

The

Harmonizer



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Monthly Newsletter for Music City Couples

October 2008

Serving Nashville & All Of Middle Tennessee and Surrounding Communities

Minding Your Manners

Dining out done right. By Tom Sietsema

Like the little black dress and classic blue blazer, good manners are always in fashion. Knowing right from wrong in restaurants – the best way to handle a wind glass, how to address a concern – can make the difference between a happy meal and a sour one. Here are some pointers for dining like a (polished) pro:

Cell Phone Etiquette

Ear-splitting soundtracks and trendy design accents (have you noticed all the uncovered floors and naked tables out there?) aren't the only source of noise pollution in restaurants these days. Count cell phone conversations as another major culprit. Whether users want to believe it or not, their voices are louder when they're talking into a cell phone than when they're speaking to someone across the table – and not everyone wants to be privy to a stranger's grocery list or baby sitter's schedule. Cell phones should be set on vibrate mode as soon as you enter a dining room, and non-emergency calls should be made or accepted only in an area where people aren't eating – say, in the lobby or outside a restroom. The most amusing request for silence that I've seen thus far was in an Italian restaurant in Washington, D.C. Its sign read: "The use of cell phones interferes with the making of risotto."

Napkin Know-How

Place your napkin on your lap as soon as you're seated – and do it discreetly, not with an attention-snap! If you need to excuse yourself from the table during a meal, place the napkin to the left of your plate. If your plate has already been removed, put the napkin on the table in front of you. (There's no need to refold it, but you should try to avoid leaving it spot-side up.) Unless you're at a crab feast or a picnic – or you're under 3-years of age – don't even think of tucking a napkin in your shirt front.

Food From Outside

Hoping to celebrate a special occasion with a bottle of wine from your personal cellar or a favorite cake made at home? Chances are, you're going to have to pay for the privilege if you want to bring it to a restaurant. To

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avoid unpleasant surprises, call ahead of your visit and inquire about the establishment's policy for serving food or drink from outside; some restaurants allow for it but charge corkage and cutting fees for wind and desserts, respectively. The charges cover the restaurant's labor, serveware and washing, among other details.

Keep in mind, restaurants are in the hospitality trade, but they're also businesses. So don't bring in wine or sweets just to save money – and never bring in something the restaurant already has on its own menu. Psst: Some restaurants waive charges for special bottles if a taste of the wine is shared with the sommelier, chef or server involved. And with advance notice, some restaurants can order or bake a special request.



Wine 101

There's a reason there's a stem on your wind glass: It protects the wine from being warmed by your hands. In other words: Don't hold a wind glass by the bowl.

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Birthdays

- Oct 05 – Kathy (of Dawn)
- Oct 09 – Gary (of Mike)
- Oct 10 – Janie (of Dawn)
- Oct 20 – Angela (of Risa)
- Oct 22 – Ana (of Elaine)
- Oct 23 – Kevin (of Rob)
- Oct 23 – Scott (of Rob)
- Oct 25 – Shelley (of Peggy)
- Oct 31 – Risa (of Angela)

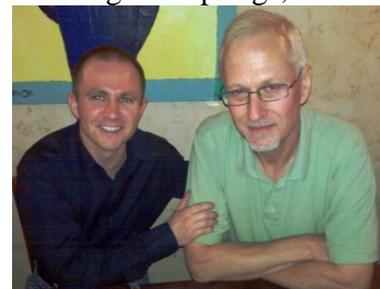
Anniversaries

- Oct 07 – Larry & Bobby (16-Years)
- Oct 07 – Sundi & Stacie (4-Years)
- Oct 30 – Tony & David (10-Years)

COUPLES

SPOTLIGHT

Matthew & Doug
Kingston Springs, TN



Joined July 20, 2008

About Our New Couple:

Matthew's Birthday: 04/21/1976
Doug's Birthday: 12/04/1954
Anniversary: 11/01/1996

How you met:

"We met on the Internet"

Minding Your Manners – Continued.....**Sushi Sense**

In a Japanese restaurant, feel free to eat sushi with either your chopsticks or your fingers. While the dish is best eaten in a single bite, some fish, particularly in American restaurants, is cut large and required two bites. If you're holding remaining sushi, hold it in a slightly lowered hand or chopsticks rather than put it back on it plate. Soy sauce is a condiment, not a gravy, so treat it as such and dip just the fish side of the sushi. If you soak the whole piece in soy sauce, sushi is likely to fall apart. Plus, you won't taste anything but soy sauce.

Pricey Propositions

Daily specials can be a chef's way of showing off a seasonal ingredient or fresh idea. They can also be among a restaurant's most expensive dishes, so if you don't see or hear their price, ask. At one restaurant I visited not long ago, the entrees on the standing menu averaged \$20, but one of the specials, a veal chop, was double that amount.

Constructive Criticism

It might be served at the right temperature and cooked the way you requested it, but now and then, a restaurant dish simply isn't to your liking. Can you send it back? You can, with a few provisions. One, let your server know specifically what you didn't care for. Was the dish too spice? Did it include an unexpected ingredient? Such information, relayed to the chef, gives the kitchen an opportunity to evaluate the item and possibly correct any flaws. Just as important, don't wait until your last bite of food to announce your disfavor. It's gauche to claim you don't like something after you've eaten all the evidence.

Cleaning Your Plate

To signal that you're finished eating, place your knife and fork together at an angle on the right side of the plate. If you're merely pausing between bites, put the tips of the utensils near the top of the plate, with the handles out to either side. (This creates an inverted V.) Waiters, take note: It's considered rude to remove plates before everyone at the table is done.

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**The Tipping Point**

In most restaurants in the U.S., I tip 20 percent of the subtotal of the bill if the service has been good or better – 25percent if the service has been extraordinary. In restaurants that feature buffet-type service, the figure is closer to 10 or 12 percent of the bill; the staff at those sorts of establishments will tell you that a lot of their labor is unseen. In addition to refilling drinks and clearing plates, for instance, servers are often tasked to perform extra chores before, during and after service, including polishing silverware, restocking supplies, and cleaning up. Without fail, poor service should be brought to the attention of a manager at the moment a problem arises, and if you're in a situation where you don't want to make a public fuss – a date a celebration or a business meeting – excuse yourself from the table and ask to speak with a supervisor somewhere private. Don't wait until you're walking out the door to point out problems. By then, it's sometimes too late to steer a bad situation to a happy ending.

Tom Sietsema is the award-winning food critic for The Washington Post. His work has appeared in GQ and Food & Wine

This Article - Compliments of Northwest Airlines, World Traveler" a monthly publication, (July 2008), provided free to their customers.

How you found Music City Couples:

We found Music City Couples while visiting Nashville Pride/2008

Hobbies:

Family, Music, Computers, Politics

Work:

Web Development

Family:

Yes, large family; 3-Children, 2-Grandchildren

Bryan & Chris

Hendersonville, Tennessee



Joined June 17, 2008

About Our New Couple:

Bryan's Birthday: 12/30/1964

Chris's Birthday: 11/01/1965

Anniversary: 06/22/1997

How you met:

We met while out on the town with friends

How you found Music City Couples:**Hobbies:**

Chris enjoys working out at the Y.M.C.A., reading m movies, visiting family, etc

Work:

Chris's work: operations manager
Bryan is retired

If you wish to be featured in next month's issue, please send in your information with a current photo to webmaster@musiccitycouples.org

Favorite Recipe

Carrot Cake

3 - Cups Grated Carrots
 1-1/2 - Cups Vegetable Oil
 2 - Cups Sugar
 4 - Eggs
 2 - Cups Flour
 2 - Tsp Soda
 1/4 - Tsp Salt
 1 - Tsp Cinnamon
 Mix and Bake at 350 Degrees for 35-Minutes

Frosting

1 - 8 oz. Package Cream Cheese
 1/4 - lb. Oleo (1-stick)
 1 - Box Powdered Sugar
 1 - Tsp Vanilla
 Mix Well
 Sprinkle with Nuts

Email Your Favorite Recipe
info@musiccitycouples.org

Events Calendar

Grand Ole Opry

Package: Main floor seats, Hotel,
 Tours at an affordable price.
 800-251-1864
www.musiccitytours.com

Stirrup Nashville

1529 4th Ave. South
 Nashville, TN, 37210
 615-782-0043
 Your New Favorite Neighborhood Bar
Info@StirrupNashville.com

Lipstick Lounge

1400 Woodland St, Nashville, TN, 37206
 This relaxed east Nashville dance club also
 features live music and theme nights.

Tribe

1517A Church St, Nashville, TN, 37203
 Sophisticated, straight-friendly gay nightclub
 fills a niche in Nashville.

Play Dance Bar

1519 Church St, Nashville, TN, 37203
 Gay-friendly dance club boasts DJs, karaoke,
 female impersonation, theme nights, snack bar
 and a private lounge overlooking the stage

COUPLES

The Music City Couples Network, an organization of hundreds of loving and committed gay and lesbian couples believes that the Federal Marriage Amendment is an unconscionable assault on the rights of millions of American citizens, and is joining other organizations seeking its defeat. According to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the amendment "would not only deny marriage to same-sex couples but could also deny any state legislature or electorate from ever voting to pass their own state's domestic partnership, civil union or marriage laws. Under the Federal Marriage Amendment, courts could be barred from enforcing the legal protections that a legislature provides through civil union or domestic partnership laws." Civil marriage, other forms of relationship recognition, and basic civil rights protections are essential components that make all families, including families headed by same-sex couples, safer and more secure. Civil marriage and religious marriage are two separate things. Religious institutions will never be forced to bless relationships with which they disagree, just as today religious institutions can refuse to marry couples of different faiths or individuals who have been divorced.

COMING EVENTS

Jun: Pride Weekend Jun/1st.
 Jul: 4th. Annual Festivities
 Jul: Movie Event "Sordid Lives"
 Aug: Dinner Night Out - Monell's
 Sep: Dinner Night Out - Red Restaurant
 Oct: Wiener Roast & Bonfire
 Nov: Waiting On A Host
 Dec: Waiting On A Host

Newsletter Submissions

Send us your Current News, Favorite Recipe, and Announcements that you would like to have added to our Monthly Newsletter. Send all submissions to, Webmaster@musiccitycouples.org no later than the First Friday of Every Month. Anything received after that Friday will be included in the next month's issue

Hosts Needed

Music City Couples is in search of couples willing to Host a Party in their home, back yard, or even a Park. If you have the desire to be a Host, please contact:
 Larry and Bobby.
info@musiccitycouples.org
 615-824-9966 - Home

Movie Night Out

Several of our couples have been asking if we plan to re-instate the monthly movie night out. We need your help. If you would like to take charge of our Monthly Movie Night Out, please drop us an email:
info@musiccitycouples.org

Dinner Night Out

Everyone loves to eat. Certainly you have a favorite Restaurant. If you would like to see us have a Monthly Dinner Night Out, please forward your Restaurant Choices and help us plan the monthly event. Simply send us an email:
info@musiccitycouples.org

Camping

Contact Barb & Jane
 Kingston, Springs, TN
info@musiccitycouples.org



Music City Couples is an organization of committed gay and lesbian couples in the Greater Nashville and Middle Tennessee area. The organization serves to provide a forum for gay/lesbian committed couples to strengthen their own relationships while also providing a social and supportive structure for their fellow committed couples. Music City Couples holds no religious affiliations and makes every attempt to respect the privacy of its couples.