

A Review of Restaurant Reviews

Restaurant food critics can be a valuable tool when choosing an eatery. In March 2008 the entire restaurant review industry came under scrutiny from a court case arising from a brutal but honest review of Belfastian pizzeria Goodfellas by the Irish News, the review which criticised the food, staff and atmosphere led to the restaurant being awarded £25,000 in libel damages. This decision went somewhat unnoticed by many, however its outcome could have changed review writing, opening the door for companies to take action when they feel they have been unfairly 'done over' by a review. However, upon appeal the case decision was overturned on the basis that the original jury was unfairly guided by the judge.

This case has brought to light many questions as to the relevance and validity of reviews; the main being that a review is a person's personal opinion it is not a qualified nor a mediated evaluation- it could be said that to curtail reviews would be to limit a person's freedom to speech, further to this, as unfairly as it is a review published is often tailored to the magazine and its readership expectations- the New York Times food critic reviewer is renowned for being tough yet is this their true opinions or do they go with the most fashionable option or what is expected? When in fact their favourite nosh secretly comes from the Hard Rock Café? Looking at reviewers who perhaps give out too good reviews; suspicion would lead me to think that opinions are swayed by advertisers and investors.

Reviewers should not be influenced by any external factors their job is to act as an independent ombudsman of sorts providing advice and guidance on where we should dine. From all the press coverage of the 'Goodfellas case' there seems to be a total disregard for the benefit readers got from the review, the words may have been excessive but the fact remained that the food was unsatisfactory according to the critic.

If you go online there is abundance of blogs that can give you a variety of restaurant reviews, online reviews are a useful tool for obtaining a perhaps more varied and honest review; the reasoning for this being that often bloggers are not swayed by advertisers nor limited by their readers demographics. Much like the newspapers and magazines, it will be one person who is writing the review but people can add to it, posting comments about their own experience with a restaurant. Once a restaurant review blog gains popularity and people are regularly leaving comments then it becomes a valuable resource for varied and honest opinions. As people are attending the restaurant socially rather than with the sole purpose of reviewing it the result will be different experience altogether and the retelling of their experience, for example taking their four children into a quiet bistro, may be of relevance to someone considering going with their own children. Therefore restaurant review blogs are very different to the reviews you read in the papers; and overall more useful.

About the Author

The Author writes articles on [restaurant review blogs](#). More articles written by the author related to Glasgow restaurants, Scottish restaurants, Restaurant food critics and [Restaurant reviews](#) which can be found in the web.

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