# GREASY SPOONS



'Greasy spoons' very rarely appear in guidebooks, but they are an essential part of life in the UK, especially for people living in the bigger cities. These small restaurants are so common that they often go unnoticed, but if they were removed, the country would be on its knees. In London, the capital city of the greasy spoon, there are hundreds of them, fuelling the population with bacon, egg and sausage.

Greasy spoon cafes are so called because any cutlery that comes into contact with the food they offer is immediately coated with a sticky, greasy layer of lard. More calories can be found in a cup of tea in a good greasy spoon than in a whole meal at a normal restaurant.

Greasy spoons are generally found slightly away from the main streets of most towns, they usually have large glass windows, a plastic sign with the name of the cafe — usually containing the name of the owner, e.g. Mario's, Bob's Place, Rita's Cafe — and a huge menu offering a wide variety of delights. Inside they are generally clean and functional. You'll see old wooden seats, tables covered with cracked linoleum and plain walls. Each table has on it a bottle of brown sauce, tomato ketchup and vinegar, and pots of salt and pepper.

In a typical greasy spoon, you will find people from all walks of life. Poets, builders, hurrying businessmen, students lazing around with huge mugs of tea. Some read novels, some stare into space, and others catch up on the day's news. At weekends there will always be large groups of friends, recovering from a night in the town.

The meals here are dangerously unhealthy, and absolutely delicious. All kinds of fried food can be bought for incredibly low prices. The centrepiece is usually the traditional English breakfast. Although it's called a breakfast, you have to be really brave to eat it first thing in the morning, because it is very big. At least two pieces of bacon, two sizzling sausages, two fried eggs, fried mushrooms, baked beans and bread soaked in hot oil and fried. The English breakfast is full of meat and fat. If you want something less filling, there's still a lot to choose from; particular specialities are bacon or fried egg sandwiches (or, of course, bacon and egg sandwiches). There is also often a range of vegetarian sausages and burgers.

Greasy spoons have some devoted followers. Typing 'greasy spoon' into an internet search engine will bring up hundreds of entries. With pictures, reviews, menus and stories, it's the next best thing to going to a greasy spoon café yourself. But of course, nothing can beat going to the real thing — especially on an empty stomach.

**1 According to the article, greasy spoons are**

a only found in big cities.

b advertised as a tourist attraction.

c important to many British people.

d going to be removed from city centres.

**2 The characteristic feature of greasy spoons is that they**

a use a special type of cutlery.

b offer a lot of dishes to choose from.

c are furnished in a sophisticated way.

d are not very clean.

**3 People who come to greasy spoons**

a are often in a hurry.

b come from various backgrounds.

c usually meet friends there.

d sometimes spend the night there.

**4 The traditional English breakfast is**

a not very cheap.

b not very tasty.

c served in huge portions.

d recommended for vegetarians.

**5 The author of the article**

a is a great fan of greasy spoons.

b believes greasy spoons represent British tastes in food.

c learned about greasy spoons on the Internet.

d thinks they should be moved away from the main streets.