

Approval Requirements &

# *Diamond Rating Guidelines*

RESTAURANT



AAA Publishing

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# RESTAURANT

## Approval Requirements &

# *Diamond Rating Guidelines*

## **I n t r o d u c t i o n**

Dear Hospitality Professional,

On behalf of AAA, I am pleased to introduce to you the latest edition of the *Restaurant Approval Requirements & Diamond Rating Guidelines*.

Since its inception in 1902 as a federation of independent motor clubs, AAA has existed to provide information, safety, security, and peace of mind to its now more than 51 million members. AAA's services have evolved to encompass roadside assistance, insurance and financial services, safety education, and public affairs. AAA is also an undisputed leader in travel information and services.

In 1937, the first AAA field representatives were hired to inspect lodgings and restaurants, and in 1963, AAA began assigning lodging ratings from 'good' to 'outstanding'. In 1977 — AAA's 75<sup>th</sup> (diamond) anniversary — the Diamond Rating system was introduced for lodgings, with restaurants included in 1989.

In 1989, the first **AAA Restaurant Diamond Rating Guidelines** booklet was introduced for industry review. Prior to this date, only minimum approval requirements were printed and distributed upon request.

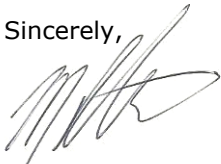
The new edition of the **AAA Approval Requirements and Diamond Rating Guidelines** was designed with two objectives in mind:

- To ensure that our ratings program is accurate and consistent when compared to meeting the travel needs of over 51 million AAA members.
- To provide hospitality professionals a valuable reference so they may be successful in achieving their goal as it relates to AAA Approval and our proprietary **Diamond Rating Process**.

To that end, we feel that it is important to partner with the hospitality industry by gathering input, discussing the meaning of our ratings, and openly sharing how the Diamond Rating Process is applied at the property level. We strongly urge property representatives to take full advantage of the information provided by AAA inspectors during an evaluation, since our experts are exposed to a wide range of properties throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean—AAA evaluates more than 31,000 accommodations, 27,000 restaurants and nearly 10,000 campgrounds each year for AAA travel products. AAA distributes more than 64 million copies of printed travel-related materials to members and consumers annually—including regional TourBook<sup>®</sup> and CampBook<sup>®</sup> guides, retail guidebooks, atlases and maps. In addition, AAA distributes online information and services to travelers who account for 40 million AAA.com visits annually.

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

Sincerely,



Michael Petrone, CEC  
Director/AAA Tourism Information Development

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*Information in this publication is based on current standards prevalent in the restaurant industry at the time of publication.  
The Approval Requirements and Diamond Rating Guidelines are subject to modification at any time without notice.*

## Section One

# *The Diamond Rating Process*

## Defining AAA Approval Requirements and AAA Diamond Rating Guidelines

It is important to note the difference between AAA Approval Requirements and Diamond Rating Guidelines as this concept is often misunderstood. The evaluation process is made up of three parts: Approval Requirements, objective Diamond Rating Guidelines, and subjective elements based on the professional experience and training of AAA inspectors — who review over 27,000 restaurants each year.

The essential AAA Approval Requirements are common-sense qualifications that AAA members have told us are important to them and, similarly, those most professional operators routinely employ. **All establishments must first meet this set of criteria in order to be considered for AAA Approval and Diamond Rating.**

**The Diamond Rating Guidelines are not mandatory rating requirements, but are components used to determine the appropriate Diamond Rating level.** Diamond Rating guidelines are simply a reflection of what is typically seen throughout the various market segments of the restaurant industry. Therefore, failure to meet some of the components listed for the rating categories does not necessarily preclude the achievement of that rating. During our evaluation, inspectors will assess the strengths and weaknesses of the restaurant and assign the most appropriate rating that will provide the best match in meeting AAA member expectations.

Furthermore, not all of the Diamond Rating Guidelines will apply to all restaurant types. For example: AAA inspectors will only use the sections of the Diamond Rating Guidelines that are appropriate for the restaurant classification in assessing the overall Diamond Rating.

## Applying for a AAA Diamond Rating

AAA CONSIDERS ALL VALID APPLICATIONS FOR EVALUATION. To be considered a valid applicant for AAA evaluation, establishments must meet all of the **Approval Requirements** for their restaurant category. These minimum requirements reflect members' basic expectations.

Prior to completing an *Application For Evaluation* (provided at: [www.AAA.biz/Approved](http://www.AAA.biz/Approved)), please review the requirements to verify your establishment's eligibility to apply. **Currently listed establishments need not reapply, as our inspectors will routinely conduct an evaluation of your restaurant on a continual basis.**

Along with your completed application, please include recent and accurate pictures of the exterior and the dining areas along with all appropriate menus. Please note that if our research indicates past disqualifying issues, you may be asked to provide written documentation of the corrective action taken since then.

AAA does not guarantee an immediate evaluation of all establishments that apply, but does guarantee a fair review of all applications. Additionally, AAA reserves all rights to apply priority consideration to those establishments demonstrating traits that provide the highest degree of AAA member value. Through ongoing member research, AAA has developed criteria reflecting key elements of consideration in making travel-related decisions. Some examples of AAA member value criteria are:

- LOCATION
- NEWLY BUILT, NEWLY OPENED, OR RENOVATED
- HIGH DEGREE OF CLEANLINESS AND COMFORT
- CONDITION OF OVERALL PROPERTY IS WELL MAINTAINED
- REPUTATION OR NOTORIETY AS BEING THE VERY BEST, WHETHER SIMPLE ROADSIDE EATERIES OR CELEBRATED, FINE-DINING ESTABLISHMENTS
- DIVERSITY IN CUISINE TYPE AND STYLE OF OPERATION
- OTHER SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS, SUCH AS UNIQUE DESIGN, STYLE OF OPERATION, OR SPECIAL VALUE FEATURES

Once your establishment is approved, it will be evaluated or updated annually. All evaluations are unannounced to ensure that our inspectors see your restaurant just as our members would see it. The conditions noted at the time of the annual evaluation will be the basis of the decision to list or rate a restaurant. This decision is at the sole discretion of AAA. **By applying for an evaluation, you agree to allow AAA to publish your establishment information and the respective Diamond Rating in our travel publications.** AAA will make every effort to ensure that your establishment is fairly represented.

If, after continued review, or up to and including the end of one year, the establishment is determined to be of limited AAA member value, a letter will be sent advising that the restaurant has been released from any further consideration.

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## AAA Approval Requirements

AAA APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS REFLECT THE MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS AS ESTABLISHED THROUGH MEMBER SURVEYS AND CONTINUOUS FEEDBACK.

To be AAA Approved and Diamond Rated, an establishment must meet the following requirements:

### Cleanliness and Condition

1. All facilities directly associated with an establishment must be clean and well-maintained throughout.
2. All food and beverage is wholesome, free from contamination, properly handled and stored.

### Management Style of Operation

3. An establishment may not use AAA trademarks—including, but not limited to, the AAA logo and Diamond Rating—without AAA’s prior written consent.
4. The establishment must be appropriately located for business or leisure travel.
5. The establishment must assist AAA in the resolution of member complaints.
6. All restaurant staff must conduct business in a professional and ethical manner providing attentive, conscientious service to guests.
7. Restaurant management, or their representative, must be readily accessible at all times for guest needs or requests.
8. The primary business operation of the establishment must be directly related to the preparation and service of food.
9. Management will readily provide establishment information as requested by AAA on a continual basis for the purpose of maintaining the most accurate travel information for AAA publications.
10. The establishment must be in compliance with all local, state, and federal codes.

### Exterior and Public Areas

11. Establishments must have accurate, legible signage in appropriate areas.
12. All facilities directly associated with an establishment (such as banquet rooms, bakeries, gift shops, etc.) provided for guest use must meet all appropriate AAA Approval Requirements.
13. Adequate illumination is required in all public areas. This includes sufficient lighting in all corridors, walkways, stairways, landings, parking areas, etc.

# The AAA Evaluation and Diamond Rating Process

The AAA Evaluation and Diamond Rating Process primarily consist of three parts:

- **INTRODUCTION, INTERVIEW**
- **MEAL AND/OR RESTAURANT TOUR AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS AND DIAMOND RATING GUIDELINES**
- **ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

First, all establishments must meet **AAA Approval Requirements** and be determined to provide member value. This validation is conducted through a combined process of applications, inspections, referrals, and media research.

If a restaurant is presumed to qualify, one of our inspectors will visit and anonymously dine to observe the basic foundation of the establishment. The inspector will apply a set of Diamond Rating guidelines that represent objective criteria prevalent throughout the restaurant industry. In addition, the inspector 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 five areas:

- **CLEANLINESS AND CONDITION**
- **MANAGEMENT AND STAFF**
- **FOOD**
- **SERVICE**
- **DÉCOR AND AMBIANCE**

AAA's overall intent is to capture the essence of the total dining experience rather than just validate attributes of the restaurant. Our research shows that AAA members consider the quality of the food and service to be the most significant factors when eating out—and décor and ambiance to be less important in defining their dining experience. Therefore, we assign the highest weight to the elements of food and service (80% of the overall Diamond Rating) –with décor and ambiance comprising 20% of the rating.

Once our assessment is complete and if satisfied, our representative will contact the owner, general manager, or restaurant designee for a brief interview. This interview is an extremely important part of the evaluation, as factual data is gathered for inclusion into our travel information inventory with potential use in AAA's worldwide printed and electronic publications. The session also gives the restaurant representative a chance to advise AAA of any plans for improvement that may be forthcoming. Furthermore, the inspector 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. Notice 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 inspector determines that your establishment meets the Five Diamond 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.

## Section Two

# *The Diamond Rating Guidelines*

AAA DIAMOND RATINGS REPRESENT A COMBINATION OF THE OVERALL QUALITY, THE RANGE OF FACILITIES, AND THE LEVEL OF HOSPITALITY OFFERED BY AN ESTABLISHMENT. These widely recognized and trusted symbols help AAA members choose restaurants that will meet their needs and expectations.

AAA inspectors are responsible for determining a restaurant's Diamond Rating based on established standards that are developed with input from our trained professionals, AAA members, and various restaurant industry professionals.

AAA's Diamond Rating Guidelines indicate what is typically found at each rating level. However, the quality of food, service, and overall appeal of an establishment are also considered, as well as regional architectural style and design. Diamonds are assigned based on the average of all restaurant characteristics, with a focus on overall guest impression rather than on individual elements. Therefore, not meeting a guideline (in one area) may not necessarily affect the overall Diamond Rating.

The final factor in determining the Diamond Rating for an establishment is professional judgment, which is a very important part of the rating assessment. Our inspectors are North America's travel experts based upon ongoing training and experience in conducting more than 27,000 restaurant evaluations per year.



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# What the Diamond Ratings Mean

## One Diamond



*[basic; good food]*

A One Diamond restaurant must meet basic requirements pertaining to management, cleanliness, and overall quality. The primary focus is on providing wholesome, straightforward, and familiar food at an economical price. Generally, these are quick-serve operations, and the menu selection is limited to a restaurant's specialty—such as: hamburgers, fried chicken, pizza or tacos. Service is limited, in many instances self service, and the surroundings are often utilitarian.

## Two Diamond



*[relaxed family fare]*

A Two Diamond restaurant displays noticeable enhancements to food presentation, such as the use of common garnishes in combination with the dishware. Typically, the menu offers a wide selection featuring familiar favorites or home-style foods often cooked to order and reasonably priced. The service, while often limited, is plain-speaking and relaxed. The surroundings, while limited in scope, typically reflect a clear theme. All elements combine to provide a familiar, often family-oriented experience.

## Three Diamond



*[entry-level fine dining]*

A Three Diamond restaurant often employs a professional chef and a supporting staff of highly-trained cooks. The menu is skillfully prepared and often reflects interpretations of the latest trends or a mastering of traditional cuisine. Typically, there are expanded offerings of beverages in complement to the menu, such as international/regional wines, specialty beers, cocktails and soft drinks. A professional dining room manager leads a team of efficient service staff. The service reflects some degree of refinement, such as reservations accepted, personal assistance, or the ability to adapt to the guest's specific needs. The décor reflects the use of well-coordinated design mediums that provide a distinct theme and good comfort. Restaurants at this level convey an entry into fine dining and are often positioned as an adult-oriented experience.

## Four Diamond



*[fine dining]*

A Four Diamond restaurant is geared to individuals in search of a distinctive fine-dining experience. Often orchestrated by an executive chef and an accomplished staff, menus reflect a high degree of creativity and complexity, using imaginative presentations to enhance high quality, market-fresh ingredients. The equally proficient service staff demonstrates a strong desire to meet or exceed guest expectations. A wine steward is typically available to provide menu-specific knowledge on wine selection. The ambiance is highly refined, comfortable and well-coordinated, incorporating quality materials and a variety of upscale design enhancements to give a first-class impression.

## Five Diamond



*[world-class dining]*

A Five Diamond restaurant is renowned and consistently provides a world-class experience. This is "haute cuisine" at its best. Menus are cutting edge, using only the finest ingredients available. Food is prepared in a manner that is highly imaginative and unique. The combination of technique and ingredients is extraordinary, reflecting the impeccable artistry and awareness of highly-acclaimed chefs. A maître d' leads an expert service staff that exceeds guest expectations by attending to every detail in an effortless and unobtrusive manner.

# Objective Diamond Rating Guidelines

THESE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS ILLUSTRATE WHAT IS TYPICALLY FOUND THROUGHOUT THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY AT THE VARIOUS MARKET SEGMENTS. The following guidelines are not mandatory rating requirements, but are components used to determine the appropriate Diamond Rating level.

## Objective Diamond Rating Guidelines - Food

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

### FOOD

(40% of overall Diamond Rating)

	ONE DIAMOND	TWO DIAMOND	THREE DIAMOND	FOUR DIAMOND	FIVE DIAMOND
<p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p><i>Appetizers, soups, salads, main courses, desserts and other offerings.</i></p> <p><i>Based on a minimum of three courses</i></p> <p><i>(cont'd on next page)</i></p>	<p>All aspects (such as: dishware, food placement and content) are unadorned and straightforward</p> <p>No discernible <b>garnish*</b> is used</p>	<p>Some evidence of enhancement, such as the limited use of common garnishes (parsley, lemon wedge, lettuce leaf, cherry tomato, etc.) in combination with basic quality china, glass or washable plastic <u>or</u> the use of upgraded dishware (more than basic quality china, glass, or washable plastic) to present the menu item</p>	<p>Obvious evidence of enhancements to placement, variety, and color; all are well-coordinated and provide an enhanced overall appeal</p> <p><b>Garnish is harmonious with the other ingredients</b></p>	<p><b>3D plus*:</b></p> <p><b>Precise attention to food placement and design. Creative, artistic, or subtle use of garnish to enhance some aspect of the recipe concept</b></p> <p><b>Each menu offering provides variety in texture, color, substance, theme, and/or temperature</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>Food is further enhanced by the use of distinctive serving pieces resulting in an extremely imaginative and exclusive concept that is implemented in outstanding fashion</p> <p>All ingredients are unique to each dish and meticulously integrated with the plate design</p>

\* See Glossary of Diamond Rating Terms

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

<b>FOOD</b>					
(40% of overall Diamond Rating)					
	<b>ONE DIAMOND</b>	<b>TWO DIAMOND</b>	<b>THREE DIAMOND</b>	<b>FOUR DIAMOND</b>	<b>FIVE DIAMOND</b>
<b>Presentation</b>  (cont'd)			<b>Type of garnish is advanced in style and may include: consistent cutting techniques, such as: patterned slicing, fine dice, julienne, or other precise styles, carved vegetables or fruits, specialty greens, flowers, or herbs</b>	<b>Portion size is consistent in scale and is an appropriate serving for one guest. <i>Large, oversized quantities are not typical, as they inhibit the guest's ability to "dine", i.e., sample several courses</i></b>  <b>Accompaniments/ sauces vary and are specific to each dish</b>	
<b>Ingredients</b>	Basic, palatable; no <b>specialty items*</b>  Obvious use of <b>convenience foods*</b>	Specialty items comprise a small percentage of the overall menu  Less evidence of the use of convenience foods	Predominantly fresh; increased use of specialty items  Minor evidence of the use of convenience foods	<b>Reflect a variety of local and/or regional fresh, market availability; frequent use of specialty items</b>  <b>No evidence of the use of convenience foods</b>  Some standard menu selections change seasonally	<b>4D plus:</b>  Reflect some aspect of fresh, global market availability; combined use of specialty, <b>exotic*</b> , and/or organic items is predominant  Some standard menu selections change daily or weekly

\* See Glossary of Diamond Rating Terms

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

## FOOD

(40% of overall Diamond Rating)

	ONE DIAMOND	TWO DIAMOND	THREE DIAMOND	FOUR DIAMOND	FIVE DIAMOND
<p><b>Menu Preparation</b></p> <p><i>Restaurants serving multiple mealtimes (breakfast, lunch and/or dinner) must be able to demonstrate similar levels of complexity at each period.</i></p>	<p>Menu incorporates a limited variety of food preparation techniques. Food typically requires minimal preparation and is often prepared in advance (as evident in most quick-serve restaurants)</p> <p>Preparation techniques are common, such as: barbecue/smoking, grilling, frying, roasting, baking, stewing, steaming, pan-frying and/or salad/sandwich preparation</p> <p><i>The techniques required to prepare the menu items are in keeping with the skills typical of a <b>short order</b>* cook</i></p>	<p><b>Menu incorporates an increased variety of common food preparation techniques</b></p> <p><b>Food typically requires increased preparation time</b></p> <p><i>The techniques required to prepare the menu items are in keeping with the skills typical of an advanced cook</i></p>	<p><b>2D plus:</b></p> <p><b>Menu incorporates some advanced food preparation techniques, such as: poaching, sautéing, sauce-making, soufflés, mousses, hot and cold smoking and/or charcuterie</b></p> <p><b>Foods are well-prepared and most courses are made to order</b></p> <p><i>The techniques required to prepare the menu items are in keeping with the skills typical of a professional cook or chef</i></p>	<p><b>3D plus:</b></p> <p><b>Menu incorporates an increased variety of advanced cooking techniques. The preparation time and delivery of all menu items is highly efficient and in keeping with the needs of the guests</b></p> <p><b>Two additional features are evident, such as: a chef's starter, an intermezzo, after-dinner confections, or an additional surprise feature</b></p> <p><b>The techniques required to prepare the menu items are in keeping with the skills typical of a series of professional chefs</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>All menu items are prepared from scratch in-house</p> <p>Food is prepared in a manner that is highly imaginative and unique. The combination of techniques and ingredients is extraordinary</p> <p>A chef's tasting menu is offered; typically in addition to à la carte selections</p> <p>Menus pairing wine and food are available</p> <p>At least three additional features are evident, such as: a chef's starter, an intermezzo, after-dinner confections, and/or additional surprise features</p> <p><i>The techniques required to prepare the menu items clearly demonstrate a mastery of the culinary arts, and are in keeping with the skills typical of a renowned professional chef</i></p>

\* See Glossary of Diamond Rating Terms

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

## Objective Diamond Rating Guidelines – Service

<b>SERVICE</b>					
(40% of the overall Diamond Rating)					
	<b>ONE DIAMOND</b>	<b>TWO DIAMOND</b>	<b>THREE DIAMOND</b>	<b>FOUR DIAMOND</b>	<b>FIVE DIAMOND</b>
<b>Reservations/ Telephone Assistance</b>	<p>Not accepted</p> <p>Telephone inquiries are handled by any member of the restaurant staff; informal in manner</p> <p>Minimal information is offered</p>	<p>Accepted on occasion for large groups or for special events; or call-ahead preferred seating is available</p> <p>Telephone inquiries are handled by a designated staff member who demonstrates a deliberate and system-oriented manner</p>	<p><b>Accepted as general rule but may not always be required</b></p> <p><b>Telephone inquiries are handled by a professional staff in a manner that is appropriate to the guest's needs</b></p> <p><b>Attendant is proficient in answering questions regarding additional information about the establishment (such as: hours of operation, smoking status, directions) or answers to general menu questions, etc.)</b></p>	<p><b><u>3D plus:</u></b></p> <p><b>Attendant answers telephone promptly (within three rings), and displays a high degree of telephone etiquette and refinement*</b></p> <p><b>Reviews information for accuracy. Thanks guest for calling</b></p>	<p><b><u>4D plus:</u></b></p> <p>Attendant demonstrates a genuine, unforced manner; anticipates the guest's needs in some manner and appropriately addresses guest by name</p> <p>Attendant volunteers additional information about the establishment</p> <p>Provides instructions pertaining to the confirmation of the reservation</p>

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

## SERVICE

(40% of the overall Diamond Rating)

	ONE DIAMOND	TWO DIAMOND	THREE DIAMOND	FOUR DIAMOND	FIVE DIAMOND
<b>Initial Greeting</b>	No greeting or limited greeting at entrance	Reception area is intermittently staffed (by any staff associate) or greeting is performed by an associate with multiple responsibilities (cashier/hostess)	<p><b>It is obvious that reception area is continuously staffed</b></p> <p><b>A dedicated greeter acknowledges guest arrival</b></p> <p><b>Guest is advised of expected waiting time as appropriate</b></p>	<p><b>3D plus:</b></p> <p><b>Greeting is handled in a manner that is prompt and refined*</b></p> <p><b>If seating is delayed, guest is offered a seat in a waiting area</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>Uses guest's name in an appropriate manner</p> <p>Reservation time is honored within five minutes. If delayed, the attendant is adept at making proper accommodations without hesitation and anticipates guest's needs in some manner</p> <p>Personal assistance is provided as appropriate with coats, packages, umbrellas, etc.</p>
<b>Seating</b>	No seating (take-out only) or self-seating is available	<p>Service is limited to following the lead of the staff member</p> <p>No personal assistance</p> <p>Menu is at the table or presented as guests are seated</p>	<p><b>Assisted seating is provided by a staff member</b></p> <p><b>Extra place settings are removed if necessary</b></p> <p><b>Menu and wine list (if available) are presented at the appropriate time and offered directly to each guest</b></p>	<p><b>3D plus:</b></p> <p><b>Manner is refined and conversant as guests are seated</b></p> <p><b>Personal assistance is provided, such as the moving of a chair and/or table as appropriate</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>Guest's name is used as appropriate; anticipates guest's needs in some manner</p> <p>Table is preset per reservation</p>

\* See Glossary of Diamond Rating Terms

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

## SERVICE

(40% of the overall Diamond Rating)

	ONE DIAMOND	TWO DIAMOND	THREE DIAMOND	FOUR DIAMOND	FIVE DIAMOND
<b>Food and Beverage Service</b>	<p>Self-service aspects are predominant, such as: counter order/pickup, cafeteria or buffet style service</p> <p>Table service is minimal or non-existent</p>	<p><b>Table service is predominant;</b> some self-service aspects may be evident</p> <p>Service style is practical, relaxed, and deliberate; appropriate to the overall theme</p> <p>The overall level of staff performance is often perfunctory and inconsistent, resulting in an average level of personal attention to guest</p>	<p><b>2D plus:</b></p> <p><b>No self-service aspects</b></p> <p><b>Service style is skilled, measured, and adaptable to guest requests</b></p> <p><b>The overall level of staff performance is consistent and unobtrusive, with an increased degree of personal attention to guest</b></p> <p><b>There is some evidence of refinement</b></p> <p><b>When wine is available, there is an appropriate source for information on wine selection</b></p>	<p><b>3D plus:</b></p> <p><b>Formalized, refined and accomplished, with a high level of personal attention and a strong desire to be of assistance</b></p> <p><b>Team approach to hospitality that often anticipates and responds appropriately to guest needs through vigilant attention to follow-up</b></p> <p><b>Tablesides preparations and other specialized services are executed with confidence and proficiency</b></p> <p><b>When wine is available, service is confident and proficient. Menu-specific knowledge on wine selection is evident</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>Provides a meticulous degree of personal attention and guest awareness by identifying and anticipating guest needs with an unconditional desire to be of service</p> <p>Consistently exceeds guest expectations in a seamless manner which is exceptionally efficient, unobtrusive, and polished</p> <p>All table service staff display a competent knowledge of the menu; courses are described as they are served</p> <p>When wine is available, expert knowledge and service are clearly evident. (Formally trained wine stewards or sommeliers)</p>

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

## SERVICE

(40% of the overall Diamond Rating)

	ONE DIAMOND	TWO DIAMOND	THREE DIAMOND	FOUR DIAMOND	FIVE DIAMOND
Payment/ Departure/ Exit	Receipt only (if desired); payment is made at time of order	<p>Presentation of check is basic, such as: check only or the use of a common plate, plastic tray or folder</p> <p>Check is presented at any time during or after the meal</p> <p>Payment is made by guest with the cashier</p>	<p>Presentation of check is enhanced in some manner</p> <p>Check is presented at the appropriate time after the meal is served</p> <p><b>Server handles settlement of check</b></p>	<p><b>3D plus:</b></p> <p><b>Presentation of check is consistent with the upscale décor and theme of establishment</b></p> <p><b>Server anticipates guest desire for check</b></p> <p><b>Check settlement is discreet</b></p> <p><b>Greeter acknowledges guest departure</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>An additional take home gift, such as: a personalized menu, specialty items, boxed chocolates, etc., is provided to guest before departure</p> <p>Server and greeter acknowledge guest departure by name</p> <p>Staff anticipates guest's needs in some manner (such as: validate parking, arrange transportation, offer to retrieve coats, etc.)</p>

## Objective Diamond Rating Guidelines – Décor & Ambiance

### Décor & Ambiance

(20% of overall Diamond Rating)

	ONE DIAMOND	TWO DIAMOND	THREE DIAMOND	FOUR DIAMOND	FIVE DIAMOND
Entrance/ Foyer	<p>No distinct separation between entrance and dining areas; no reception stand</p> <p>Self-seating or no seating is clearly evident</p>	<p>Clearly-defined reception stand and a sign or some other indication that advises guest to "Please wait to be seated"</p>	<p><b>Distinct separation between the reception area and other areas (diners are not distracted by waiting guests)</b></p>	<p><b>3D plus:</b></p> <p><b>Characteristics of the reception area are clearly upscale</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>Characteristics of the reception area are clearly luxurious and uniquely appointed</p>

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

<b>Décor &amp; Ambiance</b> (20% of overall Diamond Rating)					
	<b>ONE DIAMOND</b>	<b>TWO DIAMOND</b>	<b>THREE DIAMOND</b>	<b>FOUR DIAMOND</b>	<b>FIVE DIAMOND</b>
<b>Waiting Area and/or Lounge</b>	None	Small waiting area or bar; limited seating capacity	<b>Expanded waiting area or lounge (with tables, chairs), distinctly separate from the dining area</b>	<b><u>3D plus:</u></b>  <b>Characteristics are clearly upscale</b>	<b><u>4D plus:</u></b>  Characteristics are clearly luxurious and uniquely appointed
<b>Design Elements</b>	All elements are basic, functional, and operational	<b>An obvious coordinated theme throughout</b>	<b><u>2D plus:</u></b>  <b>Design, layout, and theme are well-coordinated for guest comfort</b>  <b>Incorporates a variety of design mediums (colors, fabrics, textures, lighting, etc.) to achieve an overall effect that is noticeably distinct</b>  Service stations are unobtrusive; incorporated into the design	<b><u>3D plus:</u></b>  <b>An obvious high level of refinement is evident; all materials are of the highest caliber; fresh flowers and plants are integrated into the theme</b>  <b>Service stations are hidden from guest view</b>	<b><u>4D plus:</u></b>  Meticulous attention to all décor elements, achieving a uniquely luxurious effect
<b>Printed Materials (Menu/Wine List/etc.)</b>	Menu is board style or of basic materials; overall effect is plain and straightforward	Quality of materials is moderately enhanced (paper, ink, plastic lamination, etc.); print techniques and design enhancements provide an overall common effect	<b>Quality of materials is distinguished by advanced substances (paper, ink, embossing, bindings, folder/cover, etc.), variety of print techniques and proficient design enhancements; overall effect is uncommon</b>	<b><u>3D plus:</u></b>  <b>Highest quality materials and a variety of stylish design enhancements; overall effect is first-class</b>	<b><u>4D plus:</u></b>  Exclusive enhancements to all elements of print, layout, and descriptions, achieving a uniquely luxurious effect

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

<b>Décor &amp; Ambiance</b> (20% of overall Diamond Rating)					
	<b>ONE DIAMOND</b>	<b>TWO DIAMOND</b>	<b>THREE DIAMOND</b>	<b>FOUR DIAMOND</b>	<b>FIVE DIAMOND</b>
<b>Tabletop Covers and Napery</b>	<p><b>Bare table surfaces of basic quality materials, such as: laminate, wood, metal, acrylic, vinyl, resin, molded melamine, etc.</b> with standard finish</p> <p>Basic, paper napkins</p>	<p><b>1D plus:</b></p> <p>Enhanced with basic treatments, such as: paper placemats, paper/vinyl /plastic tablecloths, butcher paper</p> <p>Enhanced (weight or design) paper napkins</p>	<p><b>2D plus:</b></p> <p>If exposed, table surfaces are of a decorative style with a polished /lacquered finish or an acrylic/glass overlay</p> <p>Enhanced with synthetic quality treatments, such as: polyester, poplin, spandex, leatherette, etc. – tablecloths, placemats, or runners</p> <p>Synthetic cloth napkins</p>	<p>If exposed, table surfaces are of designer quality materials, such as: highly polished fine wood, granite, marble, etc.</p> <p>Enhanced with natural quality treatments, such as: cotton-synthetic blends, leather, rattan, bamboo, etc. – tablecloths, placemats, or runners</p> <p>Cotton-synthetic blended cloth napkins</p>	<p>Tables are padded or double tablecloths are used as silencers</p> <p>Both tablecloths and napkins are natural fabrics with a luxurious feel (typically cotton/linen) with a freshly pressed appearance (minimal wrinkles or creasing)</p>
<b>Dishware</b>	<p>Disposable materials</p>	<p>Predominantly basic quality china, glass, or washable plastic</p> <p>Some evidence of disposable condiment containers or side dishes</p>	<p><b>All serving pieces are of noticeably enhanced design and materials with appropriate pieces (such as: bread &amp; butter plates, ramekins, pitchers, etc.) for menu offerings and the associated condiments</b></p>	<p><b>3D plus:</b></p> <p><b>The finest quality materials and design throughout</b></p> <p><b>Some use of varied and unique pieces as part of the overall food presentation</b></p>	<p><b>4D plus:</b></p> <p>Predominant use of varied and unique pieces as part of the overall food presentation</p>

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

<b>Décor &amp; Ambiance</b> (20% of overall Diamond Rating)					
	<b>ONE DIAMOND</b>	<b>TWO DIAMOND</b>	<b>THREE DIAMOND</b>	<b>FOUR DIAMOND</b>	<b>FIVE DIAMOND</b>
<b>Flatware</b>	Disposable materials	<b>Washable</b> , everyday quality of basic design; lightweight grade	<b>2D plus:</b>  Medium weight grade stainless steel <b>with obvious design enhancements</b>  <b>Coordinated set throughout with appropriate pieces for menu offerings</b>	<b>3D plus:</b>  The finest quality stainless steel (18/10 or 18/8) heavy weight grade with upscale design enhancements.	All pieces are a coordinated set; silver plated or finer
<b>Glassware</b>	Disposable materials	Washable plastic or heavy weight glass of common style. Pieces are often uncoordinated throughout	Medium weight glass with <b>distinct, upscale style; appropriate pieces for beverage offerings</b>	<b>3D plus:</b>  <b>Coordinated light weight table settings of the finest quality</b>	<b>4D plus:</b>  Coordinated inventory of the finest quality throughout all aspects of beverage service (design and quality of barware is comparable to table settings)
<b>Chairs/Stools /Benches</b>	Simple, functional—unpadded; limited comfort	<b>Enhanced design for good comfort</b>	<b>2D plus:</b>  <b>Well-coordinated fabric or leather coverings for sustainable comfort</b>	<b>3D plus:</b>  <b>Upscale design with ample padding on seat and back for extended comfort</b>	<b>4D plus:</b>  Luxurious, <b>upholstered*</b> arm chairs that provide the highest degree of comfort

\* See Glossary of Diamond Rating Terms

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

<b>Décor &amp; Ambiance</b> (20% of overall Diamond Rating)					
	<b>ONE DIAMOND</b>	<b>TWO DIAMOND</b>	<b>THREE DIAMOND</b>	<b>FOUR DIAMOND</b>	<b>FIVE DIAMOND</b>
<b>Table Setting Enhancements</b>	None or <b>basic, functional items, such as: condiment containers, salt, pepper, sugar, napkin dispenser, etc.</b>	<b>1D plus:</b> Common decorative enhancements, such as: artificial flowers or basic candles with or without holders—economy materials such as: plastic, heavy glass, or common wood  Utensils rolled in napkin; children’s games, menu and/or promotional flyers, etc.	<b>Elegant appeal</b>  <b>Decorative cloth napkin folds; fresh flowers; preset utensils and glassware</b>  <b>Tapered candles, votive, tea light or fuel cell lighting with upscale holders</b>	<b>3D plus:</b>  <b>Well coordinated first-class effect</b>  <b>Distinctive lighting, such as: candles of contemporary/ classic design, table lamp candleholders, or table lamps</b>	<b>4D plus:</b>  Charger or show plate

**Did you know?**

AAA inspectors...

- ❖ Are predominantly full-time AAA/CAA employees who live and work throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean
- ❖ Eat more than 10,000 restaurant meals a year
- ❖ Drive an annual combined total of nearly one million miles—enough to circle the Earth 40 times or make two round-trips to the Moon
- ❖ Evaluate more than 67,000 lodgings, restaurants and campgrounds a year

For AAA.com and the 2009 TourBook, the number of AAA Diamond Rated restaurants was:

- ❖ One Diamond = 4,429 listings
- ❖ Two Diamond = 14,536 listings
- ❖ Three Diamond = 6,916 listings
- ❖ Four Diamond = 775 listings
- ❖ Five Diamond = 59 listings

## 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.

### Subjective Diamond Rating Guidelines – Food

<b>FOOD</b>	
<b>The "OH!" Zone:</b> The following dining elements are not Diamond Rated, but are assigned "+" = very obviously enhancing, "-" = very obviously detracting, or "blank" = no obvious impact.	
<b>Bread</b>	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 by rating level, from simple processed breads to creative and imaginative offerings.
<b>Condiments</b>	As ratings increase, the quality of condiments improves with respect to preparation, presentation, and ingredients. Typical condiments are relishes, mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise, vinegar, salt, pepper, sugar, artificial sweeteners, butter, and cream. At higher ratings, many condiments are freshly made with varying attributes.
<b>Compliments</b>	Such as chef starter (amuse-bouche), intermezzo (palate cleansing course), soup, confections, pastries and/or cookies (mignardises and petits fours), complimentary drink, parting gift, etc. Typically seen at Four Diamond and Five Diamond restaurants.
<b>Taste</b>	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?
<b>Temperature</b>	Is the temperature of the food appropriate (hot food hot; cold food cold)?
<b>Variety</b>	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.
<b>Beverages</b>	As ratings increase, generally the quality and variety of beverages improves. Custom dictates if water is poured automatically or on 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 Diamonds and above, wine lists should offer wines with varying degrees of complexity, price range, availability, and production style.
<b>Value</b>	Consideration is given to location, décor, service, and food. Is the cost of the experience justified?
<b>Competency</b>	Is the food prepared as ordered? Is the meat overcooked or underdone? Are the colors and textures of vegetables true? Are soups, sauces, and emulsions of the right consistency? Execution of all methods is flawless and meticulous at the Five Diamond level.
<b>Other</b>	Miscellaneous observations of items not included above, or to increase the impact of an observation included above.

## Subjective Diamond Rating Guidelines – Service

<b>SERVICE</b>	
<b>Hospitality Zone:</b> The following dining elements are not Diamond Rated, but are assigned "+" = very obviously enhancing, "-" = very obviously detracting, or "blank" = no obvious impact.	
<b>Congeniality</b>	Cordial in all areas; level is more refined as rating increases.
<b>Timeliness</b>	Was the experience suitable and correct? All areas and rating levels.
<b>Attentiveness</b>	Were the servers thoughtful, caring, considerate, and focused on guest satisfaction? All areas: the higher the rating, the more attention to detail expected.
<b>Knowledge</b>	Is the staff adept at answering questions about food and beverage offerings in their restaurant? How efficient and polished is the delivery of this information?
<b>Ability/Willingness to Honor Special Requests</b>	Will the chef make alterations to menu items for reasons of taste, preference, or health concerns, or will the staff arrange for other special guest needs?
<b>Grooming/ Department</b>	Does staff appearance show more refinement the higher the rating level?
<b>Parking</b>	Appropriate accommodations are offered. Is professional assistance available at the higher rating levels?
<b>Payment Options</b>	Are the payment options appropriate to the style of operation?
<b>Competency</b>	Is the staff capable, properly trained, and do they demonstrate the aptitude to meet guest needs?
<b>Other</b>	Miscellaneous observations of items not included above, or to increase the impact of an observation included above.

# Subjective Diamond Rating Guidelines – Décor & Ambiance

## DÉCOR & AMBIANCE

**Comfort Zone:** The following dining elements are not Diamond Rated, but are assigned "+" = very obviously enhancing, "-" = very obviously detracting, or "blank" = no obvious impact.

<b>Exterior</b>	Does the architecture, location, landscaping, curb appeal, or parking area have an impact on guest experience?
<b>Traffic Flow</b>	Does the movement of other diners and staff in/out/throughout facility have an impact on guest experience?
<b>Table Spacing</b>	Does the placement of tables allow for easy entry/egress, access by servers, and suitable privacy?
<b>Temperature and Ventilation</b>	Is the room temperature comfortable and is the room well-ventilated?
<b>Illumination</b>	Is the lighting sufficient and properly diffused?
<b>Noise Level/ Music/ Entertainment</b>	Is the noise level appropriate to the theme of the establishment? Are guests able to maintain conversation as desired or as expected?
<b>Capacity/ Occupancy</b>	Consideration will be given to the level of occupancy in relation to a facility's capacity. Did a restaurant that is empty or overcrowded have an impact on guest experience?
<b>Restrooms</b>	Are there adequate facilities? Are restrooms appropriate to the establishment's theme, easy to access, well-attended, and well-supplied?
<b>Other</b>	Miscellaneous observations of items not included above, or to increase the impact of an observation included above.



## Glossary of Diamond Rating Terms

**Convenience Foods** – Pre-prepared in some manner (canned, frozen, pre-baked, pre-portioned, individually wrapped, etc.).

**Exotic Foods** – These items are usually not available to the general public unless obtained through a highly specialized gourmet purveyor of global ingredients as well as highly specialized farmers, ranchers, or artisans. This can include (but is not limited to) items such as: Barramundi fish, skate (sea rays), line-caught fish, beluga, osetra and sevruga caviar, coral trout, eel, foie gras, fresh porcini or morel mushrooms, frogs legs, escargots (snails), game meats, offal (pork bellies, tripe, brain, sweetbreads, etc.), heirloom tomatoes, fiddlehead greens, organic produce and meats, lychee nuts, ostrich, rabbit, sapote (a tropical fruit), sea beans, white or black truffles, turtle, Kobe and Wagyu beef, Berkshire or Kurobuta pork, kangaroo, alligator, white soya sauce, birdsnest, shark fin, fresh toro (fatty tuna belly), uni (sea urchin), fugu (blowfish), aged balsamic vinegar, imported or artisanal cheese selection, rare chocolate or chocolate with high cocoa butter content (such as Callebaut Semisweet Dark (54%), Callebaut Extra Bitter (70%), El Rey 70% Grand Suman, Schokinag Dark Chocolate (71%), Valrhona Les Feves (70%), Scharffen-Berger 70%). Exotic items can also include private gardens maintained specifically for or by the restaurant. Additionally, while fresh salmon may be less than exotic in Alaska or British Columbia, fresh salmon could be considered exotic in Florida due to the distance the product would have to travel to be served to guests there.

**Garnish** – Decorative and often edible accompaniments used to finish dishes from appetizers to desserts; and/or any item(s) that add visual impact or color, such as the key ingredients that make up the dish. Note that the finishing touch to food might not be considered edible - the garnishment can also be a visual element which adds excitement to a dish (such as upgraded or custom plateware); tableside service to finish or execute a dinner course; assorted presentations of food like bread, cheese or dessert carts; exclusive and imaginative food presentations or preparations that turn heads in a dining room or add a “wow” element to the dining experience.

**Plus** – When you see this term used (such as **2D plus**), it means that the rating includes the bolded elements of the previous columns in addition to elements of the current column.

**Refined / Refinement** – Marked by good manners, impeccable taste, cultured demeanor, and upper-class style; an expression of fineness in thought, manners, communication, deportment and expression. Displaying a natural air of culture, civility, and polish.

**Short Order Cook** – Cooks who work for fast-food restaurants often specialize in preparing one item. Some cooks prepare hamburgers while others do French fries or fried chicken. In these restaurants, cooks prepare some items prior to busy periods and keep them warm until they are sold. In smaller restaurants, short-order cooks may take customers' orders and prepare and serve the food. They may also accept payment and make change. Their overall emphasis is on speedy service.

**Specialty Items** – High grades or uncommon varieties of meat, fish, vegetables, fresh herbs, spices, etc. (such as: Prime meat grades, rack of lamb, prime rib roast, fresh fish, live lobster, mushrooms other than white common variety, fresh made pasta, extra virgin olive oil, farmers' market produce, premium bakery-style breads, etc.) Some exotic items are considered to be specialty items even if they are dried, canned, or frozen rather than fresh (such as: truffles, fiddlehead ferns, line-caught fish, etc.). These are products that are typically available in upscale supermarkets, gourmet/specialty stores, or farmers' markets.

**Upholstered Seating** – Upholstery affords soft seating by including padding (foam or batting), springs and/or webbing, and fabric or leather coverings.

## Section Three

# Additional Information

## The Listing

ONCE A RESTAURANT IS APPROVED, AAA PUBLISHING ESTABLISHES THE CONTENT AND FORMAT OF EACH LISTING IN ALL OF OUR PUBLICATIONS. **The listing is provided at no cost to the establishment** and does not contain advertising or promotional verbiage provided by the operator.

The listing copy describing the restaurant is based in part on objective information provided by the establishment. This listing information is updated annually, and your establishment will be contacted either in person, by mail, or via the telephone.

Failure to provide this information in a timely manner may result in the deletion of your establishment from our publications.

Additionally, AAA's professionally trained inspectors enhance our inventory with descriptive prose for each establishment. This skilled degree of subjectivity enables us to capture the feel of an experience and pass along this valuable information to AAA members.

Each Diamond Rated restaurant has the opportunity to participate in the AAA Official Appointment Program, entitling the establishment to use the renowned AAA (CAA in Canada) emblem and Diamond Rating in its advertising and promotions. This program also entitles the establishment to an enhanced listing in AAA publications. Personalized display advertising in AAA publications is also available.

### **FYI Designation**

This designation means that an establishment has not been Diamond Rated by a AAA inspector, but is of notable significance and potential member value. The restaurant is unrated due to one of the following reasons:

- The establishment is *too new to rate*.
- The establishment is *under construction*.
- The establishment is *undergoing extensive renovations*.
- The establishment *has not been evaluated*.
- The establishment *does not meet all Diamond Rating requirements*.

## Restaurant Classifications

ALL DIAMOND RATED RESTAURANTS ARE CLASSIFIED USING KEY DESCRIPTIVE ELEMENTS.

### **1. 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.

**Classic:** Renowned and landmark restaurant operations in business longer than 25 years; known for unique style and ambiance.

**Dinner Theater:** Full or limited service; typically serves beer, wine, or liquor; limited menu; entertainment provided in conjunction with the dining experience.

**Family Dining:** Full or limited service; limited or varied menu; caters to guests with children; common, traditional elements are evident in food, service, and decor.

**Fine Dining:** Full service; varied or limited menu; typically serves beer, wine and/or liquor; upscale and complex elements are evident in food, service, and décor.

**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*

**Quick Serve:** Fast or self-service of food; menu is typically limited.

**Sports Bar:** Full service; limited menu; has sports theme atmosphere.

## **2. SECOND, A CUISINE TYPE IS ASSIGNED:**

AAA currently recognizes over 150 different cuisine types and modifiers.

## **3. THIRD, A DETERMINATION IS MADE PERTAINING TO OVERALL CONCEPT, AND A RESTAURANT MAY BE:**

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

## **4. 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.

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## **Accessibility**



**Accessible Features:** This restaurant has some accessible features. It may be fully accessible, semi-accessible, or meet some of the needs of hearing or visually-impaired individuals.

*Accessibility is not a requirement for listing and will not affect your Diamond Rating. However, we strongly encourage you to make every effort to meet the needs of all your guests – including the mature traveler and those with disabilities.*

## Member Comment Procedures

AAA CLOSELY MONITORS THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF COMMENTS WE RECEIVE FROM MEMBERS REGARDING ALL APPROVED ESTABLISHMENTS. When members write to us expressing dissatisfaction with a particular establishment, it 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 they have an opportunity to respond and resolve the matter within a reasonable period of time. Even though a complaint may be satisfactorily resolved, the complaint becomes a permanent part of the establishment's record.

If a 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 an establishment 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 establishments may not reapply until one year has passed from the date of disapproval.** All requests may be addressed to:

**AAA Tourism Information Development  
1000 AAA Drive  
Mail Stop 51  
Heathrow, FL 32746-5063**

## The AAA Appeals Process

THE APPEALS PROCESS WAS ESTABLISHED AS A RESOURCE FOR ALL RESTAURANTS, LODGINGS, CAMPGROUNDS, AND ATTRACTIONS EVALUATED BY AAA.

### ***What can I appeal?***

We value our relationship with all establishments; therefore, restaurants can appeal any aspect of their status with AAA. Each situation is kept confidential and is handled on an individual basis.

### ***How do I file an appeal?***

First, contact the AAA Customer Service Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:30am to 5:15pm (Eastern Time) at 407-444-8370. In many cases, our analysts will be able to answer your concern immediately.

If resolution is not obtained, your call will be directed to the AAA Regional Manager for your area.

If an issue remains unresolved after the above steps, an establishment is asked 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**. In order to expedite this process, appeals should outline the specific concerns in a succinct manner. Each appeal is thoroughly researched and given thoughtful consideration and a substantive reply.

All appeals should be sent to the attention of:

**AAA Appeals Committee  
1000 AAA Drive  
Mail Stop 51  
Heathrow, FL 32746-5063**

**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.

## Green Programs



AAA SUPPORTS ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY THROUGHOUT THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TO THE EXTENT THAT TRULY EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS MAINTAIN QUALITY STANDARDS OF GUEST COMFORT. We strongly encourage continued use of programs that offer guests choices without consequences for noncompliance. Effective green programs are intended to reduce waste without reducing guest comfort.

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## Addresses and Phone Numbers

### If you have additional questions...

- ▶ Please call AAA at:

**(407) 444-8370**  
**Evaluation Applications, Operations, Rating and Listing Information**

**(407) 444-8280**  
**Display Advertising & Official Appointments**

- ▶ Visit us at [www.AAA.biz/Approved](http://www.AAA.biz/Approved)

- ▶ Or, write to us at:

**AAA**  
**Tourism Information Development**  
**Mail Stop 51**  
**1000 AAA Drive**  
**Heathrow, FL 32746-5063**

### Establishments located in Southern California should contact the following AAA club:

**Automobile Club of Southern California**  
**P.O. Box 25001**  
**Santa Ana, CA 92799-5001**  
**(714) 885-2247, option #2**  
**Evaluations, Ratings, and Official Appointments**  
**(714) 885-2410**  
**TourBook Advertising**