



CNYDining.com

Thank you for your interest in becoming a reviewer for CNYDining.com . Our reviews are **paid reviews** because the person submitting the review is paid for their meal and tip. We'll get into that in just a bit.

We're looking for reviews of local dining experiences throughout greater Central New York State. Watertown to Binghamton, Rochester to Albany, and anywhere within that circle. We don't mind if the place reviewed is a tiny hole-in-the-wall coffee shop, or an elegant restaurant serving elaborate meals. Our readers are interested in hearing about places they've never been.

Good reviews cover those “W” questions with which every good journalist is hammered over the head: *Who, What, When, Where* and *Why*. We also try to mention “How Much” as well. **Who** is important to the reader because they want to see if they can put themselves in your shoes. Is the reviewer a single business person? A mother of five rambunctious kids? Taking an office group out for a celebratory meal? **What** is the type of meal – perhaps a romantic dinner, or a quick bite with a friend. **When** can tell a reader what it's like on a Saturday night, or if it's better to go on Tuesday afternoon. **Where** is this place? Close to my home, or an hour's drive away? It's good to know before you go! **Why** did you choose to visit a particular place? Was it recommended to you, or did a relative drag you there unannounced? And finally, we'd all like to know **How Much** it cost for you, and for your party, so we can plan accordingly.

When you're thinking about writing a review, please visit the site. Do a search for the name of the place you'd like to review. We don't have a problem with different people reviewing the same establishment, but we do want different reviewers there at different times. It's not a good idea for two busy moms to visit the same restaurant a week apart and write a review. The readers probably aren't interested in a rehash of last week's post.

You may have a favorite restaurant that you go to on a regular basis, but Central New York is a big place, with many different experiences to be had. We're interested in reviews that show us and our readers places we've never been before. We want you to branch out, try new places!

When writing a review, please be honest. If your experience was a good one, we want to know. If it was bad, we'd like to know about that. Middle-of-the-road experiences are okay too. You can say, “I liked this place,” or “I hated my meal.” But the real review is in the details. Use complete sentences, written in proper English, to tell us *what happened* and *why* you liked or disliked your experience. Was the staff attentive? Did you see a rat run across the floor? A reporter should remain objective, but we want our reviewers to be *subjective*. We want to read your opinions, and have you explain them to us.

Reviews should be long enough to give us the details, and not much longer. We don't have a specific word count we want you to hit. Your review should cover the “W” questions above, and maybe tell us a bit about you. Just try to stay focused on the place you're reviewing.

Reviewers should be concerned with three things: Ambiance, service and food. How is the exterior and interior of the place? Is it inviting? Does it make you want to run away? Does it feel like a place you

want to be? Does the décor match the type of establishment they're trying to be? This is the ambiance. Service should cover the door staff, if any, as well as anyone with whom you come in contact. Servers, bus people, and management or owners. Finally, we want you to focus on the food. How is it presented? What does it taste and smell like? Too much seasoning, not enough, or just right? Is the portion size reasonable? And in ending the review, please inform us of the cost.

Feel free to mention other things that might interest the readers as well. Parking, neighborhood, bathrooms, cashing out, etc.

All reviews are rated “X out of 5” stars in the categories of ambiance, service and food. The average of these is the final score for a review. We put this code at the end of each review, and it gives a quick visual reference to the reader. We want different experiences from different reviewers, but as a whole we try not to give too many 5 star – or 1 star – reviews. If you are truly blown away by the ambiance, then go ahead. But we feel that a place that receives an overall 4 star review is a worthy place.

We welcome pictures with the review, within reason. If you can get them, we want pix of the outside of the place being reviewed. If the interior is somehow unique, we'll take those as well. What we don't want, some reviewers are surprised to find out, is pictures of the food. We'd rather you spend time describing why it tastes delicious (or terrible!). Pix should be in focus, and supplied as JPEGs approximately 1200 pixels on the long side. We'll wrestle them into shape on this end.

Once the review is written and accepted, we need a copy of your receipt. CNYDining pays for the reviewer's meal and tip. We don't cover more than one person per review, and we don't cover alcohol. You can take a picture of the receipt and email it to us, or send the original via snailmail. We'll reimburse you immediately after getting it, either by check or by a digital payment service. We can't pay without having a copy of the receipt – sorry.

Our reviewers each have a pen name, a logo and a biography that appears on the site. We're happy to work with you to develop these. They should be true to your experiences, but not so transparent that wait staff recognize you when you walk in.

After your first review is accepted, we'll create an account inside CNYDining.com just for you. You'll be able to log in and put your posts right into the system. Currently we're publishing two reviews each week, but we'd like to move to 3 reviews every week if we get the volume. Inside, in the left hand column, you'll find a listing for “Posts.” Underneath that is a “Calendar” link. You can pick the next open review day (currently Wednesday or Friday) and schedule your review. Then you can begin writing it, or even cut and paste it into the post software if you've already written it. ***All reviews are examined by an editor before being published. They are subject to editing, and may be rejected in part or in whole at the editor's discretion.***

CNYDining.com is a small site. We have a small number of sponsors, and we rely on keeping people clicking through to their sites so that we can keep paying for reviews. Please mention the site to your friends, and urge them to visit. Of course, we hope *you* visit on a regular basis, too!

Once your first review is ready, or if you have any questions, please email

editor@cnydining.com

Thank you for helping make CNYDining.com the premiere review site for Central New York State!