tertainment



Reflections of food critic: job's fulfilling

D. Gustibus, the Observer & Eccentric's food critic, clebrates his first anniversary as a food writer. His reflections follow.

The ELL AN acqualatime you are an anonymous restaurant critic whose column is published in the 12 Observer & Eccentric newspapers" and you gain a instant respect and envy.

At least that was what I found when the initial excitement of this "job" was shared with anyone and everyone I knew.

"What a perfect situation — to eat all you want and get paid for it."

Well, it has been fun, folifilling (pardon the pun) and interesting (pardon the pun) and interesting flut there are still times when if a rather not be "forced" to eat out because another deadline is approaching. This is my first (and, I expect only) journalistic endeavor. I amy a ctual vocation, the owner of a manufacturing firm that produces consumer goods you might see in department and food stores.

might see in department and food stores.
My primary qualifications for this assignment include an extensive amount of domestic and foreign travel and, hence, a lot of eating in restaurants, Perhaps I am especially interested in the subject and process because my daughter is a reporter for a California daily and my son has spent a year in Paris, learning to become a chef. But, basically, I like to eat.

WHEN I FIRST became a restaurant critic, I thought that a "scientific," objective system would enable me, and my readers, to evaluate each readers, to evaluate each restaurant more fairly than subjective techniques I had seen elsewhere. That is the reason I created a weighted point system based on my own experiences about what matters when you go uttand pay your hard-earned money for a meal.

Admittedly, my approach is like a snapshot, a single picture of one dining experience. I do not

tell the restaurant that I am coming in to review it and I do not, except in a very few instances, make any comment when I leave. I have time for only one visit,

a nave time for only one visit, so there may be occasions when a good restaurant will be visited on a bad night, or vice versa. But when you go out for a special evening, you don't care how good the food was last night, it's

evening, you don't care how good the food was last night, it's tonight that counts. Sometimes I've been care to be supported by most at the proportion of the proposition of the proposi

morey.

I HAVE TRIED to evaluate cach restaurant on its own terms and by its own implied objectives as expressed in the setting, menu, prices and so on. But good service, begood service, whether the server wears a tuxedo or jeans, and good food is good food, whether it costs a fortune or not. I have reviewed 30 restaurants during the last year and a half, and I've found some interesting highs and lows. Since I use a numerical system, I'd like to share the following figures with you. These are the duverage and a restaurants. In each of 180 per 1

possible (70 percent) and Price-Value — 11.9 of 15 possible (78. 5) spercent). The average total score of all restaurants reviewed is 78.8 out of 10 possible — just— average! That's a bit disappointing. I have chosen restaurants that are in the Observe & Eccentric communities. Many of them have

been suggested by residents in the various locations. I've tried to pick "good" places. After all, I have to eat there to review them.

I BELIEVE when you or I go out to eat, we have the right to expect something worthwhile; inviting, better than we can do on our own. Yet, time after time,

even something like service that a restaurant abould to able to control detracts from the dining experience in many places. During the last 30 reviewed meals, I've had some real treats and eaten in many "mknown" places that offered tremendous food, value and service. That's reassuring and satisfying. I'd like to share ny: "best rated and ealpoyed" in each of the categories.

enjoyed" in each of the categories. The list that follows is drawn enlirely from those restaurants I have reviewed, and many of them are not "big names," but I'd suggest they are all worth a try.

Atmosphere — Rizzo's Copper oor in Westland, a smoky and unassuming restaurant, provided the most relaxed and fun-filled

Service — Cafe Bon Homme in Plymouth was the most gracious and attentive, an altogether pleasing experience.

Before the entree — New Peking in Garden City served outstanding appetizers that were inviting and delicious.

Entrees — Roman Forum in Canton was spectacularly superb in the preparation of every dish we tried.

Dessert (my favorite category)

— Appeteaser in Birmingham
makes a Creme Brulee that is
absolutely beyond compare.

absolutely beyond compare.

MY GREATEST problem is locating those special places that are known locally but not more widely. That is where I really need your help. If you have a favorite restaurant, won't you drop me a note, D. Gustibus, In drop me a note, D. Gustibus, In the state of the s

Best rated and enjoyed'

Of the 30 resturants D. Gustibus reviewed over the past year, these are his favorites:

ATMOSPHERE: Rizzo's Copper Door in Westland. It provided the most relaxed and fun-filled eperience.

SERVICE: Cafe Bon Homme (formerly Emma's) in Plymouth. Coupled with an excellent menu, the service was the most the service was the most gracious and attentive. Altogether, it was a pleasing

BEFORE THE ENTREE: New Peking in "beautiful downlown Garden City."

ENTREES: Roman Forum in Canton was spectacularly superb in the preparation of every dish tried.

DESSERT: Appe'teaser in Birmingham makes a Creme Bruice that is absolutely beyond

from Latin, "De gustibus non est disputandum," which means, "Concerning tastes there is no disputing."

I interpret that to mean that each of us has the opportunity to judge, according to his or her own taste. I think that's an appropriate description of what I am trying to do.

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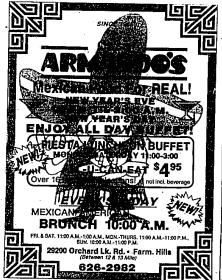
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