



Innovation > Food & Drink > Group dinners aim to introduce new friends at restaurants

GROUP DINNERS AIM TO INTRODUCE NEW FRIENDS AT RESTAURANTS

 FOOD & DRINK

Amid the vast ocean of online dating sites out there, we've begun seeing more and more efforts focusing on platonic friendships instead. First it was [Meet Joe](#); then we came across [Companion Tree](#). The latest spotting? [Grubwithus](#), a site that organizes group restaurant meals with an eye toward helping participants meet new friends. Now serving Chicago and San Francisco — New York is coming soon — Grubwithus organizes what it calls 'social meals' designed to "build friendship over food at restaurants that you've voted to be on the site". The site works with select restaurants to arrange family-style meals for a fixed price and a fixed length of about two hours. Participants can then sign up for a particular meal, paying the charge in advance in exchange for a ticket to bring to the event. Single-ticket pricing is typically in the USD 20 range, and attendees can see when they sign up who else has made a reservation. In fact, Grubwithus even offers early bookers a cheaper price as a reward "for being brave enough to eat with anyone," it says. Grubwithus is also privately testing a feature that lets groups plan their own meals. Dating may be an important part of life, but so too are good, steady friends. Keep the platonic [mass-mingling innovations](#) coming! (Related: [Site helps friends meet up spontaneously](#) — [Event planning site helps friends split the costs.](#)) Spotted by: Art Carmichael

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