

# Dinner's on me: entertaining and eating out

## A Paying the bill

We'll **split the bill**, shall we? [either each person will pay for himself/herself, or the bill will be divided equally between all the participants]

Lunch **is on me** today. [I am paying for you; *informal*]

Would you like to **join us** for dinner at the City Plaza hotel? [come with us]

We'd like you to **be our guest**. [we will pay; *formal*]

Let me **get this**. [pay the bill; *informal*]

I was **wined and dined** every night by the New York office. [invited out to restaurants]

## B Describing service



A new Italian restaurant called Bella Roma has just opened in the High Street, and we went there the other night to try it. I couldn't help comparing it to the Casa Italia, where we ate last week. In the Bella Roma, the service was **impeccable**<sup>1</sup> and quick; at the Casa Italia it's always a bit **sluggish**<sup>2</sup>. In the new place the waiters are **courteous**<sup>3</sup> and friendly without being **overbearing**<sup>4</sup>. In the other place they tend to be **sullen**<sup>5</sup> and the service is rather **brusque**<sup>6</sup>, which I find very **off-putting**<sup>7</sup>. But at Bella Roma they'll **go out of their way**<sup>8</sup> to give you what you want.

<sup>1</sup> perfect, cannot be faulted

<sup>2</sup> rather slow

<sup>3</sup> polite

<sup>4</sup> too confident, too inclined to tell people what to do

<sup>5</sup> bad-tempered, unwilling to smile

<sup>6</sup> quick and rude

<sup>7</sup> makes you feel you do not want to go there again

<sup>8</sup> do everything possible

## C Food preferences

I **have a sweet tooth** and can never say no to cakes or biscuits. [love sweet things]

I won't have dessert, thanks. You're lucky being so slim, but I'm afraid I have to **count the calories** /

I have to be a bit **calorie-conscious** these days. [be careful how many calories I eat]

I'll just have a small **portion** of dessert, please. [amount of a particular food that is served to one person]

I like to end the meal with something **savoury**, like cheese. [salty in flavour, or with herbs]

Ben's a bit of a **fussy eater**. [person who has very particular demands when eating]

No, thanks, I won't have wine. I'm **teetotal**. [never drink alcohol]

Before I book the restaurant, do you have any particular **dietary requirements**? [special needs or things someone cannot eat; *formal*]

I won't have any more wine, thanks. I don't want to **overdo it**. [eat or drink too much]

## D Entertaining at home

A: Why not come home and eat with us? You'll have to **take pot luck**, though. [eat what we're eating, nothing special]

B: Thank you. Shall I **bring a bottle**? [usually means a bottle of wine]

A: Should I wear a suit on Friday?

B: No, no, it isn't a **dinner party**, it's just an **informal get-together**. [rather formal dinner with guests] [informal group of people meeting for a meal/drinks, etc.]

A: Does anyone want **seconds**? [a second helping/serving of a dish]

B: Oh, yes please. It was delicious.

A: Can I pour you some juice? **Say when**. [tell me when I have served enough]

B: **When!** ['That's enough, thanks']

A: Help yourself to some **nibbles**. [things like nuts, crisps, etc., before a meal]

A: We have to leave at six. We can **grab a bite to eat** on the way. [have a quick meal]

B: Or we could get a **takeaway** when we get there. [ready-cooked meal bought to take home]

# Exercises

## 24.1 Rewrite the underlined parts of these sentences using expressions from A opposite.

- 1 When we eat out as a group, each person usually pays for their own food and drink. (Use a shorter expression meaning the same.)
- 2 Let me pay for this one. You can pay next time. (Use an informal expression.)
- 3 Visitors to the company's head office in London are always taken out to the best restaurants. (Use a phrase with two words which rhyme with each other.)
- 4 Fancy coming with us for lunch tomorrow? (Use a more formal expression.)
- 5 No, please. Put your credit card away. I'm inviting you for dinner. (Use an informal expression.)
- 6 I'd like to pay for you at the theatre tomorrow night. (Use a formal expression.)



## 24.2 Rewrite the underlined parts of these sentences using expressions from the opposite page to describe food and drink preferences.

- 1 I never drink alcohol. (Use an adjective.)
- 2 I don't really like sweet things. (Use an idiom.)
- 3 Are there things you can't or mustn't eat? (Use a formal/polite expression.)
- 4 Just a small amount of food (use one word) for me, please. I don't want to eat too much. (Use an expression that means the same.)
- 5 She's become very careful about how many calories she's eating. (Give two different ways of saying the same thing.)
- 6 Sasha is such a choosy person when it comes to food. It's difficult to find things she likes. (Use an expression that means the same.)

## 24.3 Give words from the opposite page which contrast with or are the opposite of these phrases.

- 1 a sweet dish
- 2 a friendly waiter
- 3 a formal gathering
- 4 rude staff
- 5 quick service
- 6 dreadful service

## 24.4 Which expressions on the opposite page mean:

- 1 eat whatever your hosts are eating at home, not a special dish for you?
- 2 tell me when I've poured enough in your glass?
- 3 get a quick meal or some other food that does not take a long time?
- 4 small items you eat before a meal, or perhaps at a reception?
- 5 another portion of what you have just eaten?
- 6 a semi-formal party in someone's house, probably not a meal?