



Top tips

Top three tips to improve customer perceptions

- A friendly smile will always go a long way in winning the customer over
- Greet customers on arrival and let them know whether to expect table service or order at the bar to prevent awkwardness and make them feel welcome
- Ensure staff know the menu and can recommend food-and-drink matches to improve confidence in upselling and recommending pairings



Creating memorable dining experiences

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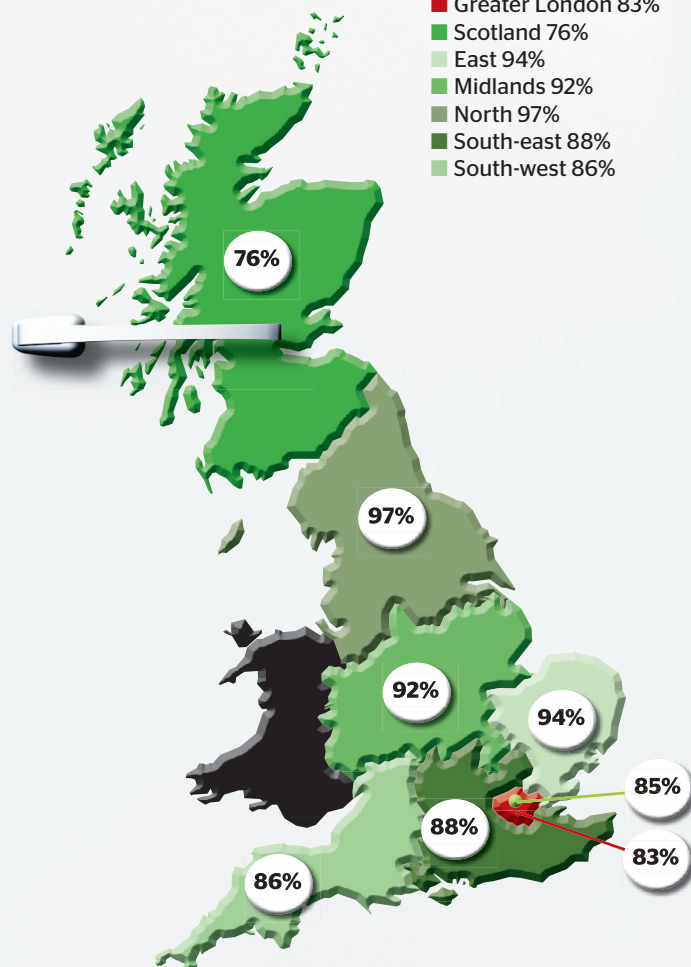


Map of regional differences

To what extent did you feel welcomed by staff at the first point of contact?

Regional average for welcome

- Central London 85%
- Greater London 83%
- Scotland 76%
- East 94%
- Midlands 92%
- North 97%
- South-east 88%
- South-west 86%



Selecting a destination for social occasions can be quite a big responsibility and there are certain occasions when a pub will always win out over a restaurant. Yet with many pubs seriously upping their game in terms of food quality and service in recent years, it's become an increasingly difficult decision – in a good way – because the concept of pub dining has changed dramatically.

Pubs have always fulfilled a very different role from restaurants, with a more relaxed environment and social atmosphere. And a large percentage of pubs, regardless of whether they are part of a chain, tenanted or freehold, retain their own unique character and personality.

In such a competitive market pub operators must understand the underlying motives of a customer's visit, as this will have a significant impact on what elements of a visit will influence the customer's perception, and lead them to decide whether they had a positive, negative or

neutral experience – and, ultimately, whether or not they would return.

It may be the quality or cost of the food and drink on offer, the environment created by the choice of décor and entertainment, or convenience of location that helps to get the punter through the door. But don't be fooled – it is the value for money a pub represents that will encourage customers to return and talk positively to others about the experience.

In this respect the total at the bottom of the bill is irrelevant. Decent food at a reasonable price coupled with fantastic, warm service will always win over outstanding food and drink with substandard service in the customer's long-term memory.

Make sure your style of service complements your food and drink offer, and indeed your prices. A smile is free, and coming from a motivated and enthusiastic server who knows their stuff, it really can elevate an entire experience from merely good to being truly memorable.

The Mystery Dining Company provides customer-experience analysis for a range of hospitality businesses, from single-site operations through to multinational chains, enabling them to use customer feedback to help improve profitability and build brand reputation. www.mysterydining.com

