer a seating area that is simple stools bolted to the floor along a stainless steel counter top. The music is usually loud and modern and the lighting is somewhat harsh and bright.

Conversely, Panera’s atmosphere is warm and inviting. The restaurant has its own fireplace surrounded by padded booths and chairs. They feature little nooks with armchairs and side tables with earthy, muted colors. The art on the walls is more sentimental in nature recalling wheat fields or a mother’s warm kitchen. Classical music plays in the background, and Panera is often a place where teachers or students want to hang out to study or read.

In summary, Chipotle and Panera have vastly differing cuisines, options, and decorations. Both of these restaurants are hugely successful in our culture right now and both have their advantages. Take note of these differences next time you eat at either one and wonder at how there’s no single way to make a successful restaurant.