

Note: This translations was combined from several translations that I have received. I would like to thank Kerkko, Annu, Niklas and Jay for their effort.

A cautioning example of poor service

Restaurant Lehtovaara

Below is the claim I've sent to Restaurant Lehtovaara. It's very describing to the case that neither the restaurant nor its manager did respond to the letter I sent in any way. I recommend you avoid the restaurant if possible.

Claim, Ravintola Lehtovaara

My intention was to offer a party of 12 a dinner with all the trimmings at Lehtovaara restaurant on Dec. 19, 2003. I had reserved a table a week in advance and I was looking forward to sharing the famous atmosphere of Lehtovaara with my friends. The party included formally dressed and behaving, academically educated professionals of business and law, aged under 30. My party and me repeatedly were surprised by the behavior and service attitude of the waiting staff. Here are some observations I made under the course of the evening:

When the party arrived at 19:55 the table wasn't ready. As the first part of the group got to sitting at the table they weren't asked for an order. When the waiter arrived the first thing he/she did was to ask for everyone's IDs. Since the group was flabbergasted with the request the waiter said they would have to leave the restaurant, if they couldn't provide any ID. The youngest of the group was my girlfriend, aged 26. The service at the door was impeccable

Ordering

When the rest of the group arrived and we had waited for 15 minutes to get some menus I finally had to ask a waiter for them. The party grew later with one more person, for whom the menu also had to be specifically requested.

Drinks

The wine list didn't come with the menus. When I noticed that no-one had gotten it I asked for it. The waiter brought one list for the whole group. At this point my party ordered the aperitifs. The first drinks came half an hour after our arrival. The Cassis-punch I had ordered was lukewarm, not hot.

I asked to get to taste the wines. As a matter of fact, one of the bottles was flawed. The waiter didn't want to believe I had some knowledge of wines. I have been a member of

the board of several wine clubs for a number of years and I definitely can recognize the aroma of TCA-compounds when I taste one. Also in this situation the waiter's conduct was improper. Loudly the waiter wondered why I wanted to taste the wines, causing a awkward situation contradicting the quality of the wine.

Water glasses were filled during the starters, but not before it was asked. During the whole dinner water was poured only once, even though most of the tumblers were already empty by the beginning of the main course.

Serving of the food

Instead of the fillet of deer I had ordered the waiter served me a Coeur de fillet. When I started eating I noticed the meat lacked the flavor of game, peculiar to deer and the portion hardly had any vegetables. I asked the waiter about this. The waiter vowed I had ordered a Coeur de fillet. Both of the people seated on either side of me and I strongly disagreed. The waiter still contradicted and presented me with the order written down. Then I was asked if I wanted the portion to be changed. Because the rest of the group was halfway through the main course I suggested the restaurant would instead offer me a cigar instead. According to the waiter this wasn't possible. The waiter didn't apologize for the mix-up at any point.

The main dish (Coeur de fillet –plate) was brought to the table and left to get cold before it was served. The second round wasn't served until the food had got cold. Especially this got the attention of the party because we asked a waiter sailing by to serve us a second round off the plate. The answer was: "I'll serve it to you in a moment". This wasn't by any means a satisfactory answer and a friend of mine sitting at the head of the table took time of the moment, which was 8 minutes. The fish main course wasn't brought to the table at the same time with the other food. Though, this I could accept because the kitchen seemed to have their hands full of work.

After observing the worst restaurant service I had ever seen I announced I wouldn't stay for the dessert in this place and wouldn't recommend it for the others either. I asked for the check and the waiter and the restaurant manager with me to the kitchen to discuss the process of the evening. I listed few of the incidents mentioned above. The waiter who "served" us agreed with me. She told the manager: "I agree. The service they received wasn't good. With these prices the customer can also expect good service." The restaurant manager blamed the kitchen for the rush. I noted the kitchen had nothing to do with the fiasco. Instead the waiting staff's negligence and lack of skill were the reasons for our disappointment. None of the staff did at any point apologize to me or to my party for the annoyance they'd caused.

All this left an image the restaurant manager had given the staff an order our table didn't have to be waited on or, at least, the other customers would be served before us. I spend thousands of euros every year in restaurants, both on business and leisure. Not once has anything similar occurred. Nor will ever again, I surely hope. This time the party consisted of my friends. I don't even dare to imagine what the situation would be had I

taken business associates for dinner. Due to poor service the restaurant forfeited both sales and customers.

Helsinki, Jan. 2nd, 2004

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MATTER: RAVINTOLA LEHTOVAARA/HIETANEN

It has come to the knowledge of the management of the Ravintola Lehtovaara of a letter of slandering in nature has been posted on the net by you in which you have in a improper manner and continuously maintained a writing, which gives a substandard picture of the restaurant's kitchen and service, lessens and jeopardizes the business of the restaurant and libels the professional skills and abilities of the chef and main chef (who the current chef has nothing to do with your restaurant visit). The same applies to defamation of the management of the restaurant and the head waiter and the head waiter's professional qualifications.

The restaurant hereby claims that you will cease and desist public access to you letter currently available at the internet. Furthermore the restaurant will be claiming for compensation of the damage caused by your writing, which damage can be estimated to be around 5000 euros per month. The compensation is demanded from the day the writing was published until the day it is removed from the net with due interest according to the law from the end of each month for each period and with due penal interest from this date forwards.

The persons from the restaurant, who are the targets of your writing mentioned above, will most likely demand for damages for your conduct and the continued harm caused to them individually. It is impossible for you, who aren't familiar with the branch of restaurant business, to imagine the emotional distress caused to the persons mentioned by the judgment and ridicule of the profession alone.

We will also take measures to report the case for criminal investigation. The report's content will depend on Your immediate actions to remedy the situation to fully satisfy the restaurant and the persons mentioned above.

Asianajotoimisto Kauppi & Molander Oy
(Law firm Ltd. Members of bar)