

'Cakeage' unpopular with 80% diners

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Being charged a fee to bring a cake to a restaurant is unpopular with 80% of diners who said they would not be happy to pay the 'cakeage' charge according to a survey by Hospitality GEM.

Respondents to the survey said the notion was 'pointless' and 'ridiculous', as it strays too far from the standard of service expected in restaurants.

Some restaurants reportedly charge up to £9 to customers who want to bring in their own cake.

According to *The Sunday Times*, diners at Kaspar's Seafood Bar & Grill at the Savoy, run by Gordon Ramsay, who wish to bring their own birthday cake are charged an extra £9 each, while at the St John restaurant in Smithfield, central London, must pay £7.50 per person if dessert is not ordered.

Only 1% of people surveyed by Hospitality GEM said they have ever paid such a fee and only 27% had heard of cakeage suggesting the trend is very London-centric.

Steven Pike, managing director at HospitalityGEM said: "Corkage is widely accepted in many restaurants, as some often do not have the necessary license to serve alcohol. However, cakeage is deemed a step too far by many customers. A cake is often brought to a restaurant to celebrate a special, personal occasion – whether it is a birthday, anniversary or another personal event, and customers expect some goodwill on the part of the venue."

Restaurateurs argue that bringing celebratory cake to a restaurant reduces spend per head because diners do not buy from the dessert menu so charging a fee to cut and serve cake is an acceptable replacement for this.

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