

Japanese tourists call police over rip-off restaurant bill

24th January, 2018



Four Japanese tourists are very angry after a restaurant in Venice, Italy charged them €1,100 (\$1,350) for a dinner of steak, fish and water. In fact, the four tourists say they were ripped off

(overcharged) for their meal. The four diners are students and study in the city of Bologna. They were on a day trip to Venice and decided to have dinner at a restaurant near the world-famous St Mark's Square on Friday. As well as the police looking into this incident, the mayor of Venice has promised he would also take action. The mayor said: "If this disgraceful episode is confirmed, we'll do all we can to punish those responsible. We are for justice - always."

It is common for tourists to be overcharged anywhere in the world. Tourism groups in Venice are worried about the Japanese tourists saying they were ripped off. This is because there have been many similar cases recently of rip-off prices in Venice. One tourism group tweeted: "Whoever puts the good name of Venice at risk harms all Venetians." The restaurant has a very low 1.5 (out of 5) rating on the website TripAdvisor.com. A huge 83 per cent of visitors gave it a "Terrible" rating. One TripAdvisor user complained that: "The food was very average....They added almost €50 in taxes and a tip - these are the hidden fees that they don't tell you about. And the service wasn't that good. I feel scammed."

Sources: independent.co.uk / euronews.com / metro.co.uk

Writing

The government should close down restaurants that overcharge customers. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

tourists / angry / steak / overcharged / dinner / mayor / disgraceful / punish / justice / world / ripped off / recently / restaurant / terrible / tip / hidden fees / service / good

True / False

- Japanese tourists were charged \$1,100 for a steak dinner. T / F
- The meal the Japanese tourists had also included fish. T / F
- The police are looking into why the Japanese tourists were overcharged. T / F
- Venice's said people would be punished if this story were true. T / F
- The article said tourists are overcharged all over the world. T / F
- This is the first time tourists have been ripped off in Venice. T / F
- The restaurant in the article got a good rating on a travel website. T / F
- A travel website visitor said the restaurant did not want taxes or tips. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. angry | a. happening |
| 2. in fact | b. examples |
| 3. incident | c. vowed |
| 4. promised | d. normal |
| 5. justice | e. costs |
| 6. common | f. actually |
| 7. cases | g. in danger |
| 8. at risk | h. score |
| 9. rating | i. furious |
| 10. fees | j. fairness |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of the price of the meal?
- What do you know about Venice?
- What's the most expensive meal you've ever had?
- When was the last time you were ripped off?
- How does it feel to be ripped off?
- What do you think the mayor of Venice will do?
- What punishment should the restaurant get?
- What advice do you have for the restaurant boss?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- Four Japanese tourists are
- charged them €1,100 (\$1,350)
- they were ripped off
- the mayor of Venice has promised he would
- we'll do all we can to punish
- It is common for tourists
- there have been many similar cases
- Whoever puts the good
- 83 per cent of visitors gave it a
- hidden
- recently
- also take action
- fees
- (overcharged)
- name of Venice at risk
- for a dinner of steak
- "Terrible" rating
- those responsible
- to be overcharged
- very angry

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why do tourists get overcharged?
- Would you complain if you were overcharged?
- Does your town have a good name/image?
- What's the best restaurant you've been to?
- What's the worst restaurant you've eaten at?
- What do you think of having to give a tip at a restaurant?
- What questions would you like to ask the tourists?

Spelling

- harcegd them €1,100
- they were ripped off (aechrrvgoed)
- looking into this icidnnet
- this gdcrasefiul episode
- uinpsh those responsible
- We are for tsuijce
- It is mocmon for tourists
- many iimlsar cases
- a very low 1.5 (out of 5) ratign
- 83 per cent of itsvrosi
- One TripAdvisor user damcnoeilp
- these are the iehdnd fees

Answers – Synonym Match

1. i	2. f	3. a	4. c	5. j
6. d	7. b	8. g	9. h	10. e

Role Play

Role A – Reasonable Prices

You think reasonable prices is the most important thing for a restaurant. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): extensive menu, music or friendly staff.

Role B – Extensive Menu

You think an extensive menu is the most important thing for a restaurant. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): reasonable prices, music or friendly staff.

Role C – Music

You think music is the most important thing for a restaurant. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): extensive menu, reasonable prices or friendly staff.

Role D – Friendly Staff

You think friendly staff is the most important thing for a restaurant. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): extensive menu, music or reasonable prices.

Speaking – Restaurants

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things for a restaurant at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- music
- presentation
- ambiance
- reasonable prices
- fresh food
- extensive menu
- taste
- staff

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.