

Read the text.

1

# No ordinary place to eat!

For hundreds of years when tired travellers stopped on their journeys, there were only a few places to eat and drink. Nowadays, streets are lined with restaurants, cafés, and snack bars, but some people want something more unusual.

## Dinner in the Sky



### Fact file

- 50m up in the air
- a table 9m by 5m
- diners hang from a crane
- there isn't a loo

**Dinner in the Sky** is for people who want more than a little excitement when they go out to eat. They sit at a huge table which **hangs from a crane fifty metres in the air**. It's not a good idea for people who are afraid of heights or for those who don't have much money. It costs £10,000. The twenty-two diners wear seat belts and relax and enjoy the views while the chefs prepare the finest food in front of them. The restaurant opened in Belgium in 2006, but now has branches in Paris, Dubai, Florida, and Las Vegas.

David Ghysels, the Belgian organizer says, 'We realized that people were bored with going to the same old restaurants. They wanted to try something different. The sky's the limit with us!'



**The crane is checked carefully before every sitting.** The table is 9m x 5m and weighs six tonnes. In the centre there is a sunken platform for the chef and two waiters. The food is delicious, but most guests don't feel like eating until after a few drinks! Then they also get the courage to look down at the ground where tiny people are looking up in amazement and waving.

**Dinner in the Sky is very exciting** and the food is good, but there are problems. For example, even in quiet weather conversation is difficult because of the wind. Guests shout to each other across the table. Also, the loo. You can't go to the loo until the table descends again. Difficult for some! But later, back on earth, after a visit to the loo, the guests have a great experience to talk about.

## Ithaa Undersea Restaurant



### Fact file

- 5m under the sea
- a huge glass ceiling
- diners wear formal clothes
- they eat face-to-face with sharks

Welcome to the Maldives and the first underwater restaurant in the world. **The Ithaa Undersea Restaurant on Rangali Island sits five metres below the Indian Ocean.** Ithaa means 'pearl' in the Maldivian language and the guests are like pearls in a glass oyster.



**It's not cheap** – about £160 for dinner – and there aren't many seats, only a dozen, so it's not easy to get a reservation even if you've got enough money. However, it is easy to get to. You don't need to be a swimmer or a scuba diver, but you do have to wear formal clothes. You simply descend to the restaurant down some spiral stairs.

The manager, Carlton Schieck says, 'We have used aquarium technology to put diners face-to-face with the fish. Our guests are speechless at the colour and beauty of the underwater world. They can enjoy the views and the fine food and not get their feet wet.'

**The views are spectacular.** In the crystal-blue sea, a few metres from your head, there are sharks, sting rays, turtles, and thousands of tropical fish looking at you as you eat. There is also a fabulous coral garden to add to the colour. The experience is both romantic and magical – and you can guess what's on the menu!

**The restaurant opened in 2004 and cost over £3 million to build.** In April 2010 it also became a hotel. If you want more excitement and would like to sleep underwater with the fish, you can do this for just £7,500 a night!

However, an underwater building can't last forever. It is thought that it will have a life of about twenty years.



## 's Baggers Restaurant



### Fact file

- no waiters
- food lands from above
- email as you eat
- eat now, pay later
- no tips

Germany likes to call itself ‘the land of ideas’ and **'s Baggers Restaurant in Nuremberg** is certainly an amazing idea. It’s a restaurant with no waiters to serve you. You do everything for yourself with touch-screen TVs and computers. **It opened in 2007 and is the first automated restaurant in the world.**

When you arrive you pick up an 's Baggers credit card and go to sit at a big, round table with three or four computer screens. You put your card into the computer and order your meal by touching the pictures on the screen. You don’t see the chefs. They are in the kitchen high above you. They’re real men, not machines (at least not yet). The food is all freshly cooked and when it is ready it is put in a pot and sent down a spiral tube where it lands on the table in front of you. This gives a new meaning to fast food! The TVs are connected to the Internet, so if you get bored while waiting, you can send and receive emails and text messages.

A businessman called Michael Mack had the idea for 's Baggers. He decided that waiters were unnecessary and too expensive. ‘You don’t need waiters to run to and from customers taking orders to the kitchen and back.’ Mack is planning to open more restaurants and now has the patent for the idea.



**The meals are not too expensive** – about €8 (£6) a portion.  
And if you want you can pay by direct debit at the end of  
the month. And something else that saves money – there is,  
of course, no need to leave a tip!

5