



Episode 29: Restaurants Part 2

Hi! If this is your first time listening to our podcast, this is an opportunity for upper level English learners to practice listening skills and learn new vocabulary by listening to authentic conversations.

In today's episode Donielle and Khrystyna continue their discussion about restaurants, and in particular, the restaurant experience in the U.S., including customs and tipping culture.

Here are a few examples of dishes mentioned during this conversation:

1. Grits

2. Banosh

3. Borscht with black bread & sour cream

4. Varenyky

5. Biscuits (U.S.)

6. Pumpernickel bread

You can also read the [transcript](#) for this episode.

See the following pages for vocabulary and language focus from this episode.



Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation

be in [someone else's] shoes	Idiom: to be in the same situation as another person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'd prefer to <u>be in your shoes</u>. (busy because of vacations and not work)
knock on wood	Used to express a wish that something will or will not occur. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lot of people are sick right now. So far, <u>knock on wood</u>, everything is good here.
molasses	a thick, brown, sweet liquid that is made from raw sugar
dense (bread)	describing bread that is heavier, with a less airy texture
dollop	a small amount of soft food (e.g. sour cream, whipped cream, mayonnaise, etc.)
divisive	causing a lot of disagreement between people and causing them to separate into different groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I love grits; it's one of those things that's very <u>divisive</u>. People either love them or hate them
runny eggs	cooked so that the yolk is not set, but is left in liquid form
I digress	the speaker (or writer) has moved away from the original topic and intends to return to it. – I <u>digress</u> ; back to restaurants.
split	to separate into equal parts. In this case, it's about sharing a meal equally, but it could also be used to indicate that each person at the restaurant will pay an equal share of the bill.
accommodating	willing to do what someone wants or requests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restaurants are generally <u>accommodating</u> if you have a dietary request.
attentive	very concerned about the needs of others
booth	a table in a restaurant between benches with high backs
dangle	to hang down loosely, especially in a way that makes it possible to swing freely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm short, so sometimes when I sit at a booth, my legs <u>dangle</u>.
scoot	to move (yourself, your chair, etc.) a short distance in a particular direction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have to <u>scoot</u> back into the booth.
shake/nod head	shake your head: move head side to side to indicate "no" nod your head: move head up and down to indicate "yes"
so and so	a person referenced in a general way without the need to specify a name (or when you don't know or remember it) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The waiter will come up to the table and say, "My name is <u>so and so</u>, and I'll be taking care of you today."
linger	to stay somewhere beyond the necessary or expected time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In many countries, people <u>linger</u> at the table after they have finished eating My students often <u>linger</u> in the classroom after the class is finished.
no rush	a polite or friendly way to tell someone that there is no need to hurry or do something immediately.

Vocabulary: Continued

chase [someone] down	to search for and find someone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servers often leave the check while you're still eating, just so you don't have to <u>chase them down</u> later when you are ready to leave.
starving	exaggerated way to say that you are very hungry
turnover	referencing the rate at which new parties are seated at a particular table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a server's perspective, they want <u>turnover</u> so they can have a chance to make more money in tips.
renowned	known and admired by many people for some special quality or achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> restaurants with <u>renowned</u> chefs
go nuts	Idiom with multiple meanings, but generally to have a strong emotional reaction (similar to <i>freak out</i> , <i>go crazy</i> , etc.) In this example, if you ask for ketchup with your steak and the chef goes nuts, it means he/she gets very upset.
freebies	something that is given for free
freak out	(see go nuts, above) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the server puts something extra on your table that you didn't order, you don't have to <u>freak out</u>. (get very upset, concerned, etc.)
water [something] down	make something weaker or less effective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the ice melts, it <u>waters down</u> the soda.
free refills	a common practice in restaurants to charge one price for a beverage (coffee, tea, soda) & they will refill your cup/glass as much as you want at no extra cost
draw a/the line	set a limit on what one is willing to do or accept, beyond which one will not go <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free refills is only for coffee, tea, and soda – not for beer, so they definitely <u>draw a line</u> there.
be not used to [something or doing something]	be unaccustomed to something (note the difference between used to do something) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>I'm not used to</u> cold weather; <u>I'm not used to</u> waking up early.
to-go box	a box to take leftover food home in
wage	an amount of money that a worker is paid based on the number of hours, days, etc., that are worked (minimum wage, a week's wages, etc.)
I will die on this hill	Idiom: an issue I will pursue with wholehearted conviction; I will not change my mind.
take it up a notch	make something more intense, or work harder to improve something, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servers are generally friendly, but they will <u>take it up a notch</u> and get even more friendly as they're about to drop off the bill.
livelihood	a way of earning money in order to live

Phrasal Verbs with UP

Adding the word UP to many verbs can create a phrasal verb that adds layers of meaning. In general, UP can suggest an increase or movement to higher level, completion, or movement toward a point.

Increase/ movement to higher level	heat up – bring to a hotter state grow up – moving to a higher level of development (physically/emotionally) look up (a word, etc.) – look for information from a higher source (dictionary, internet, etc.)
completion	cook up – heat something until it is completely cooked pack up – finish the process of packing Other examples – finish up, use up, fill up, break up, clean up, wrap up
movement towards a point	come up – approach, either physically or referencing a future event. Examples: The server came up to the table; the deadline is coming up

Join the Conversation

- When you are looking for a restaurant to go to, do you generally choose food from your own culture, or do you prefer to try something different? Explain your reasoning.
- Do you tend to order similar dishes when you go to certain types of restaurants or try something new all the time? What is your favorite restaurant, and what is your *go-to*¹ dish when you eat there?
- Do you ever ask for substitutions when you order from a menu? If so, what types of substitutions do you request? Are the servers typically **accommodating**?
- What are your thoughts on some of these customs you heard in the episode about restaurant culture in the United States: (1) free bread, chips, etc. on the table when you arrive (2) ice in drinks (3) free refills?
- How are the servers where you live? How does your experience compare to the description you heard in the episode? (Are they friendly, attentive, etc.? Do they bring menus, food, check, etc. quickly or do they encourage people to **linger** over their meal?)
- What are the pros and cons to the U.S. style of (generally) getting in and out of a restaurant quickly?
- What are tipping expectations like in your own culture? How does it compare to where you live now, or what you have heard about in this episode about the U.S. system of tipping?

¹. *something that is often chosen or used for consistently good or reliable results*

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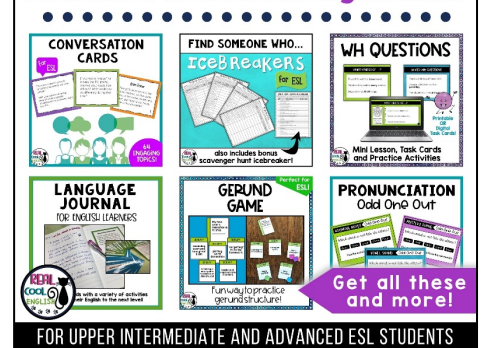
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