



RESTAURANT 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.

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| Minimum and maximum points per criteria | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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| 1 | SERVICE AND HOSPITALITY |
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| 1.1 | Pre-booking - Online check |
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| 1.1.1 | <i>Restaurant website available</i> |
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| 1.1.2 | <i>Restaurant social media page (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, etc) available</i> |
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| 1.1.3 | <i>Current food menu clearly available online with prices (where not available reason given)</i> |
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| 1.1.4 | <i>General info online about the restaurant including opening hours, directions, contact details available and all updated. Reference to special dietary food requests should also be available</i> |
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| 1.1.5 | <i>Option to book online available</i> |
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| How to award the points | |
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| 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. | |
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| Pre-booking - Online check - Score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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| 1.2 | Telephone Booking score |
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| 1.2.1 | <i>The telephone was answered immediately, the name of the restaurant was mentioned as part of the greeting</i> |
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| 1.2.2 | <i>Did the person taking the call confirm the booking details and ask for personal details including contact number?</i> |
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| 1.2.3 | <i>Customer asks for supplementary information and is given correct and adequate information e.g. directions, car park, special requests, etc.</i> |
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| 1.2.4 | <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> |
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| 1.2.5 | <i>Friendly tone with polite telephone manners at time of booking; person taking the call identified himself/herself; customer is thanked by name for booking</i> |
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| How to award the points | |
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| One point for each of the criteria satisfied above. | |
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| Telephone Booking score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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| 1.3 | Arrival |
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| 1.3.1 | <i>Acknowledged promptly - usually less than 1 minute; a point may be deducted for unreasonable delay with no adequate apology</i> |
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| 1.3.2 | <i>Warm and friendly welcome / greeted (ideally by name). an explanation should be offered if the table is not yet available and ideally offered a place to seat and/or complimentary drink</i> |
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| 1.3.3 | <i>Seated efficiently;- Guests should be escorted to their table and politely assisted to sit; as a minimum guests are just escorted to their table</i> |
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| 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 not awarded</i> |
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| 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, extension of wishes for an enjoyable meal etc.</i> |
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| How to award the points | |
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| One point for each of the criteria satisfied above. | |
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| Arrival score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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| 1.4 | Taking the food/beverage order |
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| 1.4.1 | <i>Effective communication between the waiter and guest/s</i> |
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| 1.4.2 | <i>Time to take order from presentation of menu - within 10 minutes</i> |
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| 1.4.3 | <i>Menu knowledge (à la carte and set menu where applicable)</i> |
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| 1.4.4 | <i>Knowledge of wine/beverage lists</i> |
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| 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> |
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| How to award the points | |
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| One point for each of the criteria satisfied above. | |
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| Taking the food/beverage order | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
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| 1.5 | Restaurant dinner - food service | | | | | |
| 1.5.1 | <i>Appropriate staffing levels</i> | | | | | |
| 1.5.2 | <i>Reasonable waiting time - within 15 - 20 minutes from the order for the starter and within 10 - 15 minutes from finishing the starter for the main course; desserts are offered after the table is cleared from the main course plates. A longer (reasonable) waiting time is acceptable provided that the guest is made aware.</i> | | | | | |
| 1.5.3 | <i>Good serving skills (e.g. not across the table)</i> | | | | | |
| 1.5.4 | <i>Food served as ordered and at the correct temperature on sufficiently hot plates (where applicable)</i> | | | | | |
| 1.5.5 | <i>Courteous, attentive and enthusiastic staff.</i> | | | | | |
| | How to award the points | | | | | |
| | One point for each of the criteria satisfied above. | | | | | |
| | Food service score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1.6 | Restaurant dinner - serving of wine | | | | | |
| 1.6.1 | <i>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)</i> | | | | | |
| 1.6.2 | <i>Wine served at the correct temperature; a wine bucket/cooler offered for white/rosé wine;</i> | | | | | |
| 1.6.3 | <i>Additional wine offered and offered to top up wine glasses.</i> | | | | | |
| 1.6.4 | <i>Clearing away of empty wine glasses and wine bottles.</i> | | | | | |
| 1.6.5 | <i>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.</i> | | | | | |
| | How to award the points | | | | | |
| | One point for each of the criteria satisfied above. | | | | | |
| | Restaurant dinner - serving of wine | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1.7 | Restaurant dinner - beverage service (other drinks example water and coffee) | | | | | |
| 1.7.1 | <i>Drinks served at the appropriate serving temperature;</i> | | | | | |
| 1.7.2 | <i>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);</i> | | | | | |
| 1.7.3 | <i>Provision of accompaniments to drinks, examples include ice and lemon; use of trays to serve drinks by the glass;</i> | | | | | |
| 1.7.4 | <i>Courteous, attentive and enthusiastic staff</i> | | | | | |
| 1.7.5 | <i>Excellent knowledge of beverage list with staff member able to make recommendations, up sell and promote house specials.</i> | | | | | |
| | How to award the points | | | | | |
| | One point for each of the criteria satisfied above. | | | | | |
| | Restaurant dinner - beverage service (other drinks example water and coffee) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1.8 | Departure | | | | | |
| 1.8.1 | <i>Accurate and itemised bill provided once asked (all bill items were clear prior to ordering);</i> | | | | | |
| 1.8.2 | <i>Bill well presented;</i> | | | | | |
| 1.8.3 | <i>Efficient payment procedure;</i> | | | | | |
| 1.8.4 | <i>Guest satisfaction check - verbally or through a feedback form;</i> | | | | | |
| 1.8.5 | <i>Acknowledging and thanking the customer for visiting the restaurant, suggesting a return visit.</i> | | | | | |
| | How to award the points | | | | | |
| | One point for each of the criteria satisfied above. | | | | | |
| | Departure score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Total score - service | | | | | |
| 2 | FOOD AND BEVERAGE QUALITY | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Starter (where applicable) | | | | | |
| 2.1.1 | <i>Appearance / presentation</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.1.2 | <i>Quality of main ingredients, sauce (where applicable) and accompaniments</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.1.3 | <i>Culinary skills (including serving temperature)</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.2 | Main course | | | | | |
| 2.2.1 | <i>Appearance / presentation</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.2.2 | <i>Quality of main ingredients, sauce (where applicable) and accompaniments</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.2.3 | <i>Culinary skills (including serving temperature)</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.3 | Dessert/cheese course (where applicable) | | | | | |
| 2.3.1 | <i>Appearance / presentation</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.3.2 | <i>Quality of main ingredients, sauce (where applicable) and accompaniments</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2.3.3 | <i>Culinary skills (including serving temperature)</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Coffee beverage (prepared in-house) | | | | | |
| 2.4.1 | <i>Presentation and quality of coffee</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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| Total score | |
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| 3 | OTHER AREAS CHECKED BY THE MYSTERY GUEST | | | | | |
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| 3.1 | Ambience - appropriate environment in line with the restaurant's specialisation or class; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.2 | Tables and chairs should be appropriate to type and style of restaurant - sufficient table size and comfort of seating; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.3 | Variety on menu - 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 |
| 3.4 | 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 |
| 3.5 | 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 |
| 3.6 | 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 |
| 3.7 | Room temperature (indoors) - very pleasant controlled temperature (4-5 points); adequate (2-3 points); uncomfortable (1 point); | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.8 | Uniformity of waiting staff attire, clean and well groomed (long hair should be neatly tied back); | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.9 | Appropriate behaviour of staff and language used when communicating with one another; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.10 | Good condition of crockery, glassware, cutlery and table linen; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.11 | Good condition of the restaurant decor (including floor, ceiling and walls) and furniture; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.12 | Good standard of restaurant cleanliness; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.13 | 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; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.14 | Good standard of cleanliness in toilet; well maintained; fresh, clean-smelling atmosphere (if the toilet is not sufficiently clean the mystery guest should check another toilet or visit again prior leaving the premises); | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3.15 | 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. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Total score - other areas | | | | | |

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| Compliance with mandatory requirements | | | | | Y/N |
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| 4 | MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS CHECKED BY THE MYSTERY GUEST | | | |
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| 4.1 | Manager available during visit; | Yes/No/Comments | | |
| 4.2 | 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 | | |
| 4.3 | 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 | | |

| 5 | MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS CHECKED THROUGH AN ANNOUNCED VISIT | | | Y/N |
|-----|---|-----------------|--|-----|
| 5.1 | 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 | | |
| 5.2 | Mechanism is in place for handling of complaints at place of delivery and via internet/email; | Yes/No/Comments | | |
| 5.3 | Consumer oriented processes - maintenance and cleaning; | Yes/No/Comments | | |
| 5.4 | Induction training for all employees and a minimum of one person trained in basic first aid; | Yes/No/Comments | | |
| 5.5 | Involvement of employees in the quality process – quality coordinator; | Yes/No/Comments | | |
| 5.6 | Compliance with all relevant legislation (declaration). | Yes/No/Comments | | |

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| Compliance with mandatory requirements | | | | | Y/N |
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| Total score - mystery guest visit | | Min | Min | Min | Max |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----|---------|-----|-----|
| Budget per person (Euros) | | <45 | 46 - 75 | 76> | |
| 1 | Service and Hospitality | 24 | 28 | 32 | 40 |
| 2 | Food and beverage quality | 21 | 24 | 28 | 35 |
| 3 | Other areas checked by the mystery guest | 45 | 52 | 60 | 75 |