



HOW TO BE A GOOD PERSON AT A RESTAURANT

By Avantika Bose

“A restaurant is a fantasy - a kind of living fantasy in which diners are the most important members of the cast.”

Whenever we go out for a meal, we expect two things - excellent food quality and an overall good experience of which good decor, ambience along with courteous staff and patrons also play an important part. Now, haven't we all come across those special category of humans who fuss over and create a scene over almost anything and everything? Be it the fact that the hot sauce they asked for came in two minutes late or that their drink has two cubes of ice instead of three, every restaurant around the world has seen that annoying person who's just waiting for his/her server to make a mistake so they can begin their ranting. In fact, about right now in 8 out of every 10 restaurants, there's that unhappy customer complaining or screaming.

What we often forget is that a restaurant just doesn't comprise of chefs, stewards and bartenders. There is an entire team of hard working people both in front of you and back-of-the-house that combine together to make it a memorable experience for you. But unfortunately, there are always a few bad apples who expect royal treatment and often become rude and impolite at the drop of a hat. This ensures an unsatisfying experience for them as well as others around them. So here are a few guidelines which you need to follow next time you're dining outside.

- A lot of you might not have thought about this, but the fact is that your meal begins way before you're even near the vicinity of the restaurant you plan to eat at. It starts when you make a reservation. So if it's your friend's birthday, let them know. If you're a pure vegetarian, tell them so that they can tell you if their vegetarian dishes have egg in it or not. No restaurant wants a customer to create a public scene in their outlet - imagine what a blasphemous Zomato review that would make for!

- Don't feel shy or hesitate to send your food back. If you asked for something extremely spicy and it isn't then you should let the staff know, after all you're paying for it. But don't be that person that asks their dish to be changed when they clearly asked for mash potatoes but now feel like eating French fries. However, sometimes, restaurants do make mistakes, but it is important to be a little empathetic as we're all humans at the end of the day and to give them another chance - unless it's something really blasphemous.

- A cardinal sin that people commit when they're at a restaurant is being too loud. We get it, you're happy. You've had a few drinks and you're enjoying a good meal with someone special - be it your wife, kids, boyfriend or your pals. But so is everyone else. No one is interested in your conversation. So keep it low and restricted to your own table. We're all trying to have our own conversations. Uncouthness and a lack of class is never appreciated.

- Another kind of undesirables are the guests who keep sitting at their table long after their meal has been completed and the bill's been paid. We get it, you had a great time but there are other people waiting to be seated and they're hungry. Why do that to them? If you want to spend a little more time with whoever you've come out with then continue your conversation at the bar or better yet, go to a café and have a conversation over a cuppa. But don't hold the table. The restaurant would like it back and so does the person waiting to be seated.

To be honest, how good your experience is at a restaurant totally depends on the service there. But if you keep these few points in mind, you'll have a way better experience for sure. After all, you are spending your hard-earned money or maybe your dad's hard-earned money - whatever the case hard-earned being the key word - then why not make it worth each penny spent. ■