

STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

The Harbor Steak House in Orchard Lake serves up good, plentiful food in a country atmosphere.

Down-home eatery a treat

By D. Gustibus
special writer

Your traveling taster visits area eateries and rates them on a 100-point scale. Up to 30 points are awarded for ambience, which includes general atmosphere and service; 55 points for food; and 15 points for price/value rating. A total count of 59 points or less indicates a restaurant is not recommended, 60-74 points signify from passing to good, 75-89 points designate very good with some extraordinary features, and 90-100 points show that a very special dining experience awaits you.

HARBOR STEAK HOUSE (3251 Orchard Lake Road, Orchard Lake; 682-8350) serves up good, plentiful food in a country atmosphere. This is a "down-home" place that caters to local regulars, but it is worth a visit — even if you don't live next door.

Both the bar area and the dining room are quite casual, with paper placemats and napkins. The decor is nautical and includes, for example, stained glass "porthole" windows, marmalade musthards and mounted fish. An assortment of metal sculptures that are for sale adorn the walls. The overall impression is one of a lakeside tavern.

Television sets in strategic spots show sports events with local teams. Although the restaurant was generally clean, the walls at

our booth were a bit dirty. We did not have a reservation but were seated immediately. Dinner took an hour and 15 minutes. **GENERAL ATMOSPHERE** — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 12.

Our waitress was extremely cheerful, helpful and pleasant. She happily complied with our requests. Unfortunately, we did have to ask for water and table clearing. But although the level of service would have been disappointing at a "fancy" place, it was quite adequate for the setting here. In fact, our waitress was one of the most agreeable and enjoyable we have seen in some time. The attitude goes a long way in overcoming a lack of training, and she added to our enjoyment of the restaurant and its food. **SERVICE** — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13.

Come with a substantial appetite because the portions are very large. We particularly enjoyed the breaded mushrooms (\$2.75) which were all big, fresh and prepared in a delicious beer batter. The potato skins (\$4.25) were also quite tasty, with lots of potato, cheese and bacon, and a very crisp skin. One could make a meal on the appetizers alone.

There is also a basket of garlic toast with a flavorful, if greasy, appeal.

The mixed drink was average in strength, but the Bloody Mary was very good with a large pickle slice that hit the spot. The house salad that accompanies the entrees was



A counting for taste

D. Gustibus

the one disappointment of the meal. The lettuce was wilted, the dressing flat, and the ingredients showed no imagination. **BEFORE THE ENTREE** — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13.

For \$12.95, you get a slice of prime rib — with a bone if you ask — that is too big to finish. The mammoth portion was tender, juicy and very tasty. There is a choice of potatoes, and we tried the trail fries, which were quite good. Although the orange roughly special (\$9.95) was flaky and mild, it was ordinary; the beef was a better choice. But a large serving of glazed carrots added zest and interest to the fish. Although we did not order it, the strip steak also looked exceptionally large and juicy. **ENTREE, VEGETABLES AND GARNISHES** — 30 points maximum. Points awarded — 26.

There is a broad selection of desserts, and the two we tried really hit the spot. A personal favorite was the peanut butter pie (\$2.50), which had an honest-to-goodness, delightful peanut butter flavor. This dish — large as the portion, was — could have been even big-

ger for this diner. The carrot cake (\$2), too, was large and satisfying, with almost a fruitcake richness. Leave room for dessert; it's well worth the calories. **DESSERTS** — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 10.

We really overordered, even so, our bill was only \$45 per couple with tip. An equally satisfying meal could be had for considerably less. But even at the higher amount, this meal represented a good value, with loads of good food in a pleasing setting. **PRICE/VALUE** — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13.

A COUNTING FOR TASTE — 100 points maximum. Total points awarded — 87. The Harbor Steak House is a treat. Bring the family, a date or some friends, and eat up.

D. Gustibus welcomes your reactions, comments and suggestions of favorite restaurants in the Observer & Eccentric communities. Write to D. Gustibus, in care of Observer & Eccentric, Street Scene, 30251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Boss' gifts offer no real benefits

I work for a company that does not provide benefits, insurance or a pension plan of any consequence. The owner is very generous to me as his office manager — tickets to shows, expensive crystal gifts, a good bonus at Christmas, etc. I feel out of line asking for improved benefits. How can I handle this without insulting him?



business
etiquette

Joan K. Dietch

Darling, he is insulting you! The oldest game in business is to shower employees with perks — tax deductible to the employer of course — without providing yearly substantial benefits. Next time bonus or gift-giving occasions arise, say very graciously, "I love these perks, Mr. So and So. However, I find my insurance rates are climbing faster than I can keep up. Eyeglasses, dentists and physical checkups all have to be paid for in cash. I tried to pass on the theater tickets you gave me to my doctor, but he said, 'No thanks.' He preferred cash. It's important to me to discuss with you arranging a benefit program that would apply on a yearly basis. I know a man of your integrity and generosity understands my situation." If this doesn't work, then start looking for another job and make benefits a top priority.

I'm the office manager for a home health organization. Often I'm included in the discussion with people from outside the office staff concerning our services. The officers in our company, the personnel director, vice president of sales and the vice president of publication, all have appointments that come through my office. Then, I'm called in to discuss the details of the business transaction. The company officers never introduce me! You talk about no class. I feel discounted. Also, it makes the officers in the company look like clods. What can I do to give the place some class?

I sense your anger is reaching rage proportions. First of all, there is nothing you can do to change your superiors' behavior. When an outside client is brought through your office, stand up, walk over, offer your hand and say, "I'm Miss (Blank), the office manager for Home Health Organization. Welcome to our offices." When you are called into another office to discuss arrangements, again approach the visiting client (if you did not introduce yourself earlier), offer your hand and clearly state your name. You are totally within the boundaries of good business etiquette by introducing yourself and making your role with the company known. When superiors lack the social graces to make the business run smoothly, the understaffers need to supply the missing piece.

My supervisor has the habit of criticizing the people who work for him in front of others. I have lost respect for him because this seems like such showoff adolescent behavior. Yet, I don't know how to respond.

No wonder you've lost respect. Criticizing an employee in front of others is one of the worst mistakes a manager can make. The manager lowers his or her own image, not the employee's. The next time your supervisor starts to criticize, get up from your desk or wherever you are at the time and move toward the criticizer's office. Keep your eyes locked into his. The steady eye contact will make him instinctively follow you. When you get into the office say, "I always welcome constructive criticism. However, it is far more effective for me when given on a one-to-one basis." Thank the supervisor and leave his office. Do this as graciously as possible every time this unpleasant occurrence happens. You cannot turn a slob of a boss into a gentleman or lady. But you can make the situation as comfortable as possible for yourself. Treating rudeness with rudeness never pays. It only reinforces the bad behavior.

Joan K. Dietch of Rochester Hills is a sales and marketing consultant who lectures on business etiquette and has written a business dress book. Address questions to her at the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 30251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

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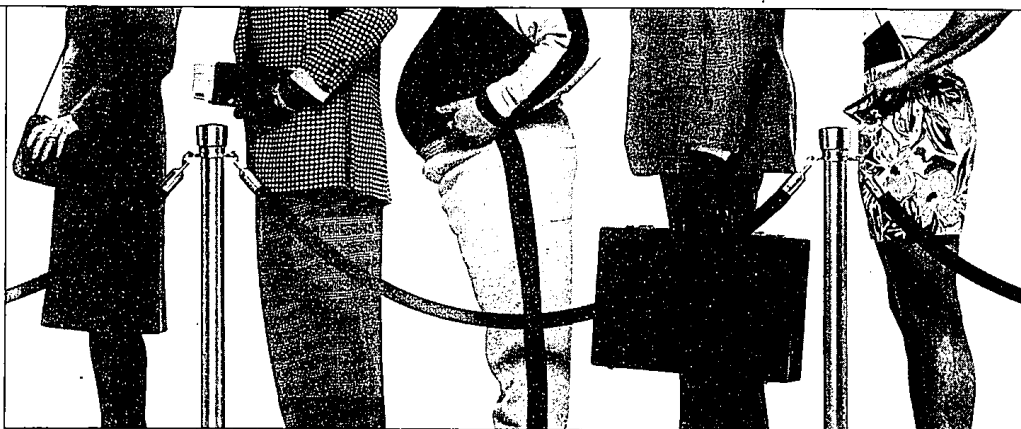
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