



RESTAURANT BUFFET QUALITY ASSURED SEAL



Mystery guest and audit criteria

Five point scale assessment based on the following point system: 1 point for poor quality - 2 points for acceptable quality - 3 points for good quality - 4 points for very good quality - 5 points for excellent quality. Some criteria are non compensatory and may only be awarded a minimum of 3 points. Criteria that are not marked with a score are mandatory; a yes/no answer should be given and areas for improvement pointed out.

Minimum and maximum points per criteria		1	2	3	4	5
1	SERVICE					
1.1	Pre-booking					
1.1.1	<i>Website available and updated; a company social media page (e.g. business Facebook page) for small restaurants (less than 60 covers) is sufficient;</i>					
1.1.2	<i>Current food menu clearly available online with prices (where not available reason given);</i>					
1.1.3	<i>General info about the restaurant including opening hours, directions and contact details. Reference to special dietary food requests should also be available;</i>					
1.1.4	<i>Option to book online;</i>					
	How to award the points					
	The minimum requirements to pass this criterion includes the compliance with the first three indicators (score 3-4); the fourth indicator together with the first three would indicate a maximum score of 4-5 points.					
	Pre-Booking score	1	2	3	4	5
1.2	Booking					
1.2.1	<i>Call answered promptly within restaurant opening hours (number of rings) and staff name given - calls should be answered within 5 rings or less;</i>					
1.2.2	<i>Were the personal details recorded?</i>					
1.2.3	<i>Did the person taking the call confirm the booking details?</i>					
1.2.4	<i>Customer asks for supplementary information and is given correct and adequate information e.g. directions, car park, special requests, etc.</i>					
1.2.5	<i>Customer is asked by the person taking the call if s/he can help in any other way e.g. directions offered, car parking explained, special requests, etc.</i>					
	How to award the points					
	Compliance with the first four indicators (score 3-4); the fifth indicator together with the first four would indicate a maximum score of 4-5 points.					
	Booking score	1	2	3	4	5
1.3	Arrival					
1.3.1	<i>Acknowledged promptly - usually less than 1 minute; a point may be deducted for unreasonable delay with no adequate apology;</i>					
1.3.2	<i>Greeted (ideally by name) and seated efficiently; an explanation should be offered if the table is not yet available and ideally offered a place to seat and/or complimentary drink - Guests should be escorted to their table and politely assisted to sit; as a minimum guests are just escorted to their table.</i>					
1.3.3	<i>Explanation of the buffet operation as a self service operation and highlighting which sections provide what course. The possibility of a second helping should be mentioned/encouraged;</i>					
1.3.4	<i>Menu is promptly presented to guests (or available at the table) - if guests need to ask for the menu (after a long wait - approximately 5 minutes) a point is deducted;</i>					
1.3.5	<i>Examples of anticipatory/excellent service such as: offer to take coats, offer to take drinks order when seated, clearing surplus settings, orientation e.g. toilet facilities, check of guest comfort etc.</i>					
	How to award the points					
	Compliance with the first four indicators (score 3-4); the fifth indicator together with the first four would indicate a maximum score of 4-5 points.					
	Arrival score	1	2	3	4	5
1.4	Taking the food/beverage order					
1.4.1	<i>Effective communication between the waiter and guest/s;</i>					
1.4.2	<i>Time to take order from presentation of beverage menu - within 10 minutes;</i>					
1.4.3	<i>Knowledge of food dishes on display;</i>					
1.4.4	<i>Knowledge of wine/beverage lists;</i>					
1.4.5	<i>Proactive service - the following are some examples of good proactive service. Identifying anticipatory explanations of unusual dishes or ingredients, up selling specialty dishes, identifying local suppliers (e.g. fishermen), explaining restaurant/chef's signature dish or proactive explanation of menu changes and replacement dishes/ingredients if required;</i>					

	How to award the points (continued 1.4) Compliance with the first four indicators (score 3-4); the fifth indicator together with the first four would indicate a maximum score of 4-5 points.					
	Taking the food/beverage order	1	2	3	4	5
1.5	Restaurant dinner - food service					
1.5.1	Appropriate staffing levels;					
1.5.2	The finished first course plates are cleared as each guest returns to the buffet to collect the main course. The main course plates are cleared after all guests at the table have finished. An offer for a further portion should precede a further satisfaction check at the end of the main course;					
1.5.3	Table cleared and set up for dessert course;					
1.5.4	Food displayed at the correct temperature, hot plates available (where applicable) and tent cards describing food dishes available;					
1.5.5	Guest satisfaction check a few minutes into each food course;					
	How to award the points Compliance with the first four indicators (score 3-4); the fifth indicator together with the first four would indicate a maximum score of 4-5 points.					
	Food service score	1	2	3	4	5
1.6a	Restaurant dinner - beverage service including wine					
1.6.1	Bottle presented (where applicable wine vintage on bottle should match that on menu unless otherwise indicated), opened at table and taste offered (initial drinks and other beverages should be served prior to the first course and, where possible, from the right hand side);					
1.6.2	Wine and other beverages served at the correct temperature; a wine bucket/cooler offered for white/rosé wine;					
1.6.3	Provision of accompaniments to drinks, examples include ice and lemon; use of trays to serve drinks by the glass;					
1.6.4	Additional drinks offered, glasses topped up and clearing away of empty glasses and bottles;					
1.6.5	Designated or specifically trained wine staff. Excellent knowledge of wine list with staff member able to make recommendations, up sell house wines or local produce. Staff very proactive and observant providing an excellent service throughout dinner.					
1.6b	Restaurant dinner - beverage service excluding wine					
1.6.1	Drinks served at the appropriate serving temperature;					
1.6.2	Drinks served within a reasonable timeframe (initial drinks and other beverages should be served prior to the first course and, where possible, from the right hand side);					
1.6.3	Provision of accompaniments to drinks, examples include ice and lemon; use of trays to serve drinks by the glass;					
1.6.4	Additional drinks offered and clearing away of empty glasses and bottles;					
1.6.5	Designated or specifically trained staff on cocktails and other beverages. Excellent knowledge of cocktail and beverage list with staff member able to make recommendations, up sell and promote house specials. Staff very proactive and observant providing an excellent service throughout dinner.					
	How to award the points Compliance with the first four indicators (score 3-4); the fifth indicator together with the first four would indicate a maximum score of 4-5 points.					
	Beverage service score	1	2	3	4	5
1.7	Departure					
1.7.1	Accurate and itemised bill provided once asked (all bill items were clear prior to ordering);					
1.7.2	Bill well presented;					
1.7.3	Efficient payment procedure;					
1.7.4	Guest satisfaction check - verbally or through a feedback form;					
	How to award the points The minimum requirements to pass this criterion include the compliance with the first three indicators (score 3-4); the fourth indicator together with the first three would indicate a maximum score of 4-5 points.					
	Departure score	1	2	3	4	5
	Total score - service					

Minimum and maximum points per criteria		1	2	3	4	5
2	HOSPITALITY					
2.1	Booking score - friendly tone with polite telephone manners at time of booking; person taking the call identified himself/herself; customer is thanked by name for booking (4-5 points); answered correctly but impersonal (2-3 points); not friendly or impolite (1 point).	1	2	3	4	5
2.2	Arrival score - warm and friendly welcome/greeting; extension of wishes for an enjoyable meal (4-5 points); correctly but impersonal (2-3 points); cold and indifferent greeting (1 point).	1	2	3	4	5

2.3	Restaurant dinner score - <i>courteous, attentive and enthusiastic staff (4-5 points); impersonal service with no enthusiasm showed by staff (2-3 points); cold and indifferent service (1 point).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
2.4	Restaurant beverage score - <i>courteous, attentive and enthusiastic staff (4-5 points); impersonal service with no enthusiasm showed by staff (2-3 points); cold and indifferent service (1 point).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
2.5	Departure score - <i>acknowledging and thanking the customer for visiting the restaurant, suggesting a return visit (4-5 points); correctly but impersonal (2-3 points); did not acknowledge or thank for your custom (1 point).</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Total score - hospitality						

Minimum and maximum points per criteria		1	2	3	4	5
3	FOOD QUALITY					
3.1 Starter						
3.1.	Appearance / presentation	1	2	3	4	5
1	Quality of main ingredients, sauce (where applicable) and accompaniments	1	2	3	4	5
3.1.	2 Culinary skills (including serving temperature)	1	2	3	4	5
3.2 Main course						
3.2.	Appearance / presentation	1	2	3	4	5
1	Quality of main ingredients, sauce (where applicable) and accompaniments	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.	2 Culinary skills (including serving temperature)	1	2	3	4	5
3.3 Dessert/cheese course						
3.3.	Appearance / presentation	1	2	3	4	5
1	Quality of main ingredients, sauce (where applicable) and accompaniments	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.	2 Culinary skills (including serving temperature)	1	2	3	4	5
Total score - Food quality						

Minimum and maximum points per criteria		1	2	3	4	5
4	BEVERAGE QUALITY					
4.1 Beverage quality (drinks prepared inhouse)						
4.1.	Presentation	1	2	3	4	5
1	Quality of main components and choice/range	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.	Professional skills	1	2	3	4	5
Total score - Beverage quality						

Minimum and maximum points per criteria		1	2	3	4	5
5	OTHER AREAS CHECKED BY THE MYSTERY GUEST					
5.1	Ambience - appropriate environment in line with the restaurant's specialisation or class.	1	2	3	4	5
5.2	Tables and chairs should be appropriate to type and style of restaurant - sufficient table size and comfort of seating.	1	2	3	4	5
5.3	Variety at the buffet - balance, variety and choice of food - a good spread across the main types of ingredients, though account would be taken of the nature and style of the restaurant.	1	2	3	4	5
5.4	Menu appearance (applicable also to menu on board and specials of the day) - text, content, design and physical appearance of the menu (clearly set out menu; easy to access all relevant information including prices; gives clear breakdown of dish and style); Menu appropriate to style of restaurant;	1	2	3	4	5
5.5	Noise levels - hardly noticed staff's activity (4-5 points), some cluttering (2-3 points), constant clutter and noise (1 point).	1	2	3	4	5

5.6	Room lighting - very effective and well balanced (4-5 points); well lit but does not compliment décor (2-3 points); badly lit (1 point).	1	2	3	4	5
5.7	Room temperature (indoors) - very pleasant controlled temperature (4-5 points); adequate (2-3 points); uncomfortable (1 point)	1	2	3	4	5
5.8	Uniformity of waiting staff attire, clean and well groomed (long hair should be neatly tied back).	1	2	3	4	5
5.9	Appropriate behaviour of staff and language used when communicating with one another.			3	4	5
5.10	Good condition of crockery, glassware, cutlery and table linen;			3	4	5
5.11	Good condition of the restaurant decor (including floor, ceiling and walls) and furniture;			3	4	5
5.12	Good standard of restaurant cleanliness;			3	4	5
5.13	Ease of entrance and exit into the toilet; good condition of the entire decor including floor, ceiling and walls; good condition of the fittings; accessories and machines providing hygienic products well stocked and maintained; baby changing facilities;			3	4	5
5.14	Good standard of cleanliness in toilet; well maintained; fresh, cleanG smelling atmosphere (if the toilet is not sufficiently clean the mystery guest should check another toilet or visit again prior leaving the premises);			3	4	5
5.15	Information signs (where applicable) are available in English and Maltese; as a minimum English is to be used. Symbols or pictograms may also be used.			3	4	5
Total score - other areas						

Compliance with mandatory requirements			Y/N
6	MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS CHECKED BY THE MYSTERY GUEST		
6.1	Manager available during visit;	Yes/No/Comments	
6.2	Functional website with basic information as per criterion 1.1. A company social media page for small restaurants (less than 60 covers) is sufficient.	Yes/No/Comments	
6.3	Wines from grapes grown in Malta - a minimum of 30% or 20 different wines from the list of wines available in the restaurant;	Yes/No/Comments	

Compliance with mandatory requirements			Y/N
7	MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS CHECKED THROUGH AN ANNOUNCED VISIT		
7.1	Consumer surveys – possibility for guest to provide feedback either online or through alternative means (e.g. questionnaires) and action taken to improve the quality of service;	Yes/No/Comments	
7.2	Mechanism is in place for handling of complaints at place of delivery and via internet/email;	Yes/No/Comments	
7.3	Consumer oriented processes - maintenance and cleaning;	Yes/No/Comments	
7.4	Induction training for all employees and a minimum of one person trained in basic first aid;	Yes/No/Comments	
7.5	Involvement of employees in the quality process – quality coordinator;	Yes/No/Comments	
7.6	Compliance with all relevant legislation (declaration).	Yes/No/Comments	

100% COMPLIANCE WITH MANDATORY CRITERIA (Y/N)	
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Quality assured restaurants must meet all the mandatory criteria as indicated above (sections 6 and 7) as well as the minimum score in each of the five sections in the table below.

Total score - mystery guest visit		Min	Min	Min	Max
Budget per person (Euros)		<30	30-45	45>	
1	Service	19	23	26	35
2	Hospitality	16	16	16	25
3	Food quality	25	29	34	45
4	Beverage quality	8	10	11	15
5	Other areas checked by the mystery guest	41	49	56	75