



Five College Center for the Study of World Languages

Conversation Preparation Guides

Title: Ordering from a Menu

Topic: Food in Restaurants

Level: Novice-Intermediate

Practice on Your Own

Imagine you are in a restaurant in a country where the language is spoken. You are sitting at a table looking at the menu. Now it is time to order your food.

- Try to find a menu that includes some foods that are common in the country. Practice pronouncing the foods. If you have any difficulty, take notes to ask your conversation partner.
 - If you are not able to find an actual menu, look for information about dishes that are common in the country.
- Choose three of the most common dishes. Prepare a dialogue in which you ask a waiter to tell you about these dishes. Practice the conversation out loud.
 - You: What is in this dish (or dish X)?
 - Waiter: It has beef, onions, red peppers, tomatoes...
 - You: What about this dish (or dish X)?
 - Waiter: It has...
- Now look up some typical terms that are used in ordering food.
 - Do you have vegetarian food? (or vegan)
 - Is it rare, medium, or well-done?
 - What are your desserts?
 - The food is delicious!
 - Does this dish come with bread? (or rice, etc.)
 - Is this food sweet, sour, or spicy?
- Learn how the payment process works in restaurants. Do you pay at the table? Should you go to a cashier at the entrance? Do you pay in cash? How do you ask for your check? Are you supposed to leave a tip? Is there a word for “tip”?

Practice in Conversation Session

- Show the menu you have found online to your conversation partner. Read the dishes out loud to check your pronunciation. Have you found a good menu, one that represents a typical restaurant menu of the country?

Online at: langmedia.fivecolleges.edu

© 2015 Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and Five Colleges, Incorporated.

- Role play the restaurant scene. Have your conversation partner as the waiter, while you are a customer. First ask for the menu. Then choose a few dishes and ask the waiter to tell you about the ingredients. Alternate the roles.
- Continue the restaurant scene. You want to order, you want to pay, you want to ask for dessert, you want to tell about how you want your food prepared...
- Practice the main food tastes with your conversation partner:
 - Sour, sweet, spicy/hot, salty, bitter...
- What were the foods that you already knew about, like omelette! Are they prepared the same way? Read and find out more about the food culture, and discuss your findings with your conversation partner.