THANK YOU!

Our goal in establishing these new guidelines is to ensure that each restaurant we review meets the basic needs of our members, is consistently compared to a set of objective criteria, and includes the key personalized, subjective elements of the experience. The outcome of the combination of these factors equals a AAA diamond rating.

The essential AAA restaurant requirements are common sense qualifications that professional operators routinely employ and that any patron would usually expect. The diamond rating guidelines are just that — guidelines. They are not arbitrary but reflect what is typically seen throughout the restaurant industry at the various levels. To capture such criteria takes a combined effort of many dedicated individuals.

AAA wishes to acknowledge and thank the following restaurant industry representatives for their participation in the Restaurant Requirements & Diamond Rating Guidelines revisions:
- Charlie Trotter's, Chicago, Ill. — Mr. Mark Signorio
- Christian's Restaurant Italiano, Orlando, Fla. — Ms. Angela Christini, Mr. Chris Christini
- Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Toronto, Ontario, Canada — Mr. Serge Simard
- Kahala Mandarin Oriental Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii — Mr. Wolfgang Kneuer
- Renaissance Orlando Resort, Orlando, Fla. — Mr. Hiroshi Noguchi
- Tony's, St. Louis, Mo. — Mr. Vincent Bommaisto

The final outcome of any experience is personal to all of us. It is AAA's opinion that this subjective experience must be included in any rating system in order for it to be meaningful, therefore, our new rating system has incorporated key subjective elements as appropriate.

We look forward to your continued service for AAA members at large and appreciate your support of and participation in AAA programs.

Sincerely,
Alan B. Borne
Managing Director/AAA Publishing

Information in this publication is based on current standards prevalent in the restaurant industry at the time of publication. The requirements and diamond rating guidelines are subject to modification at any time without notice.

Dear Restaurant Professional,

On behalf of AAA, I am pleased to introduce to you our new Restaurant Requirements & Diamond Rating Guidelines booklet. By requesting this booklet, you have expressed an interest in our diamond rating program and, more importantly, in providing a high level of hospitality to AAA/CAA members. Your interest and involvement is very much appreciated.

Twenty-two years experience "in the trenches," and sometimes "in the weeds" of the Foodservice Industry has provided me with sound insight to the challenges of the trade. The work is intense, demanding, and sometimes frustrating. This can be especially true when hard work goes unappreciated by some that have grown to routinely expect that which you so lovingly provide. In contrast, when all of your sincere, creative efforts culminate and are recognized by your patrons, it can be a feeling that is unmatched.

We had a saying during my tenure, that any restaurant is only as good as the last plate served or the last interaction with a guest. This statement is even more realistic in the life of a critic, or rating professional, as these limited elements and interactions shape an opinion. As a chef, I too have felt the stressful moments when a critic calls, and have experienced the uncertainty and apprehension of the critic's review. In many ways, the critic's role mimics the first-time patron you try to hard to keep. Often, there is not an opportunity to really study a restaurant. Frequently, attitudes and ratings are based solely on the subjective opinions of the individual who may not care for the restaurant's individual cuisine, decor, or style of service.

AAA recognizes the extreme importance of each restaurateur to develop and maintain a certain creative element that is unique to each restaurant. In fact, we applaud and encourage it! Therefore, we have gone to great lengths to ensure that this revision of our Restaurant Requirements & Diamond Rating Guidelines in no way infringes upon these creative features.

We encourage each and every establishment to know your customer and provide to them the food, service and ambiance that they desire. In doing so, you will be rewarded with loyal patrons at whatever diamond rating.

We wish you the best of success!

Live to eat!

Michael Petrone, CEC
Director/AAA Tourism Information Development
Restaurant Requirements & Diamond Rating Guidelines

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Overview

AAA

AAA IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION OF SOME 90 MOTOR CLUBS SERVING MORE THAN 42 MILLION MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. When traveling in Canada, the CAA logo is synonymous with AAA. Although AAA is changing at a rapid pace, one thing remains the same — the association’s lifelong commitment to providing safety, security, and peace of mind to its members. According to AAA’s “Basic Beliefs,” “We exist for our members and will judge everything we do by how well it serves their needs.”

◆ In 1902, only 23,000 motor vehicles were registered in the United States. Roads were treacherous and driving was restrictive. Meeting in Chicago, delegates from nine independent motor clubs, representing fewer than 1,000 members, united to combat unfair traffic laws and to campaign for better roads and more reliable vehicles. AAA is now a federation with more than 1,100 service offices throughout the United States and Canada. The AAA National Office is located in Heathrow, Fla.
◆ In 1903, AAA published its first road maps and, two years later, established the Bureau of Touring Information, supplying national information on roads, hotels, service garages, and vehicle regulations.
◆ In 1915, AAA began the first emergency road service program.
◆ In 1937, the first field representatives were hired to inspect lodgings and restaurants.
◆ In 1963, AAA began rating accommodations as good, very good, excellent, and outstanding.
◆ In 1977, the diamond rating system was introduced for lodging evaluations during AAA’s 75th anniversary.
◆ In 1988, with the co-operation of Cornell University, the diamond rating system for restaurants was developed.
◆ In 1989, the diamond rating system for restaurant evaluations was introduced.

Looking to the future, AAA is developing customized products and services — enhanced travel and entertainment offerings, financial services, improved automotive services, and new membership privileges — designed to meet the ever-changing needs of our members.

As one of the world’s largest travel organizations, AAA annually:
◆ Evaluates more than 12,000 restaurants, in addition to more than 29,000 accommodations and 4,600 campgrounds, for travel publications and electronic information delivery.
◆ Publishes nearly 300 million copies of travel-related materials for the exclusive use of our members, including more than 38 million TourBook guides, CampBook guides, TravelBook guides, and Destination Guides.
◆ Sells over $3 billion in travel agency services.
◆ Sells more than $2 billion in American Express Travelers Cheques.
◆ Generates more than $3.4 billion in credit card transactions.

When new members join AAA, they join a network with the collective resources to develop new products, services, and technologies, and the ability to influence legislation affecting all motorists and travelers.

A AAA listing makes good business sense for your restaurant, since 26 percent of all U.S. households have a AAA membership. AAA members are an excellent market for the hospitality and tourism industry. Member research shows:

◆ 75 percent of AAA members use AAA publications for restaurant information when traveling.
◆ AAA members spend approximately $35 billion annually on dining when traveling.
◆ AAA members represent 28 percent of the total U.S. travel volume.
◆ An estimated $164.5 billion is spent annually on travel by AAA members.

AAA Publishing

AAA PUBLISHING IS ONE OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST TRAVEL INFORMATION PUBLISHERS. The eight departments within the publishing group work together to collect, produce, and distribute, in both print and electronic format, a variety of travel publications to AAA clubs and the retail marketplace.

Member-only products include 23 TourBook guides, five foreign TravelBook guides, 11 Destination Guides, 11 CampBook guides, as well as 75 regional, state, and city sheet maps. The combined circulation of these products exceeds 100 million copies annually.

Additionally, AAA Publishing develops new products for consumer markets and distributes a variety of travel publications including atlases, travel guides, Traveling With Your Pet, and Bed & Breakfast guides for the United States, Britain, and France.

AAA Publishing, in co-operation with AAA/CAA clubs, creates and owns most of the product content used in AAA publications including the diamond ratings, all editorial content, the Official Appointment licensing, and display advertising.

AAA Publishing Restaurant Strategy

We will become the pre-eminent source of restaurant information throughout North America.

We will efficiently collect consistent, reliable information pertaining to a variety of restaurant types and styles that are notable, unique, and contain “value added” elements for our members.

This information will be innovative, and will mirror current market offerings. We will use this information in all AAA publications, both paper and electronic.
Applying for a AAA Diamond Rating
AAA CONSIDERS ALL VALID APPLICATIONS FOR EVALUATION. Each establishment must initially meet AAA’s 12 minimum rating requirements (see below) for consideration of an evaluation for a diamond rating. Currently listed establishments need not reapply.

A completed application does not guarantee an evaluation by one of our full-time, professionally-trained tourism editors. AAA reserves the sole right to determine which restaurants will be evaluated, assigned a diamond rating, or listed in publications.

It is not the intention of AAA to list every restaurant that meets minimum rating requirements. Rather, our goal is to ensure that our members’ travel needs are well-represented. In general, our database inventory reflects member interest, with principal consideration given to:

- Geographic location (major cities, destination areas)
- Those restaurants with the reputation as being the very best, whether they are simple roadside eateries or celebrated, fine-dining establishments
- Variety in cuisine type and ethnic diversity
- AAA/CAA club and member recommendations
- Other significant benefits, such as, unique design, style of operation, or special value features

Diamond Rating Requirements
DIAMOND RATING REQUIREMENTS REFLECT THE BASIC EXPECTATIONS OF AAA/CAA MEMBERS AS ESTABLISHED THROUGH SURVEYS AND CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK. Prior to the assignment of a diamond rating, an establishment must be able to meet the following requirements:

1. Primary business operation is food
2. Establishment is open and prepared to readily accommodate the general public
3. Establishment is clean and well-maintained
4. Management will readily provide property information as requested by AAA
5. Management and staff present a neat appearance
6. Management and staff operate in a professional and ethical manner
7. Management and staff provide attentive, conscientious service to guests
8. Management is willing to assist in the resolution of member complaints
9. Establishment location is easily accessible and in a desirable area
10. Establishment is in compliance with all local, state, and federal codes
11. All food and beverage is wholesome, free from contamination, and properly handled and stored
12. All public restroom facilities have privacy locks on stalls or one on the entrance door
The Evaluation and Rating Process

THE EVALUATION PROCESS IS MADE UP OF THREE PARTS: MINIMUM MEMBER-RATING REQUIREMENTS, OBJECTIVE RATING GUIDELINES, AND SUBJECTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE. First, all establishments must meet member-rating requirements and be determined to provide member value. This validation is conducted through a combined process of applications, referrals, and media research. If a restaurant is presumed to qualify, one of our tourism editors will visit and anonymously dine to observe the basic foundation of the establishment. The tourism editor will apply a set of diamond rating guidelines that represent objective criteria prevalent throughout the restaurant industry. In addition, the tourism editor will include key subjective elements experienced at the time of the evaluation. This evaluation process will include the review of these key dining essentials pertaining to the following three areas:

◆ FOOD
◆ SERVICE
◆ DECOR AND AMBIANCE

Equal weight will be given to factors experienced for food and service. Although décor elements are important, our members have conveyed that these aspects play a less significant role in determining their favorite restaurant choices. Despite the lesser emphasis on the physical features, all establishments must be clean, comfortable, and well-maintained. The tourism editor will evaluate each restaurant and assign a separate housekeeping and maintenance designation as either excellent, good, or acceptable.

If the determination is made that an establishment should be listed, the tourism editor will assign, or recommend, a diamond rating or other appropriate designations. Because of the dynamic nature of the restaurant business, each rating assignment must be based on conditions that exist at the time of the evaluation. Warnings of rating adjustments are restricted for limited cases and are applied at the sole discretion of AAA. The achievement of a AAA diamond rating means that an establishment is one of an exclusive group that has successfully completed this thorough evaluation process. The frequency of subsequent AAA evaluations varies slightly, depending on the classification and the assigned rating of each establishment.

If the AAA tourism editor determines that your establishment meets the maximum criteria, and the dining elements represent a world-class experience, he/she will recommend consideration for the prestigious five diamond rating. All five diamond rating recommendations are forwarded to AAA’s Five Diamond Committee for thorough review. Once the committee’s assessment is concluded, the establishment will be advised in writing of the outcome.

What the Diamond Ratings Mean

One Diamond
These establishments appeal to a diner seeking good, wholesome, no-nonsense eating at an affordable price. They typically provide simple, familiar, and unadorned foods served in a sensible, casual, or self-service style. Often quick service and family oriented.
Examples include coffee shops, diners, cafeterias, short order, and modest full service eateries.

Two Diamond
These establishments provide for dining needs that are increasingly complex, but still reasonably priced. They typically exhibit noticeable efforts in rising above the ordinary in many aspects of food, service, and décor. Service is typically functional yet ambitious, periodically combining informal style with limited self-service elements. Often well-suited to traditional, special occasion, and family dining.
Examples include coffee shops, diners, cafeterias, short order, and modest full service eateries.

Three Diamond
These establishments impart an increasingly refined and upscale, adult-oriented experience. This is the entry level into fine dining. Creative and complex menus offer a blend of traditional and trendy foods. The service level is typically semi-formal with knowledgeable and proficient staff. Routinely, these restaurants appeal to the diner in search of an experience rather than just a meal.
Examples include high-caliber, chic, boutique, and conventional restaurants.

Four Diamond
These establishments impart a luxurious and socially refined experience. This is consistent fine dining. Menus typically reflect a high degree of creativity and complexity, featuring elaborate presentations of market-driven or traditional dishes. A cultured, professional, and highly proficient staff consistently demonstrates a profound desire to meet or exceed guest expectations. Restaurants of this caliber are geared to individuals with an appetite for an elite, fine-dining experience.
Examples include dining rooms associated with luxury lodgings, or exclusive independent restaurants often found in metropolitan areas.

Five Diamond
Often renowned, these establishments impart a world-class and opulent, adult-oriented experience. This is “haute cuisine” at its best. Menus are often cutting edge, with an obvious dedication to use of only the finest ingredients available. Even the classic dishes become extraordinary under the meticulous direction of highly acclaimed chefs. Presentations are spectacular, reflecting impeccable artistry and awareness. An expert, formalized staff continuously anticipates and exceeds guest expectations. Staff members’ unfailing attention to detail appears effortless, well-rehearsed, and unobtrusive. Undoubtedly, these restaurants appeal to those in search of the ultimate dining experience.
Examples include renowned dining rooms associated with luxury lodgings, or exclusive independent restaurants often found in metropolitan areas.
### Objective Diamond Rating Guidelines

#### Food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ONE DIAMOND</th>
<th>TWO DIAMOND</th>
<th>THREE DIAMOND</th>
<th>FOUR DIAMOND</th>
<th>FIVE DIAMOND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Presentation</strong></td>
<td>Unadorned and straightforward</td>
<td>Limited use of common garnishes.</td>
<td>Obvious use of complimentary garnishes to enhance overall appeal. No self-service aspects (buffets, salad bars, etc.).</td>
<td>3+ plus precise attention to food placement and design. Creative and artistic use of garnishes to reflect some aspect of the recipe concept. Selection provides variety in texture, color, substance, theme, and temperature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Ingredients</strong></td>
<td>Basic, common, palatable including an obvious use of convenience foods</td>
<td>Common, palatable. Less evidence of convenience foods. Limited use of specialty items.</td>
<td>Often reflecting regional market availability. Increased use of specialty items. Limited evidence of the use of convenience foods.</td>
<td>3+ plus frequent use of specialty items. No evidence of the use of convenience foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Convenience Foods</strong> — pre-prepared in some manner (canned, frozen, pre-baked, pre-portioned, individually wrapped, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specialty Items</strong> — high grades or uncommon varieties of meat, fish, vegetables, fresh herbs, spices, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Preparation</strong></td>
<td>Limited degree of technical skill is evident. Incorporates limited variety of cooking techniques. Food typically requires limited preparation and is often prepared in advance.</td>
<td>Moderate degree of technical skill is evident. Increased variety of cooking techniques; less evidence of griddle frying or deep frying. Food typically requires limited preparation, and some foods may be prepared in advance or à la minute.</td>
<td>Increased degree of technical skill evident. Variety of cooking techniques may include roasting, baking, stewing, steaming, grilling, pan-frying, or wood smoking. Increasingly refined techniques such as poaching, sautéing, hot and cold smoking, pâtés, and molds. Most main course foods are prepared à la minute.</td>
<td>3+ plus advanced degree of technical skill is evident throughout. Complex cooking techniques often require the efforts of a series of skilled chefs to facilitate the efficient execution of a la minute for virtually every ingredient used in the main course offerings. Those items not prepared in-house will be purchased through specialty purveyors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The diamond rating guideline criteria will be applied to:

1. Appetizers (including “amuse bouche” courses or “amusez-vous” courses that might be introduced during a meal)
2. Soups
3. Salads
4. Main courses
5. Desserts (including “mignardises” and “petits fours”)

To determine the FOOD sub-rating, the evaluation is based on a minimum of three courses.
## Service

### Section Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ONE DIAMOND</th>
<th>TWO DIAMOND</th>
<th>THREE DIAMOND</th>
<th>FOUR DIAMOND</th>
<th>FIVE DIAMOND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reservations/Telephone Assistance</td>
<td>Typically not accepted. Telephone inquiries are handled appropriately with limited information provided.</td>
<td>Sometimes accepted; restrictions may apply for groups or large parties. Telephone inquiries are handled appropriately; offering additional information about the establishment (hours of operation, smoking status, directions, answers to specific menu questions, etc.). Telephone attendant prompts the guest for basic information such as time, date, number of guests, and smoking or non-smoking preference.</td>
<td>Accepted without restrictions. Telephone inquiries are handled appropriately, offering additional information about the establishment (hours of operation, smoking status, directions, answers to specific menu questions, etc.). Telephone attendant prompts the guest for basic information such as time, date, number of guests, and smoking or non-smoking preference.</td>
<td>3 plus answers telephone promptly, displaying a high degree of telephone etiquette. Reviews information for accuracy. Thanks guest for calling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Initial Greeting</td>
<td>No greeting or limited greeting at entrance.</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of arrival is prompt, polite, and friendly. Advised of expected waiting time as appropriate.</td>
<td>2 plus greeting by full-time host/hostess. Offers a seat in waiting area if seating is delayed.</td>
<td>3 plus refined greeting by maître d’. Personal assistance provided as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Seating</td>
<td>Self-seating</td>
<td>Assisted seating provided. Menu presented at time of seating.</td>
<td>Assisted seating managed by host or hostess. Menu and wine list (if available) presented at time of seating. Reservations honored within five minutes. Menus provided at the appropriate time.</td>
<td>3 plus refined personal assistance provided. Extra place settings removed if necessary. Reservations honored within five minutes. Menus provided at the appropriate time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Food and Beverage Service</td>
<td>May be self-service. Varied styles and levels of performance. Limited personal attention.</td>
<td>Limited self-service. Deliberate and system-oriented service style appropriate to overall theme. Varied levels of performance. Average level of personal attention.</td>
<td>No self-service. Deliberate service style appropriate to overall theme but adaptable to guest needs and moods. Skilled and consistent level of performance. Evidence of formalized service and desire to be of assistance. Good level of personal attention. May provide team approach to table service. If wine is available, competent service and knowledge should be evident.</td>
<td>3 plus formalized, well-rehearsed service, high level of personal attention. Provides a team approach to service, anticipating and responding appropriately to guest needs through vigilant attention to follow-up. Tableside preparations and other specialized services should be executed with confidence and proficiency. May provide additional surprise features and/or confections such as “mignardise” or “petits fours.” If wine is available, service should be efficient, expert service, knowledge, and advice should be evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Payment/Departure/Exit</td>
<td>Check presented when meal served. Pay at cashier (sometimes prior to eating). Usually cashier thanks guest.</td>
<td>Check presented after meal or upon request. Server handles settlement of check and thanks guest.</td>
<td>2 plus check presented on a plate, in a folder, or on a tray. Greeter also acknowledges guest’s departure.</td>
<td>Server anticipates when guest wants check or presents it upon request. Clear, legible, and well-itemized check presented in a folder. Check presentation consistent with décor and theme; typically accompanied by some form of complement such as specialty candy. Server quickly and discreetly handles settlement of check. Server and maître d’ acknowledge guest’s departure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Décor &amp; Ambiance</td>
<td>ONE DIAMOND</td>
<td>TWO DIAMOND</td>
<td>THREE DIAMOND</td>
<td>FOUR DIAMOND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Entrance/Foyer</strong></td>
<td>No distinct separation between entrance and dining areas; no reception stand</td>
<td>Distinct separation between reception and dining areas; may have staffed reception stand</td>
<td>2 ★★ plus continuously staffed reception stand; may have coat check area</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus upscale appointments; secured coat check area as required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Waiting Area and/or Lounge</strong></td>
<td>Not typically seen</td>
<td>May have small waiting area or stool bar</td>
<td>Waiting area and/or upscale lounge which is large enough to accommodate all waiting guests</td>
<td>Upscale lounge separate from entrance area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Design Elements</strong></td>
<td>Basic, functional, operational</td>
<td>1 ★★ plus coordinated theme throughout (not plain)</td>
<td>2 ★★ plus noticeably distinct and high quality interior design; theme, colors, fabrics, textures, lighting, etc., are well-coordinated throughout the restaurant</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus high level of refinement is evident, achieving a sophisticated atmosphere; upscale equipment and materials of the highest caliber; fresh flowers and plants often integrated into the theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Printed Materials (Menu/Wine List/etc.)</strong></td>
<td>Basic, legible presentation</td>
<td>1 ★★ plus noticeable enhancements; menus often coated or covered with plastic</td>
<td>2 ★★ plus menus sometimes presented in a folder or may be coated or covered with plastic providing an innovative visual impact</td>
<td>First-class formal presentation; no plastic cover or coating on menus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Table/Covers/Napery</strong></td>
<td>Uncovered tables, paper place mats, paper napkins</td>
<td>May have uncovered tables, paper place mats and napkins at lunch; may incorporate cloth napkins and table covers such as paper, vinyl, polyester blends (that appear less absorbent)</td>
<td>Appropriately sized cloth table covers, mats or runners, cloth napkins. If uncovered, table surfaces should be quality finished such as granite, marble, fine wood, etc.</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus tables are padded or silencers used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Dishware</strong></td>
<td>Washable (may be mismatched) and/or disposable</td>
<td>Washable (may be mismatched) — no plastic or disposable</td>
<td>High quality, matched/coordinated and appropriate pieces for menu offerings and condiments</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus finest quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Cutlery</strong></td>
<td>Washable (may be mismatched) and/or disposable</td>
<td>Washable (may be mismatched) — no plastic or disposable</td>
<td>High quality, matched/coordinated and appropriate pieces for menu offerings; heavier grade stainless steel</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus highly polished stainless steel with upscale design elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. Glassware</strong></td>
<td>Washable (may be mismatched) and/or disposable</td>
<td>Washable (may be mismatched) — no plastic or disposable</td>
<td>High quality, matched/coordinated and appropriate pieces for beverage offerings</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus fine glass (table settings only); spotless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. Chairs/Stools/Benches</strong></td>
<td>Simple, functional, sturdy</td>
<td>1 ★★ plus padded seats</td>
<td>2 ★★ plus coordinated fabric coverings and upscale design</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus upholstered seats; thick padding, may have arms (suitable for leisurely dining experiences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10. Table Setting Enhancements</strong></td>
<td>Limited; often, not typically seen</td>
<td>Average appeal, such as hurricane lamps, artificial flowers, children's games, menu flyers, etc. Utensils may be rolled up in napkins.</td>
<td>Candies, silk flowers, fresh flowers, decorative napkin folds; utensils and glassware are preset, ready for use, providing an elegant appeal</td>
<td>3 ★★ plus show plate providing a first-class appeal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subjective Diamond Rating Guidelines

THESE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS ILLUSTRATE A MORE SUBJECTIVE, PERSONAL ASPECT OF THE DINING EXPERIENCE. No diamond rating is assigned to these individual criteria; however, depending on whether these factors have a positive, negative, or nil effect on the dining experience, they may cumulatively affect the final rating.

### Food

1. **Breads**
   - If not available, consideration is given as to whether it is appropriate for the cuisine or the meal. If bread is provided, the quality generally increases through the rating levels, from simple processed breads to creative and imaginative offerings made in-house.

2. **Condiments**
   - Such as relishes, mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise, vinegar, salt, pepper, sugar, artificial sweeteners, butter, cream, etc.

3. **Complements**
   - Such as “amuse gueule,” “mignardese,” and/or “petits fours.” Typically seen at 4 and 5.

4. **Taste**
   - When evaluating taste, consideration is given to the following questions: Are all the ingredients noted on the menu included? Do they complement each other or are they conflicting? Is the dish appropriately seasoned, acidic, bitter, or sour? Do the sauces complement or conflict with the food? Do the flavors match expectations?

5. **Temperature**
   - Is the temperature of the food appropriate (hot food hot; cold food cold)?

6. **Variety**
   - The degree to which variety affects a rating is extremely subjective in nature. It depends on such factors as a diner’s expectations, quality of existing items and the restaurant concept.

7. **Beverages**
   - As ratings increase, generally the quality and variety of beverages improves. Custom dictates if water is poured automatically or upon request. Higher ratings typically offer both sparkling and still bottled water. If alcoholic beverages are not provided or are limited, consideration is given to prevailing laws, restaurant concept, and regional competition. At a rating of three diamond and above, wine lists should offer wines with varying degrees of complexity, price range, availability, and production style.

8. **Value**
   - Consideration is given to location, décor, service, and food. Is the cost of the experience justified?

### Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOSPITALITY ZONE:</th>
<th>Cordial in all areas; level is more refined as the rating increases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Congeniality</td>
<td>Cordial in all areas; level is more refined as the rating increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Timeliness</td>
<td>All areas and rating levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Attentiveness</td>
<td>All areas; the higher the rating, the more attention to detail expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Knowledge</td>
<td>Answer questions about food and beverage offerings in their restaurant? How efficient and polished is the delivery of this information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ability/ Willingness to Honor Special Requests</td>
<td>Alterations to menu items for reasons of taste, preference, or health concerns; arrange for other special needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Grooming/ Deportment</td>
<td>All areas and rating levels; the higher the rating, the more impeccable the appearance of the staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Valet Parking</td>
<td>Expected at 4 and 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Credit Cards</td>
<td>Expected at 3 and higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMFORT ZONE:</th>
<th>Appropriate to theme and reading of menu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Exterior</td>
<td>Architecture, location, landscaping, parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Traffic Flow</td>
<td>Movement of guests and staff in/out/throughout facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Table Spacing</td>
<td>Placement of tables allows for easy entry/egress, access by servers, and suitable privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Temperature and Ventilation</td>
<td>Comfortable temperature, well-ventilated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Illumination</td>
<td>Appropriate to theme; able to maintain conversation as desired or expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Noise Level/ Music/ Entertainment</td>
<td>Consideration will be given to the level of occupancy in relation to a facility’s capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Capacity/ Occupancy</td>
<td>Appropriate to theme; ease of access; adequate facilities; clean, well-attended, and well-supplied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Restrooms</td>
<td>Appropriate to theme; ease of access; adequate facilities; clean, well-attended, and well-supplied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Décor & Ambiance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION THREE</th>
<th>Subjective Diamond Rating Guidelines</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Exterior</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Restaurant Classifications —

ALL DIAMOND RATED RESTAURANTS ARE CLASSIFIED USING FOUR KEY DESCRIPTIVE ELEMENTS.

FIRST, ALL RESTAURANTS ARE CLASSIFIED BY MARKET SEGMENT:

- Brew Pub — specializes in the brewing of beer; offers a limited menu and full service.
- Cafeteria — traditional eatery with line feeding, limited service, often self-service, varied menu.
- Casual Dining — full service, typically serves beer, wine, or liquor; typically universal menu identity such as steaks, seafood, pasta, etc.; menu may be limited.
- Dinner Theater — full or limited service; typically serves beer, wine, or liquor; limited menu; entertainment provided in conjunction with the dining experience.
- Family Restaurant — full or limited service; limited or varied menu; typically does not serve beer, wine, or liquor; caters to children; common, traditional elements are evident in food, service, and decor.
- Fine Dining — full service; varied or limited menu; typically serves beer, wine, or liquor; upscale and complex elements are evident in food, service, and decor.
- In-Store Feeding — typically common restaurants or snack bars that exist within retail units.
- Quick Serve — fast or self-service of food; menu is typically limited.
- Sports Bar — full service; limited menu; has sports theme atmosphere.

SECOND, A CUISINE TYPE IS ASSIGNED:

- AAA currently recognizes over 90 different cuisine types.

THIRD, A DETERMINATION IS MADE PERTAINING TO OVERALL CONCEPT, AND A RESTAURANT MAY BE:

- Independent: Any restaurant operation consisting of no more than two separate outlets of same name and concept. This definition includes all types of concepts, service levels, and menu offerings.
- Chain: Any restaurant operation with three or more separate outlets of same name and concept.

FINALLY, THE RESPECTIVE SERVICE LEVEL IS NOTED:

- Full Service: Any restaurant operation that provides a full range of table services (no self-service aspects).
- Limited Service: Any restaurant operation that provides less than a full range of services. This includes self-service aspects such as buffets, salad bars, cook-your-own, and counter services.

Restaurant Sub-Classifications —

IF APPLICABLE, RESTAURANTS MAY BE FURTHER DEFINED AS:

- Classic: Renowned and landmark properties, older than 25 years, known for unique style and ambiance.
- Historic: Properties must meet one of the following criteria:
  - Listed on the National Register of Historic Places
  - National Historic Landmark
  - Located in a National Register Historic District
Accessibility
AAA recognizes the importance of this issue for travelers with disabilities. In 1997, AAA developed a two-tiered standard to meet members’ varying degrees of need in this regard, and to provide some flexibility for properties. These levels of accessibility are defined as follows:

**Level One** — Fully Accessible includes all criteria to meet the needs of those that are significantly disabled and primarily confined to a wheelchair.

**Level Two** — Semi-Accessible includes only some of the criteria to meet the needs of those that are disabled, but have some mobility and are not confined to a wheelchair. This would include people using a cane or a walker, or a disabled traveler with good mobility but limited range of arm or hand motion.

Accessibility is not a member-rating requirement and will not affect an establishment’s diamond rating. However, we strongly encourage you to be aware of special accessibility needs so that all travelers have adequate restaurant choices.

AAA accessibility requirements ensure that guests can park their vehicles, gain access to the restaurant, and utilize the facilities therein. The criteria are consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), but do not encompass the full scope of the ADA architectural guidelines. The AAA representative will check for accessibility during the evaluation of each restaurant.

AAA Accessibility Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>PUBLIC AREAS</th>
<th>Semi-Accessible must include ALL shaded items.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ramps to food and beverage outlets and accessible guest rooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level landings at top and bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ramp slope 1:12 maximum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handrails on both sides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Riser meet trends without nosings on stairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extensions at top and bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elevators to food and beverage outlets and accessible guest rooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tactile sign on all elevator buttons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and door jams, OR help available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doors provide at least 32-inch clear opening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minimum 48” x 48” car platform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control buttons 48 to 54 inches from floor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RESTAURANTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Menus in Braille OR reader available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accessible route to food and beverage outlets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fully Accessible must include ALL shaded and unshaded items.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTRANCE</th>
<th>PUBLIC RESTROOMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking and Exterior Pathways</td>
<td>Entry door along accessible route</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated accessible parking with upright signs</td>
<td>Entry door operable with closed fist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible parking spaces near main entrance</td>
<td>Grab bars beside toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-foot wide access aisle to an accessible route</td>
<td>Hardware operable with closed fist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks</td>
<td>Minimum 32-inch clear opening width</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curb cuts at appropriate street or parking lot walkways</td>
<td>Grab bar behind toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curb cuts or level access at passenger drop-off</td>
<td>5’ x 5’ toilet stall with out-swinging door and 32-inch clear opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrances and Doors</td>
<td>29-inch clearance below front apron of lavatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational with closed fist</td>
<td>Adequate clear turning space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level or ramped main entry</td>
<td>Insulated plumbing pipes beneath vanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beveled or flush floor thresholds at all doors</td>
<td>Toilet seat 17 to 19 inches from floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum 32-inch clear width</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Member Complaint Procedures
AAA keeps a close watch on the number and type of comments received from members regarding listed establishments. When members write to AAA expressing dissatisfaction with a particular restaurant, this information is tracked through the AAA National Office Member Relations department. All complaints are carefully reviewed for validity. The establishment is then notified of each complaint so that the restaurant management has an opportunity to respond and resolve the matter within a reasonable period of time.

Of the more than 45,000 listings in AAA publications, the average ratio of member complaints received by AAA/CAA clubs and the national office is less than one per establishment. Even though a complaint may be satisfactorily resolved, the complaint becomes a permanent part of the establishment’s record.

As a member-driven organization, AAA is highly sensitive to the needs of its membership. Therefore, when a restaurant receives six or more complaints from AAA/CAA members within six months, or a recurring problem exists, AAA reviews the restaurant’s approval status. A decision will then be made to determine an appropriate remedy, such as a warning, a changed rating assignment, or immediate disapproval. If any member complaint is determined to be of an extreme nature, an establishment may be disapproved immediately and without warning. This action is at AAA’s sole discretion.

If a restaurant has been disapproved for excessive member complaints, a written request for a reevaluation may be submitted, accompanied by an explanation of the actions taken to limit future complaints. Note: Such properties may not reapply until two years have elapsed from the date of disapproval.

All requests may be addressed to:
AAA Tourism Information Development
1000 AAA Drive
MS 51
Heathrow, FL 32746-5063

**Additional Information**

**POLICY**

- Are reservations guaranteed for accessible tables?

**ENTRANCE**

- Parking and Exterior Pathways
- Designated accessible parking with upright signs
- Accessible parking spaces near main entrance
- 5-foot wide access aisle to an accessible route
- Sidewalks
- Curb cuts at appropriate street or parking lot walkways
- Curb cuts or level access at passenger drop-off
- Entrances and Doors
- Operational with closed fist
- Level or ramped main entry
- Beveled or flush floor thresholds at all doors
- Minimum 32-inch clear width

**PUBLIC AREAS**

- Ramps to food and beverage outlets and accessible guest rooms
- Level landings at top and bottom
- Ramp slope 1:12 maximum
- Handrails on both sides
- Riser meet trends without nosings on stairs
- Extensions at top and bottom

**Elevators to food and beverage outlets and accessible guest rooms**

- Tactile sign on all elevator buttons and door jams, OR help available
- Doors provide at least 32-inch clear opening
- Minimum 48” x 48” car platform
- Control buttons 48 to 54 inches from floor

**RESTAURANTS**

- Menus in Braille OR reader available
- Accessible route to food and beverage outlets

**Fully Accessible must include ALL shaded and unshaded items.**

**Semi-Accessible must include ALL shaded items.**

**OF THE MORE THAN 45,000 LISTINGS IN AAA PUBLICATIONS, THE AVERAGE RATIO OF MEMBER COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY AAA/CAA CLUBS AND THE NATIONAL OFFICE IS LESS THAN ONE PER ESTABLISHMENT.**
The AAA Appeals Process

THE APPEALS PROCESS WAS ESTABLISHED AS A RESOURCE FOR ALL RESTAURANTS, LODGINGS, CAMPGROUNDS, AND ATTRACTIONS EVALUATED BY THE AAA TOURISM INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT. The process was created to:

- Aid in maintaining a fair and respectful relationship with the hospitality industry
- Allow establishments to raise issues without fear of forfeiting future opportunities for a fair evaluation
- Ensure that all issues are addressed in an efficient and timely manner
- Help identify policies, practices, or procedures that may be in need of review

How do I file an appeal?

First, contact the AAA Customer Service Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. EST: (407) 444-8370. In many cases, analysts will be able to resolve your concern immediately.

If resolution is not obtained, your call will be directed to the regional manager for your evaluation territory.

If an issue remains unresolved after the above steps have been taken, an establishment is required to state its concerns in writing for review by the AAA Appeals Committee. All appeals entertained by the committee must be in writing from the establishment only. Exercise utmost care to state specifically your concerns and provide your case for the committee's final review. Each appeal is thoroughly researched and given thoughtful consideration and substantive reply.

The AAA Appeals Committee convenes on a monthly basis and is comprised of seven voting members of AAA management from various business lines within the association. After consideration of your appeal, the committee will take one of three actions:

- Support the appeal
- Reject the appeal
- Table the appeal pending further information or reevaluation

Please note: The committee’s decision on your appeal will be considered as AAA’s final decision. You will be notified by mail as to the status of your appeal within 45 days of receipt of your written statement.
"We exist for our members and will judge everything we do by how well it serves their needs."
Be a Part of the Program

That Means Business!

The partnership that means business! As soon as you're Approved, become a AAA/CAA Official Appointment, and let all associates know and trust — AAA/CAA® Members and non-members. All because you're...

Customers...

Increase your

Then ever to

It's easier

...and more...

highlights! The page of your TourBook guide that includes your restaurant's listing in our TourBook users' guide.

Seventy-nine percent of our TourBook users indicate they are more likely to select restaurants listed in our TourBook guide.

AAA/CAA® members spend approximately $5 billion dollars annually on dining when traveling! This exclusive program is available to restaurants for just a $375 annual fee* — that's only a little more than $1 a day!

Although you are certain to realize some AAA/CAA® business from your complimentary listing, you can increase your share of this powerful market by participating in the Official Appointment (OA) Program.

In a recent survey, AAA/CAA® Members ranked your restaurant's listing with a red logo! Seventy-nine percent indicated they are more likely to select restaurants listed with a red logo.

For more information call (407) 444-8280.

* Year 2000/2001 rate

The partnership that means business!

Business!