

To Eat Promptly, And In Peace

EVERY once in a while, one would like to share experiences and happenings with other people, in order to either prevent them experiencing the same, or to hopefully shed light on the goings-on at certain eateries in Windhoek. I would like to share one such experience with readers, and hope that this will have some kind of (positive) impact.

We all like to slip away from office during our lunch hours (usually between 1 and 2) and grab something small to eat, preferably in pleasant company, and in pleasant surroundings if possible. Now for clear reasons, I shall not name the little corner amongst birds and trees, created in a backyard-garden like atmosphere, where I decided to take a female friend to lunch for a chat over some usually good and fresh food. The order was comprised of a salad and toast for the lady. After having been helped promptly, the waiting began. As the minutes ticked by one after the other, I decided to enquire about the delay. One of the waiters told me that the order was almost ready and that I should be patient. I was amazed that a lukewarm pasta salad could take over 25 minutes to make ... after all - to cook pasta takes at most 10 minutes!

Eventually food was served at 13h40. After eating as fast as possible without being obscene in doing so, I decided to ask for the bill to pay for food consumed. Amazingly, for the next 10 minutes no waiters were to be seen anywhere in the eating area! I then walked up to the counter outside, and asked for the bill, clearly stating that I was by this time in a great hurry. It was 13h58 already, and my friend and I

were going to be late for both our jobs. After waiting at least another 5 minutes, now slightly annoyed, I decided to leave without payment, and to return later for such. As we left, suddenly the waiter came running after us, expecting me to pay for lunch once I was inside my car! I refused to do this, and left, only to be called about an hour later and told that I would have to deal with the Police in this matter, should I refuse to pay for the food and services rendered. I ask you though - what service? I work in a highly customer service related industry, and thus am well familiar with the concepts of customer satisfaction and prompt, efficient and friendly service. I would like to conclude in asking this: are we forced to merely endure slow and inefficient service in instances such as these? Should we, as the clients and customers, the consumers, and effectively the money bringers to establishments such as this one, stand up and demand better and more customer-oriented service? Upon returning to pay the outstanding bill, I had to listen to allegations of being ill mannered, and guilty of theft, with no intention of resolving the matter from my side...

Occurrences like these seriously hamper the enjoyment of the public, and thus I am inviting the editor and the readers to comment on such instances, and let us try to resolve these problems. After all - what we as consumers want is some quiet place to sit and enjoy our lunch, not having to worry if the food is served on time.

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