

Restaurants

by
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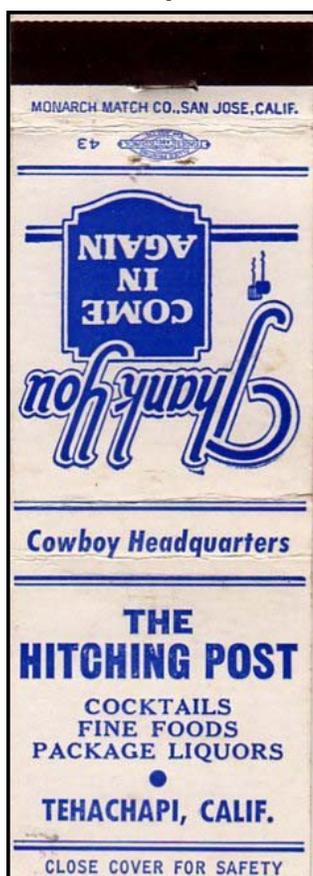
Want to have a huge collection in a hurry? Just collect Restaurants! Hands down, it's the largest category in the hobby. It's also one of the most widely collected...and it's probably the most unheralded. Why? Probably because it's just so darn big and just so darn...vague.

Why is this the biggest category? Because, traditionally, there have always been more restaurants than other matchcover-issuing businesses, at least of those pertinent to our discussion here...That's more restaurants than hotels, more restaurants than barber shops, and so on. Hence...more restaurant covers!...*A lot* more restaurant covers!

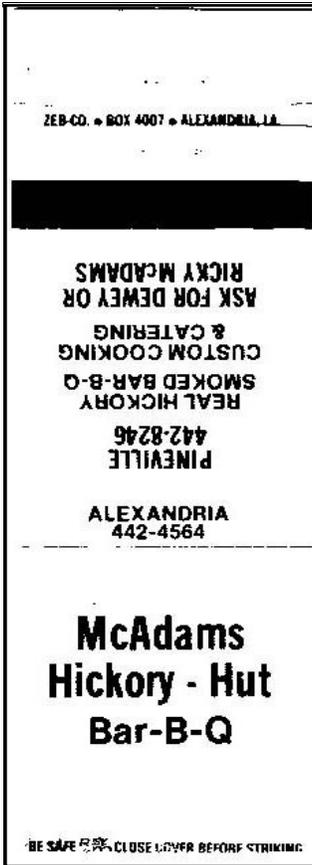
But just what qualifies as a restaurant? I'm actually not a Restaurant collector, myself, but I *do* eat! Given those credentials, I would define 'restaurant' as any establishment that serves food, to be eaten on the premises, to customers, paying or not. Boy! That covers a lot of territory! Off the top of my head...

Types

- Beer halls (that serve food)
- Buffets
- Cafes
- Cafeterias
- Coffee houses/shops
- Delicatessens (that serve food)
- Dining rooms



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- Drive-Ins
- Fast food places
- Grills
- Hofbraus
- Hotel restaurants
- Inns (restaurant type)
- Lodges (that serve food)
- Lounges (that serve food)
- Luncheonettes
- Night clubs (that serve food)
- Pubs (that serve food)
- Soup kitchens (I've never seen a cover from one)
- Sandwich shops
- Soda fountains (that serve food)
- Supper clubs
- Tea rooms (that serve food)

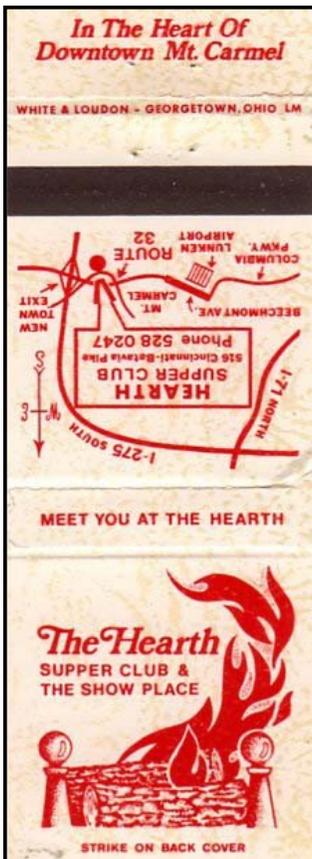
Specialty Restaurants

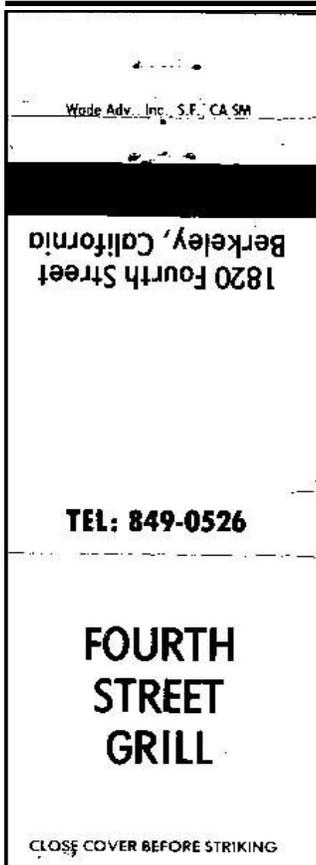
- Barbecue restaurants
- Broilers
- Chowder houses
- Crab houses
- Donut shops
- Oyster bars
- Pancake houses
- Pizza parlors
- Rib houses
- Seafood restaurants
- Steak houses
- Sushi Bars
- Waffle houses

Ethnic Restaurants

I suppose there are as many ethnic restaurants as there are cultures in the world, but the better known ones include...

- Chinese*
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Jewish
- Korean
- Mexican
- Mongolian
- Polish
- Polynesian





Russian
Swedish
Vietnamese

(*Chinese Restaurants are collected separately as their own category, but I'm certain that general Restaurant collectors include them in their collecting)

Misc.

Ice cream parlors
Pastry shops
Snack bars

Not surprisingly, then, restaurant collections can be truly daunting. The late Warren Marshall, CA, had over 100,000 in the 1980s, and the late Les Hufford, OH, reported 118,108 in his collection in August 1993. With such numbers, that means that the usual methods of organizing simply don't work. Alphabetizing, for example, would only divide a collection of 50,000 into 26 smaller divisions... leaving such divisions much too large to deal with. Imagine trying to check incoming covers against your collection of 3,000 "S" restaurants! Far too unwieldy. Even using states would only give you a divisor of



50, which would mean that at least some of your divisions (California, Pennsylvania, and New York, for example) would still run into the thousands.

How about states, *then* alphabetizing? That would give you a divisor of 1,300! *Now*, we're talking workable. And, I'm sure that at least some Restaurant collectors use such a system. But, I'm just as certain that there are any number of different systems in use. Each collector has to find something that he or she is comfortable with. Many may choose to break all those restaurants down into states, then *cities*; or, ethnic categories and *then* states; or...who knows?

Something else to consider when collecting Restaurants is...space! Do you have room for a 100,000+ cover collection? True, collectors are notoriously ingenious when it comes to dealing with such problems, and, I suppose, if you were to keep all those covers in fairly large boxes, this wouldn't be a serious obstacle. But, covers kept in boxes can't be gotten to and gone through easily, which is why most collectors put their covers in albums. So, how many albums would it take to house a 100,000+ collection, and how much space would it take to store that many albums? Not to mention the cost of those albums...and the pages. Now, that wouldn't dissuade a lot of collectors I know, but not everyone's situations are the same...so, it's just something to take into consideration.

On the other hand, one might rightly argue that, since this is the most populated category, it offers the collector more satisfactions--numbers, variety, locations...and, of course, availability. Looking for Midgets?...Hard to find! Looking for Crowns?...Hard to find! Looking for Restaurants?...Everyone's got 'em! And, no matter how many you've acquired, there's always more! Plus, since they're seen as essentially 'run-of-the-mill' covers [*only because others haven't yet succumbed to their undeniable allure*], they're cheap! So, the wonderful world of Restaurants awaits you! Have at 'em!