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The secret garden restaurant menu alton towers

Photo Courtesy: Wine Not/Trip Advisor You may think you know how to judge a restaurant's quality: the friendliness of the staff, the atmosphere, and of course, the food. However, a lot goes on behind the scenes at restaurants that could seriously change how you view your favorite place to dine out. These are some of the most well-kept insider secrets about restaurants that you'll want to keep in mind when planning your next evening out. The Best Days to Avoid Restaurants Holidays like Valentine's Day and Mother's Day can be some of the busiest times of the year for restaurants. has less time for more critical tasks. Photo Courtesy: Masti Restaurant/Trip Advisor As a result, these times are also when restaurants are most likely to catch foodborne illnesses as cooks, servers and other workers all have less time to follow food safety rules and too many things to do at once. Dine out during these days at your own risk. Eavesdropping Happens More Than You ThinkWith good food, drink and company, a restaurant can be the perfect environment for catching up on the latest news and gossip. However, some customers feel a false sense of security and privacy at a restaurant. Servers are not deaf, and sometimes, your gossip makes for an entertaining moment in their own night. Photo Courtesy: yoletzvillasmil/Trip Advisor While there often isn't any harm in strangers knowing about your Aunt Margaret's scandalous behavior, there are times when you probably don't want your conversation shared with the entire kitchen. Act accordingly. The Dirty Truth About BathroomsYou may think you know which restaurants have clean bathrooms, but the truth is, a clean public bathroom is a bit of an oxymoron. Diligent restaurant workers do their best to make things sparkle, but they can only do so much. As anyone who's cleaned a restaurant bathroom knows, people do all sorts of unspeakable things in them. Photo Courtesy: Steve Sherron/YouTube According to a study in Applied and Environmental Microbiology, there are over 77,000 types of bacteria and viruses in your average public bathroom. Meanwhile, scientists at San Diego State University discovered that such bathrooms become completely recontaminated with fecal bacteria and dangerous microbes within one hour of a good clean and disinfecting. It's never a bad time to wash your hands. Tips Have Nothing to Do With Service QualityIt's easy to feel a sense of entitlement as a restaurant guest. You're paying good money for a meal, perhaps after a long day of work, and being a server isn't a complicated job even if it isn't an easy one. You also tip for good service, right? Photo Courtesy: Gian Q/Trip Advisor Studies show that people don't actually tip more for better service. Statistically, what matters more are things about you, like where you come from, your income and whether you use a credit card. Things like the gender and hair color of your server (blond women earn bigger tips) are also more likely to influence you. Considering that servers depend on tips to earn a living and that mistakes are as likely to be made in the kitchen as by them, it's better to be generous when the bill arrives. The Benefits of Being a Regular Restaurant employees love regulars. When someone is a repeat customer, they've likely enjoyed the service enough to return and ideally leave a solid tip. Because of that, regulars are usually a more dependable source of income for the restaurant and treat them appropriately, they'll often reward you for it in the form of faster service and maybe even a free drink or extra toppings on whatever you order. It really does pay to be kind. Don't Take It Personally When They're in a RushAll servers manage multiple tables, and when things are crowded, they sometimes have to cater to quite a few at once. While on slower days, they might be able to take the time to introduce themselves and chitchat (another thing that makes you more likely to tip them well, incidentally), that just isn't always possible. Photo Courtesy: Scottishmarko/Trip Advisor If a server is a bit brusque with you during a rush, don't hold it against them. They're doing what they need to do to ensure you and probably a fair number of other people all get your food in a timely manner. Taking offense to their efforts to ensure everyone has a good time under stressful conditions is only going to ensure that if a table does get worse service than the others, yours will be the one to be overlooked. What Promising Tips Before the Meal Really MeansThere's a special kind of restaurant customer that thinks they are smarter than everyone else. This person makes outrageous requests from the server before declaring that they'll give a good tip. Nine times out of ten, that customer leaves little to no tip at all. Photo Courtesy: Déborah B/Trip Advisor Such people think they've found a smart way to get special treatment, but seasoned servers see right through it. The best way to get good service is pretty much the same as it is with anyone: be polite, friendly and don't make unreasonable demands. And of course, if you want good service next time, leave a decent tip.Don't Ask Servers About Their Favorite DishesMost restaurant servers are required to perform a "stand up" with management before their shift. It gives the boss a chance to provide some much needed daily updates to the staff, specifically on daily specials and which foods to upsell. Photo Courtesy: Matthews Beachside Restaurant/Trip Advisor Servers use this information when a customer asks what they recommend. Rather than sharing their own thoughts on a food, which they may have never tried or not even like (not everyone's into seafood), they recommend what's best for the restaurant. This could be an expensive item, but it could also be something that uses ingredients that expire soon or that they're trying to clear out to make room for a new dish. It's not necessarily something bad, but it is something to be aware of. Kids Can Be DisgustingThere's no easy way around it: kids are dirty. They are living, breathing, walking germ machines and condiments to the tablecloth and chairs. Photo Courtesy: Brian R/Trip Advisor From spat out food to bodily fluids, restaurant servers have the unpleasant task of cleaning up the aftermath. They know exactly how disgusting things can get, and they do what they can to make sure you don't have to. Still, you might want to wash your hands after using the mustard. Where the Water Comes FromSay you're trying to avoid sugary drinks or alcohol and order water to accompany your big meal. Maybe it comes in a glass, or maybe it's in a pitcher full of ice and lemon slices. One thing's likely, however: No matter how fancy the establishment is, it probably came from a faucet, Photo Courtesy: Sery_btt/Trip Advisor Most non-bottled water at restaurants comes directly from the tap, and it's rarely filtered. To be fair, tap water in the vast majority of cities and towns is fine to drink. In fact, even the bottle of water you order to avoid drinking tap water might very well be filtered tap water might very water might winter, right? And restaurants often have specialty tea that you can't get elsewhere. Photo Courtesy: Saola Coffee Shop/Trip Advisor Not so much. While you can occasionally find a place with a truly exotic tea selection, most of the time, the teas available are more or less the same as what you would get at the grocery store. It may even be bagged tea with the bag removed to make it seem classier. Once again, it's not exactly terrible, but it should make you wonder if it's really worth spending extra money on. Think Before Asking for a Lemon or Lime WedgeWhile the thought of a fresh slice of lemon is certainly appealing, it's not practical for restaurants to cut up a new one each time a customer orders water. With dozens or hundreds of customers served each day, restaurant workers end up preparing lemons either early in the morning or last thing before they close. Photo Courtesy: Rouxbe Online Cooking School/YouTube What that means for you is that the lemon in your glass definitely isn't fresh. Lemons keep well even after being sliced, so it's not too big of a deal, but if a restaurant shows other signs of cutting corners, you might want to forgo the fruit. Who knows how long it's been out for? Why Bread Is Complimentary Bread and some patrons nearly make a meal of the bread without saving room for the main course, saving buffets money. However, most establishments do not bake their bread in-house. Photo Courtesy: TBIRD Travels/Trip Advisor No matter how fancy the restaurant is, it's just not feasible in most cases. Instead, they order bread from local bakeries. Some national chains even order bread for all locations from one place, and they may even receive it frozen. Is the Soup Homemade? Some restaurants pride themselves on homemade soups made fresh daily. Many soups are cheap, easy to make and stay good for a long time, and they keep guests happy while they wait for their food to arrive. Photo Courtesy: Debra T /Trip Advisor However, unless a restaurant specifically claims to make the soup themselves, there's a good chance that it wasn't. Restaurants can buy soup from distributors in plastic bags that are stored in a walk-in cooler until they're needed. They taste fresh, but in reality, they're not much different from the soup you buy at the grocery store. Homemade soup is cheap, but the premade stuff can be even cheaper. Watch Out for Salads a salad seems like a hard thing to mess up. Chop up some lettuce, add other assorted vegetables, some nuts, fruit or chicken and dressing, and viola! A salad is born. However, it's not always that simple. Photo Courtesy: Sendasa Cafe/Trip Advisor While many restaurants don't do this, some will disguise the presence of lettuce and other produce that's past its prime by mixing it in with other, fresh lettuce. Some chain restaurants that use premade salads also keep them past their expiration date. If a place seems shady, skip the greens. Not-So-Special DishesMost people think restaurant specials are the best dishes a chef can create. Sometimes they are, but sometimes, there's a financial motive behind what dish gets made into the special of the day. Photo Courtesy: Eva D/Trip Advisor Sometimes it's simply because the restaurant was able to get a great deal when buying an ingredient in bulk. When life gives you fresh clams, make New England clam chowder. However, just like with server recommendations, specials are sometimes made with ingredients that the restaurant needs to get rid of. Take Care With Seafood. While nothing beats fresh crab or salmon, when seafood goes bad, it's the absolute worst. Photo Courtesy: Liliana A/Trip Advisor Seafood has an extremely brief shelf life, yet it's also expensive, giving chefs an incentive to "postpone" the expiration date more than any other dish. Seafood that's past its prime is particularly likely to be used in soups and dishes with heavy sauces, so choose your meal accordingly. The Uncertainty of Desserts There's nothing better than a brownie à la mode or a decadent slice of cake after a good meal, and homemade desserts in particular make for a wonderful way to treat yourself. You can probably guess what we're about to say, however: They're not always really homemade. Photo Courtesy: HLX/Trip Advisor The word "homemade" itself is kind of misleading. While your brownie may have been made fresh, it also could have been "made" when a scoop of ice cream was placed on a brownie shipped from across the country. We won't blame you if that doesn't stop you from enjoying it, though. Vegans BewareIt's not always easy being a vegetarian, and that's doubly true for vegans. It's hard to find a restaurant that can offer more than one or two dishes that are truly free of meat and animal products. Photo Courtesy: Thibaut Modelia/Trip Advisor Unfortunately, even when you do find a good vegan restaurant meal, it's not always actually vegan. Sometimes servers and even cooks don't know all the animal-derived products in the foods they serve, and even when they do, pots and pans are sometimes insufficiently cleaned, leading to cross-contamination. Undercooked FoodSure, a chef should understand the difference between rare and medium-rare, but that's not always the case. Even when they do, managing multiple orders can cause even the most diligent chefs to make mistakes, leading to food that's undercooked. Photo Courtesy: JuLoSaGa/Trip Advisor Receiving a rare steak after expected by any server worth their salt. Ask About Ingredients — The Right WayThere are all kinds of reasons why you might need to know about what goes into your food. Maybe you have a food allergy, maybe you're a vegan or vegetarian, maybe you have religious dietary restrictions — the list goes on and on. However, there's a right and wrong way to ask about what's in your food. Photo Courtesy: DaniZanotta/Trip Advisor If you come across as demanding and ask which specific farm in Kansas your beef was raised on, you probably won't win any friends among the waitstaff. If you're polite and acknowledge that you are asking something of them, however, most people are happy to help. There's no need to apologize, but do thank your server, the chef or whoever else ends up answering you. Yes, You Still Need to Tip on DrinksAlcohol can be expensive, and drinks at a restaurant are particularly pricey. However, just because they cost a lot doesn't mean they should be magically excluded from the total amount you tip on. Photo Courtesy: Jeanolapin/Trip Advisor Servers have to do just as much work to place your drink orders and bring them to you as food items, so it makes no sense to stiff them for doing extra work for you. What's more, some places split tips between the server and the bartender who very well may also be making below minimum wage. While guidelines on what to tip for drinks are more variable than food, 20 percent or a dollar or two per drink are common rules of thumb. Unclean Dishes HappenNo one likes finding a dirty utensil in their rolled-up napkin, but it's an unfortunate risk you always take when going to a restaurant. Industrial dishwashers can clean a lot, but they're not perfect, and restaurants go through thousands of dishes and silverware each day. That means that accidents do happen. Photo Courtesy: CBC Docs/YouTube While the waitstaff sometimes catch dirty utensils, rolling utensils into napkins itself is mind-numbing work, making it easy for them to miss something. If you find a dirty utensil, be polite about it, and you just might get something nice from your server. There's Usually a Reason for Empty Tables and flipping them for more customers quickly and efficiently, which can make it all the more frustrating when you have to wait for a table. It can be especially bad when you can see an empty table in front of you, or when they refuse to seat you because your full party hasn't arrived. What gives? Photo Courtesy: The Waiter's Academy/YouTube In both cases, it's ironically most likely to ensure speedy service. Tables are usually only kept open during a rush if there's a reservation or there aren't enough servers or cooks to quickly bring them food. As for why you may have to wait for your party to arrive, it's to keep a table from being occupied for hours in case your friends are late. Your temporary inconvenience ensures other people's quick service. Where Did the Server Go? While it may be tempting to think that your server has intentionally decided to ditch you to go out back and smoke a cigarette, that's rarely the case. While the stress of the restaurant industry definitely does lead to big bucks for cigarette companies, there's usually a more benign reason for a server being busy. Photo Courtesy: Megan Shinner/YouTube Remember, a server being busy. Photo Courtesy: Megan Shinner/YouTube Remember, a server being busy. quickly, so while they might have forgotten that you were there, they're probably just helping someone else. Even if they are avoiding you, it could be because the kitchen is backed up and they literally cannot bring you your food. The Perks of the JobEveryone knows the stereotype of the snobby customer who decides to send back perfectly good food a dozen times over some imagined flaw. Such customers definitely exist, and they're certainly a pain, but they can also be a boon. Photo Courtesy: Sergey S/Trip Advisor What customers don't know is that if a dish is sent back without being touched, one of the employees may take the opportunity to enjoy it themselves, especially if they're on break. If you wanted it, you should have eaten it. Wash. Your. Hands. Washing hands is the simplest way to prevent the spread of germs and pathogens. A thorough, 20 second wash under hot water is the bare minimum necessary to kill harmful germs and pathogens. A thorough, 20 second wash under hot water is the bare minimum necessary to kill harmful germs and pathogens. actually do. Photo Courtesy: Mayo Clinic/YouTube Food often passes through the hands of at least two people before reaching the table. While many restaurant workers absolutely do follow that handy chart of proper handwashing steps, the odds are good that, at least every once in a while, someone who touched your food didn't. Have fun trying not to think about it. How Not to Get a Server's AttentionWhether it's because of negligence on the part of your server or the sudden realization that you actually wanted the chicken adobo rather than the salmon, you've probably needed to flag down your server at some point. That's fine, but there's a right way and a wrong way to do it. Photo Courtesy: Ellie A/Trip Advisor Snapping your fingers or whistling, for instance, is a great way to convey that you regard your server as little more than a dog but a poor way to actually get them to come. They may very well start intentionally ignoring you, and they may very well plan unwanted surprises for you. Instead, try and make eye contact, and if that doesn't work, a hand wave and a self-deprecating smile and thanks can ensure good will even in a busy restaurant. The Real Authority Most servers want to resolve any problems you have just as much as you do, and generally speaking, you'll be treated better if you avoid escalating a situation that doesn't warrant such a move. Photo Courtesy: dirk q/Trip Advisor That said, if you genuinely do have a terrible server, you should ask to speak to the general manager or owner of the establishment. They're usually the ones with the power to offer a refund. However, if you bother such a person over nothing, you might find yourself to be unwelcome at the restaurant. A Germophobe's Worst NightmareThe very last step after enjoying a nice meal is paying the bill. You may think you're out safe, but the leather-bound bill holder your server may give you what the waiters tried not to: lots and lots of germs. These are practically the most-touched items in the entire restaurant. Photo Courtesy: Florian D/Trip Advisor This leather folder has made its way through the hands of who knows how many customers and servers. If you're really worried about germs, this entirely inedible object is what you should really be afraid of. MORE FROM REFERENCE.COM

