

# Taco Bell Powers Up the Protein

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NEW YORK (AP) — Taco Bell aims to pack more protein on customers' plates.

The fast-food chain next week is replacing its Cantina Bell burritos and bowls with ones that will have a double portion of meat and more than 20 grams of protein.

The new Cantina Power bowls and burritos keep most of the Cantina Bell ingredients but Taco Bell is ditching some carbs, such as the corn salsa in the bowl and the rice and beans in the burrito. The calorie count will remain under 500.

Other food chains, like Panera Bread Co. and Subway, are adding ingredients seen as more healthy to their food as their shoppers demand more nutritional options. Taco Bell had introduced the Cantina Bell line, with ingredients considered more gourmet such as whole black beans, cilantro rice and all-white-meat chicken, in 2012. But Taco Bell, which caters to 18-to-34-year-olds, says its customers wanted more protein.

"People are not looking for diet food," said Brian Niccol, president of Taco Bell, in a conference call with the media. "What they're looking for is food that gives them energy." He said Cantina Power is a big step forward in pleasing customers who like to eat a lot of protein.

The prices will be in line with what Taco Bell had charged for Cantina Bell, ranging from \$3.79 for a chicken burrito to \$5.19 for a steak bowl.

Taco Bell, owned by Yum Brands Inc., is testing protein-heavy options for breakfast too, such as a Greek Yogurt with granola toppings and breakfast steak burritos and bowls in Omaha, Nebraska. It's hoping to roll out those items nationally next year.

**Source URL (retrieved on 04/25/2015 - 12:58pm):**

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