



Restaurant Requirements & Diamond Guidelines



Professional On-Site Inspections Since 1937

Introduction

Dear Hospitality Professional,

We are pleased to announce the transformation of our expert-based AAA Diamond Ratings Program to the new **AAA Diamond Program**. Our goal is to increase the relevance and value of the Diamonds for travelers and property operators.

With the launch of our redesigned program, effective first quarter 2020, AAA offers an updated model to guide hotel and restaurant selection:

- Since 1937, AAA inspectors have been influencing the hospitality industry, recognizing consumer expectations and approving only the best places to stay and dine. These essential elements remain.
- However, **our inspection criteria and processes, which we've continually evolved to fit the market, are newly updated** to reflect current industry trends and member experience factors.

Our research shows consumers are confused by the glut of user reviews in a role previously filled by professional ratings. While the AAA Diamonds have always conveyed what properties offer based on comprehensive inspections, the term **rating** has come to mean how much users like a property based on their personal experiences. To distinguish the two, **we reframed the Diamonds as “designations” instead of “ratings.”**

To reinforce each designation as a standalone identity, and to increase their impact for travelers and properties that want to promote their association with AAA, **we replaced the one-to-five Diamond icons with single-Diamond icons.**

As always, only hotels and restaurants that pass our rigorous annual on-site inspections receive AAA's endorsement: the **AAA Diamond Hotel** or **AAA Diamond Restaurant** window decal.

Subsequently, every AAA Diamond hotel and restaurant receives a specific Diamond designation.

- The **new Three, Four and Five Diamond designations** recognize clearly differentiated properties that meet comprehensive Diamond Guidelines.
- And the **new “Approved” Diamond designation** elevates the accomplishment of passing AAA inspection.

With these changes, combined with significant and sustained visibility, we believe the AAA Diamond Program will remain **the traveler's trusted choice** for advice on selecting hotels and restaurants.

To that end, we look forward to working with you to implement the new requirements and guidelines to better serve you, travelers and the industry. We appreciate your participation in the AAA Diamond Program along with your continued service to our members.



The AAA Diamond Program Team

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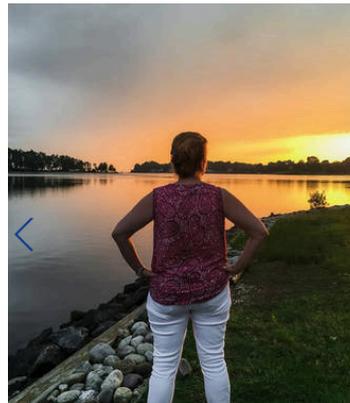
MEET THE INSPECTORS!



While we can't reveal their identities, we can offer you a closer look at the qualities and experiences that make AAA's seasoned industry professionals so fascinating.

Meet the Experts

Scroll through creatively angled portraits that tell a story and captivating biographies on topics from previous jobs to food and travel tips.



Inspector 55. Before becoming a AAA inspector in 1993, Inspector 55 had worked in restaurants, a historic house museum and retail jobs—including at a Christmas tree lot one year. She'll never forget the day she island hopped in the Caribbean via a small chartered plane to inspect several resorts on private islands. Her go-to recipes for cooking at home feature pasta, and discovering dishes with creative uses of vegetables is one of her favorite parts of dining out. During her trips she collects unusual key cards and makes them into refrigerator magnets when she gets home.
College major: Art history.
Wants to visit: Asia.

Inspector Shadows

Tag along as reporters and bloggers follow AAA inspectors on actual hotel and restaurant evaluations, watching and listening as they look under bedspreads and sample the menus.



Here's what AAA inspectors found at Hotel Paseo Palm Desert
 Desert Sun (USA Today Network), June 14, 2019
 Peeling back bed linens, one layer at a time, holding each up into the light making sure there are no stains, tears or hair strands. Running her hands along countertops in the bathrooms ...[Read More](#)

Twitter

Follow your favorite #AAAInspector @AAA_Travel for a smorgasbord of entertaining observations and discoveries from the road.

 **AAA Travel** @AAA_Travel · Oct 21
 This is just the appetizer! Stop by The Keep in Missoula, MT, to get yours because this is mine! - #AAAInspector 594



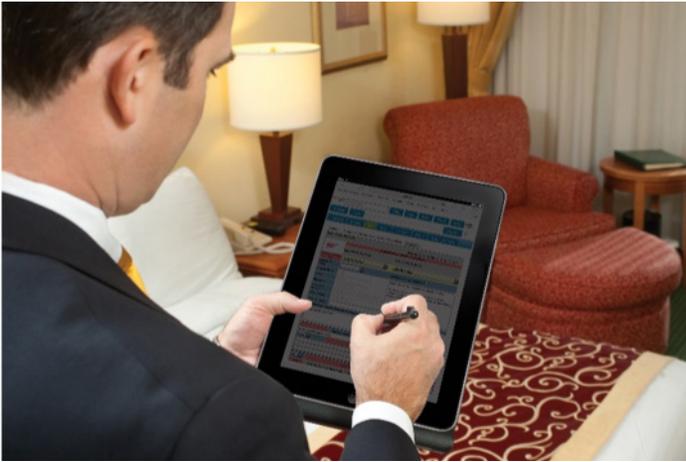
Visit AAA.com/Diamonds for more!

AAA INSPECTORS: THE TRAVEL EXPERTS

When AAA inspectors enter properties across North America – unscheduled and requesting prompt access to guest rooms – good things follow. That’s because, for more than 80 years, AAA has represented the gold standard for hotel and restaurant inspections.

Long before there were websites, social networks and consumer reviews to help travelers find a clean lodging and a good meal, AAA inspectors were looking under beds and tasting the meatloaf all along North America’s roadways. Since 1937, AAA has been conducting on-site evaluations and publishing the results to help members make informed travel decisions. AAA attributes this longevity to a system so reliable it benefits industry as much as travelers – plus a team of highly trained, full-time inspectors with extensive industry experience.





Unlike many rating providers, AAA excludes substandard properties. Only good options are AAA Diamond properties, so members can focus on the fit... and that's where the AAA Diamond Program comes in.

The Diamond designation lets travelers know what to expect. Sometimes a good night's sleep or a simple meal is all that's needed. Other times the facilities, ambience and services are essential to the experience. Each Diamond designation describes a different type of experience.

The guidelines inspectors apply follow a progression based on what's typical across the industry, with increased expectations at each designation. The attributes are weighted based on member priorities - and the collective result is a highly reliable way of categorizing. Travelers can use the quick-glance AAA Inspector designations or take in the full picture with the wealth of descriptive details also provided.

CONNECTING TO 60 MILLION+ MEMBERS

How do properties benefit from such scrutiny? They have the assurance of published, regularly calibrated AAA Diamond Program requirements and Diamond Guidelines – and an opportunity for immediate face time with inspectors to discuss the results, market trends and potential property changes.

Once designations are confirmed, hotels and restaurants are added to AAA's database for listing in travel information and trip planning tools. This means exposure to over 60 million AAA/CAA members in the resources they use to make travel planning and buying decisions – and eligibility for logo licensing and advertising programs for increased visibility and reach.

Section Two

THE INSPECTION PROCESS

The inspection process includes three parts:

1. **Apply for an inspection** using the form available at AAA.biz/Diamonds.
2. **Fulfill AAA's Diamond Program requirements** and receive the AAA Diamond designation.
3. **Achieve your AAA Diamond designation** calculated from objective scores recorded during the inspection and subjective elements based on the inspector's professional experience and training.

PART 1: APPLY FOR AN INSPECTION

By applying for – and/or consenting to – an inspection, you agree to allow AAA to publish your property information and the respective Diamond designation in our digital and printed travel information. Currently listed establishments need not reapply, as our inspectors routinely reassess AAA Diamond properties.

To expedite the application process, we suggest the following approach:

- Verify your establishment's eligibility by reviewing the AAA Diamond Program requirements. Restaurants must meet all Diamond Program requirements to be valid applicants.
- Complete and submit the [Restaurant Inspection Application \(pdf\)](#).
- Complete and submit the [Restaurant Application Processing Fee Form \(pdf\)](#). The nonrefundable application processing fee helps offset the costs of validating property information; it does not guarantee an inspection or influence the outcome.

Important notes:

- If our records indicate past disqualifying issues, you may be asked to provide written documentation and receipts of the corrective action taken since then.
- AAA does not guarantee an immediate inspection of all restaurants that apply, and we reserve the right to apply priority consideration to those demonstrating the highest degree of AAA member value according to the following criteria:
 - HIGHLY DESIRABLE OR CONVENIENT LOCATION
 - NEWLY BUILT, NEWLY OPENED, OR RECENTLY RENOVATED
 - HIGH DEGREE OF COMFORT, CLEANLINESS AND CONDITION
 - NOTABLE OR REPUTABLE
 - UNIQUE CUISINE, DESIGN OR STYLE OF OPERATION

- We will provide written notice of your application status as soon as possible after completing our review.
- If your property is selected for inspection, the unannounced visit will occur within one year of the application date as we have an inspector available in your area.
- Basic listings in AAA travel products are provided without charge to AAA Diamond properties and those designated as FYIs.

For more information, review our [Applications FAQ](#).

A Couple of Tidbits

Diamond designation adjustments are restricted to limited cases and are applied at the sole discretion of AAA.

The frequency of subsequent AAA evaluations varies slightly, depending on factors such as classification, designation, history, AAA member and AAA club feedback, and operational changes at an establishment.

What to Expect from the AAA On-Site Inspection

AAA inspection consists of three parts:

- RESERVATION
- DINING EXPERIENCE
- INTERVIEW

First, your restaurant must meet all AAA Diamond Program requirements and provide member value. All establishments are validated through a combined process of applications, inspections, referrals and media research.

Second, if your restaurant qualifies, the inspector will dine anonymously while benchmarking the experience against our Diamond guidelines, which reflect AAA member priorities and typical trends throughout the restaurant industry. Our inspector will also assess key subjective elements based on the on-site dining experience. The comprehensive evaluation includes a review of the following key dining essentials:

- CLEANLINESS AND CONDITION
- FOOD
- SERVICE
- VIBE
- MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

AAA's intent is to capture the essence of the total dining experience rather than just particular attributes of your restaurant. Our research shows that AAA members consider the quality of the food and service to be the most significant factors when eating out — and the vibe to be less important in defining their dining experience. Therefore, we assign the highest weight (85% of the overall Diamond designation) to food and service elements — with the vibe making up just 15% of the designation.

Once our assessment is complete, the inspector will recommend or assign a Diamond designation (or FYI designation) based on existing conditions at the time of the evaluation. The achievement of a AAA Diamond designation means that your restaurant is one of an exclusive group that has successfully completed this rigorous evaluation process.

Lastly, AAA will contact the owner, general manager or restaurant designee for a brief interview. This is an extremely important part of the evaluation, as the data gathered is used in our worldwide travel information applications.

The AAA Five Diamond Designation

If the AAA inspector determines that your establishment meets the Five Diamond guidelines for a world-class experience, your restaurant will be considered for the prestigious Five Diamond designation. All Five Diamond recommendations are forwarded to AAA's Five Diamond Committee for thorough review. Those that qualify will be advised via email of the committee's assessment.

RESTAURANTS MUST MEET ALL AAA DIAMOND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS BEFORE DESIGNATION FACTORS ARE ASSESSED.

Assessment Summary

If a restaurant meets all AAA Diamond Program requirements, the inspector will recommend a Diamond designation based on the points assigned to food, service and décor as noted at the time of the inspection. The establishment will also receive a AAA Diamond Restaurant decal at the conclusion of the evaluation to affix in a visible property location. Additionally, we will provide you a AAA Inspection Summary by email which includes your restaurant's status and the Diamond designation (if applicable)*.

***This valuable information is unique to the AAA inspection process.** Additional inspection detail is available for a small fee by request. Visit [AAA.biz/Diamonds](https://www.aaa.com/biz/diamonds).

For more information, review our [Inspections FAQ](#).

PART 2: FULFILL AAA DIAMOND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

AAA DIAMOND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS REFLECT THE MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS AS ESTABLISHED THROUGH MEMBER FEEDBACK*. [*This research is unique to the AAA inspection process.](#)

To be designated as a AAA Diamond restaurant, an establishment must pass inspection by meeting the following requirements:

Cleanliness and Condition

1. All facilities directly associated with an establishment must be clean and well-maintained throughout.
2. All food and beverage must be wholesome, free from contamination and properly handled and stored.

Management and Style of Operation

3. Establishment must provide AAA members value in all aspects of operation.
4. An establishment may not use AAA branding — including, but not limited to, the AAA logo, Diamond designations and badges — without AAA's prior written consent.
5. The establishment must be appropriately located for business or leisure travel.
6. The establishment must assist AAA in the resolution of member complaints.
7. All restaurant staff must conduct business in a professional and ethical manner providing attentive, conscientious service to guests.
8. Restaurant management, or a designated representative, must be readily accessible at all times for guest needs or requests.
9. The primary business operation of the establishment must be directly related to the preparation and service of food.
10. Management must readily provide establishment information as requested by AAA on a continuing basis for the purpose of maintaining accurate travel information for AAA products and publications.
11. The establishment must be in compliance with all local, state and federal codes.

Exterior and Public Areas

12. All facilities directly associated with an establishment (such as banquet rooms, bakeries and gift shops) provided for guest use must meet all appropriate AAA Diamond Program requirements.
13. Adequate illumination is required in all public areas. This includes sufficient lighting in all corridors, walkways, stairways, landings and parking areas.

AAA DIAMOND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND DIAMOND GUIDELINES - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

AAA's Diamond Program comprises two distinct components. The *Diamond Program requirements* are uncompromising, mandatory standards that result in one of two outcomes: achieving a AAA Diamond designation or not. The *Diamond Guidelines*, applied only to establishments that meet the Diamond Program requirements, are somewhat flexible. The overall designation is based on a prevalence of expected attributes and the inspector's professional judgment in the context of thousands of restaurant inspections.

Establishments must meet all AAA Diamond Program requirements to be designated as a AAA Diamond restaurant.

Diamond Program requirements are common-sense qualifications AAA/CAA members say are essential to their satisfaction and professional operators routinely seek to achieve.

Establishments must meet most AAA Diamond Guidelines to achieve the respective Diamond designation.

The Diamond Guidelines reflect attributes typically — but not universally — observed throughout a restaurant industry segment. Therefore, the lack of some components listed for a Diamond designation does not necessarily preclude the achievement of that designation. During evaluations, inspectors assess each attribute of the restaurant and assign the most appropriate designation that will provide the best match in meeting AAA member expectations.

Not all guidelines apply to all restaurant types. AAA inspectors use only the sections of the Diamond Guidelines applicable to the restaurant's classification. This approach allows restaurateurs to be creative in developing their market identity and steadfast in meeting the needs of their guests while achieving a Diamond designation relevant to AAA member expectations.

PART 3: ACHIEVE YOUR AAA DIAMOND DESIGNATION

AAA DIAMOND PROGRAM

AAA DIAMOND DESIGNATIONS FOR RESTAURANTS REPRESENT A COMBINATION OF THE OVERALL FOOD, SERVICE AND VIBE OFFERED. The widely recognized and trusted AAA Diamond designations help AAA members choose the right restaurant experience to fit the whim or special occasion.

AAA inspectors determine a restaurant's Diamond designation using standards based on AAA member priorities, insight from our expert inspectors and involvement from various restaurant industry professionals.

Diamond designations are assigned using a member-solicited weighted average of all restaurant characteristics, with a focus on overall guest impression rather than on individual elements. The final factor is the professional judgment of our inspectors: North America's travel experts in reviewing over 32,000 restaurants per year

What the **Diamond** designations mean:



Approved

Noteworthy by meeting the industry-leading standards of AAA inspections.



Three Diamond

Trendy food skillfully presented in a remarkable setting.



Four Diamond

Distinctive fine dining, well-served amid upscale ambience.



Five Diamond

Leading-edge cuisine, ingredients and preparation with extraordinary service and surroundings.



Food

(50% of overall Diamond designation)

PRESENTATION

Overall impact or visual appeal incorporating dishware, food placement and garnish used in combination to present appetizers, soups, salads, main courses, desserts and other offerings.



Common concepts are noticeably enhanced

Limited use of common garnishes: primarily ornamental in nature (parsley, lemon wedge, lettuce leaf, kale, cherry tomato, etc.)

Well-coordinated using innovative/ expanded concepts implemented in precise fashion

Garnishes are less familiar; refined placement or techniques (patterned slicing, fine dice, julienne, or other precise styles, carved vegetables or fruits, specialty greens, flowers, or herbs)

Artistic/ detailed concept with well-balanced portions and a variety of textures, colors and ingredients implemented in precise fashion

Garnishes are artistically integrated as ornamental or flavor enhancements

Extremely imaginative with uniquely exclusive concepts with well-balanced portions and a variety of textures, colors and ingredients implemented in precise fashion

Each ingredient and plate component supports a leading-edge plate design and enriches the concept; food and garnish are in perfect harmony

FOOD PLACEMENT & VISUAL APPEAL

DISHWARE

Predominantly basic quality ceramic, glass or washable synthetic (polycarbonate / melamine) or woven baskets; some disposable condiment containers or side dishes

Ceramic, glass or washable synthetic (polycarbonate / melamine). Noticeable enhancements to design and materials with appropriate accessories, such as: bread & butter plates, ramekins, pitchers

The finest quality materials and design throughout (fine china, custom ceramic, porcelain, etc.) with appropriate accessories, such as: bread & butter plates, ramekins, pitchers

Some use of varied and unique pieces as part of the overall food presentation (creative packaging)

The finest quality materials and design throughout (fine china, custom ceramic, porcelain, etc.) with appropriate accessories, such as: bread & butter plates, ramekins, pitchers

Predominant use of varied and unique pieces as part of the overall food presentation (creative packaging)

INGREDIENTS



Predominantly staple items with some uncommon items

Some evidence of the use of convenience foods



Blend of staple and uncommon, with some use of unique (artisanal)* items; Predominantly fresh and/or specialty items

No evidence of the use of convenience foods

* Relating to or being a food or beverage made by hand or by traditional methods



Blend of staple and uncommon, with increased use of uncommon and unique (artisanal) items; Predominantly fresh and/or specialty items

No evidence of the use of convenience foods



Predominant use of fresh, unique (artisanal) and uncommon items; most ingredients are unique to each dish

No evidence of the use of convenience foods

PREPARATION

The selection, measurement and combining of ingredients in an ordered procedure to achieve a desired result.

Menu incorporates an increased variety of common food preparation techniques

Typical of a professionally-trained cook

Menu incorporates some advanced food preparation techniques prepared à la minute*

Typical of a highly experienced chef

*prepared to order, rather than being prepped in advance and held for service

Menu incorporates an increased variety of advanced cooking techniques prepared à la minute*

Typical of a series of professionally-trained chefs

Menu incorporates an increased variety of expert-based cooking techniques. Food is prepared à la minute* in a manner that is highly imaginative and unique

Commensurate with a mastery of the culinary arts; typical of a renowned professional chef

STANDARD ROTATION
(EXCLUDING DAILY SPECIALS)

Limited menu selections change seasonally

Most menu selections change seasonally

Some menu selections change daily/weekly, driven by market availability

A chef's tasting menu is offered; typically in addition to à la carte selections

Most menu selections change daily/weekly driven by market availability

A chef's tasting menu is offered; typically in addition to à la carte selections



Subjective Impressions

MEASURES ON SEVERAL IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE DINING EXPERIENCE ARE STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY PERSONAL PREFERENCES AND EXPECTATIONS.

If offerings in these areas are noted by the inspector as typical, a “blank” (no score) is assigned; if the offering is atypical, either positively or negatively, a small addition or deduction is made which impacts the establishment’s Diamond designation computation.

Food Impressions

Beverages

Quality and variety of offerings. At higher Diamond designations, beverages typically include sparkling and still bottled water along with a diverse selection of wines (varying degrees of complexity, price range, availability and production style). If alcoholic beverages are not provided or are limited, the inspector gives consideration to prevailing laws and restaurant concepts.

Bread

Availability, appropriateness for the cuisine or meal and, to increasing degrees at higher designation levels, quality and complexity, from simple and processed to creative and imaginative.

Competency

Extent to which the food is prepared and cooked as ordered; degree to which the cooking techniques preserve colors, textures and consistency of soups, sauces and emulsions.

Complimentary Chef’s Extra

Availability, quality and creativity. Typically found only at the Four and Five Diamond levels. May include a chef starter (amuse-bouche), intermezzo (palate-cleansing course), soup, confections, pastries and/or cookies (mignardises and petits fours), a complimentary drink or parting gift.

Other

Optional category for including additional observations or increasing the impact of a separately recorded observation.

Portion Size

Appropriateness of serving size in relation to cuisine, style or designation level..

Taste

Measure of how ingredients, sauces and seasonings complement or conflict each other.

Temperature

Appropriateness of the food temperature.

Value

Appropriateness of cost in relation to elements of the food, service and décor.

Variety

Degree to which variety fits guest expectations and the restaurant concept and its impact on quality.



Service

(35% of overall Diamond designation)

INITIAL CONTACT

Establishing a connection through interaction via remote communication or direct contact



Handled by an associate with multiple responsibilities (cashier/hostess/waitperson)

Solely dedicated greeter(s) handle(s) guest's reservation, arrival and determines seating

Professional host/hostess is engaging, well-practiced and knowledgeable

Professional host/hostess is engaging, well-practiced and knowledgeable

When unattended, there is an indication that advises guest to "Please wait to be seated"

Reservation time is honored within ten minutes; if delayed, the attendant is adept at making proper accommodations without hesitation

Reservation time is honored within ten minutes; if delayed, the attendant is adept at making proper accommodations without hesitation

Greeter uses guest's name upon engaging guest

Offers personal assistance with coats, packages, umbrellas, etc.

INITIAL GREETING



SEATING



Associate leads guest to table; advises guest of server's name

Menu is at the table or presented as guest is seated



Associate is engaging; initiates a conversation as guest is seated

Menu and beverage lists (if available) are presented at the appropriate time and offered directly to each guest

Extra place settings are removed if necessary



Associate is engaging; initiates a conversation as guest is seated. Demonstrates a well-practiced approach with personal assistance provided, such as the moving of a chair and/or table as appropriate

Menu and beverage lists are presented at the appropriate time and offered directly to each guest

Table is preset per reservation



Guest's name is used as appropriate; anticipates guest's needs in some additional manner

Associate is engaging; initiates a conversation as guest is seated. Demonstrates a well-practiced approach with personal assistance provided, such as the moving of a chair and/or table as appropriate

Menu and beverage lists are presented at the appropriate time and offered directly to each guest

Table is preset per reservation

FOOD & BEVERAGE SERVICE

The level of assistance provided guests from order-taking through food delivery, payment and departure.

STYLE

Some self-service aspects may be evident (digital device ordering and payment), however, table service is predominant; single server responsibility is clearly evident

Service style is practical and deliberate; appropriate to the overall theme

Table service is predominant. No self-service aspects; team approach is clearly evident

Service style is skilled, measured and accommodating

Table service is predominant. No self-service aspects; team approach is clearly evident with distinguished delivery by well-defined roles; proficient with a strong desire to be of assistance

Service style is skilled, measured and accommodating

Provides an elevated level of personal attention adapted to the convenience and comfort of the guest

Table service is predominant. No self-service aspects; team approach is clearly evident with distinguished delivery by well-defined roles; Exceptionally efficient while exceeding guest expectations; all service staff display expert knowledge of the menu; courses are described as they are served

Provides a meticulous degree of personal attention and demonstrates an unconditional desire to be of service



BEVERAGE INFORMATION

Enhanced beverage reference available, including additional descriptions of specialty drinks, wines and/or spirits

Detailed beverage reference available, including additional descriptions of specialty drinks, wines and/or spirits

Detailed beverage reference available, including additional descriptions of specialty drinks, wines and/or spirits

Detailed beverage reference available, including additional descriptions of specialty drinks, wines and/or spirits

A knowledgeable staff representative is available to provide assistance

Most associates are well-versed on providing menu-specific assistance with beverage selection (such as wine/beer pairings)

Expert beverage knowledge is readily available; (professional mixologist and sommelier)

CHECK SETTLEMENT

Server handles check settlement

Server handles check settlement

Server is discreet in anticipating and presenting check for settlement

Server is discreet in anticipating and presenting check for settlement

Check presentation materials are basic, such as: check/receipt only or the use of a common plate, plastic tray or branded credit card merchant folder

Check presentation materials are enhanced in a manner relative to the overall theme

Check presentation materials are consistent with the upscale décor and theme of establishment

Check presentation materials are consistent with the upscale décor and theme of establishment; includes mignardises and/or a take-home gift, such as a personalized menu, specialty item, boxed chocolates

DEPARTURE

Server thanks guest

Server thanks guest; Host/hostess acknowledges guest departure

Server thanks guest; Multiple staff members acknowledge guest departure

Server thanks guest; Multiple staff members acknowledge guest departure; Guest's name is used during departure

Staff anticipates guest's needs in some manner, such as: validate parking, arrange transportation, offer to retrieve coats



Subjective Impressions

MEASURES ON SEVERAL IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE DINING EXPERIENCE ARE STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY PERSONAL PREFERENCES AND EXPECTATIONS.

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Service Impressions

Attentiveness

Degree to which the servers are thoughtful, caring, considerate and focused on guest satisfaction, with greater attention to detail expected at higher Diamond designation levels.

Competency

Measure of staff capabilities, awareness and aptitude for meeting guest needs.

Congeniality

Cordiality of staff in all areas.

Guest Feels Well Served

At the end of the dining experience, degree to which the guest feels that staff has provided exemplary hospitality.

Knowledge

Efficiency, style and correctness of staff in answering questions about food and beverage offerings and general restaurant information.

Mobile-Enabled Service Options

Extent to which the use of mobile devices for ordering and payment enhance or detract from service.

Other

Optional category for including additional observations or increasing the impact of a separately recorded observation.

Reservations

Ease and efficiency of the reservation process online, or by phone.

Special Requests

Degree to which staff will accommodate special guest needs (within reason) and the chef will make menu alterations for reasons of taste, preference or health concerns.

Timeliness

Suitability and correctness of the experience (well-paced for guest needs).



Vibe

(15% of overall Diamond designation)

DESIGN ELEMENT

The use of colors, space, texture and other components to define the appearance, functionality and ambience.

MATERIALS

(COLORS, FABRICS, TEXTURES, FIXTURES, ETC.)



Obvious enhancements to materials

Significant enhancements to materials

Upscale materials

Luxurious and/or unique materials

OVERALL IMPRESSION

Practical; purposeful; Enhanced level of overall comfort and appeal

A good balance between a welcoming ambience and maximum seating capacity

A good balance between a welcoming ambience and maximum seating capacity; Advanced level of overall comfort and appeal

Provides an enriched and efficient guest experience

Design is highly functional, well-suited for comfort and extended dining

Provides a distinguished guest experience

Luxurious, leading-edge (innovative, intelligent, efficient) design well-suited for comfort and extended dining

Provides a world-class guest experience

ENTRANCE/ FOYER

Clearly-defined reception area/stand

Clearly-defined reception area/stand; Distinct separation between the reception area and dining areas (diners are not distracted by waiting guests)

Clearly-defined reception area/stand; Distinct separation between the reception area and dining areas (diners are not distracted by waiting guests)

Design characteristics are clearly upscale

Clearly-defined reception area/stand; Distinct separation between the reception area and dining areas (diners are not distracted by waiting guests)

Design characteristics are clearly luxurious and uniquely appointed

WAITING AREA AND/OR LOUNGE

Small waiting area or bar with seating

Appropriately-sized waiting area or lounge (with tables, chairs/booths)

Appropriately-sized waiting area or lounge (with tables, chairs/booths); Design characteristics are clearly upscale and distinctly separate from the main dining area

Appropriately-sized waiting area or lounge (with tables, chairs/booths); Design characteristics are clearly luxurious and uniquely appointed

				
TABLETOP COVERS	<p>Bare surfaces; Modest enhancements, such as: paper placemats, paper/vinyl /plastic tablecloths, butcher paper/acrylic overlay</p>	<p>If exposed, table surfaces are of a decorative style with a polished / lacquered finish or glass overlay</p> <p>Synthetic treatments, such as: polyester, poplin, spandex, leatherette – tablecloths, placemats or runners</p>	<p>If exposed, table surfaces are of designer quality materials, such as: highly polished fine wood, granite, marble</p> <p>Enhanced with natural quality treatments, such as: cotton-synthetic blends, leather, rattan, bamboo – tablecloths, placemats or runners</p>	<p>Tables are padded or double tablecloths are used as silencers</p> <p>Tablecloths are natural fabrics with a luxurious feel (typically cotton/linen) with a freshly-pressed appearance (minimal wrinkles or creasing)</p>
NAPERY	<p>Paper napkins; Enhanced design or weight</p>	<p>Synthetic cloth napkins</p>	<p>Natural fabrics (typically cotton)</p>	<p>Luxurious linen</p>
TABLE SETTING ENHANCEMENTS	<p>Common overall appeal</p> <p>Utensils rolled in napkin, paper placemats, preset menu, children's games and/or promotional flyers, etc.</p>	<p>Trendy overall appeal</p> <p>Cloth napkin folds; preset utensils and glassware</p> <p>Decorative table enhancement (flowers or candles or ornamental pieces, etc.)</p>	<p>Well-coordinated distinguished effect</p> <p>Cloth napkin folds; preset utensils and glassware</p> <p>Upscale table enhancement (flowers, candles or candles or, ornamental pieces, etc.)</p>	<p>Well-coordinated world-class effect</p> <p>Cloth napkin folds; preset utensils and glassware</p> <p>Luxurious table enhancement (flowers, candles or candles or, ornamental pieces, etc.)</p> <p>Charger or show plate</p>
FLATWARE	<p>Washable materials, everyday quality of basic design; lightweight grade</p>	<p>Washable materials; Medium-weight grade stainless steel with obvious matching design enhancements</p>	<p>The finest quality stainless steel (18/10 or 18/8) heavyweight grade with upscale design enhancements</p> <p>Coordinated set throughout with appropriate pieces for menu offerings</p>	<p>Silver plated or finer</p> <p>Coordinated set throughout with appropriate pieces for menu offerings</p>

GLASSWARE



Washable plastic (polycarbonate/melamine) or heavyweight glass of common style



Medium-weight glass with distinct style; appropriate pieces for beverage offerings



Lightweight glass of the finest quality; appropriate pieces for beverage offerings



Lightweight glass of the finest quality; appropriate pieces for beverage offerings

Consistent throughout all aspects of beverage service (design and quality of barware is comparable to table settings)

CHAIRS / STOOLS / BENCHES

Enhanced design for good comfort

Enhanced design for good comfort; well-coordinated materials and design with coverings or padding for sustainable comfort

Upscale materials and design with ample padding on seat and back for extended comfort

Luxurious; materials and design provide the highest degree of comfort





Subjective Impressions

MEASURES ON SEVERAL IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE DINING EXPERIENCE ARE STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY PERSONAL PREFERENCES AND EXPECTATIONS.

If offerings in these areas are noted by the inspector as typical, a “blank” (no score) is assigned; if the offering is atypical, either positively or negatively, a small addition or deduction is made which impacts the establishment’s Diamond designation computation..

Vibe Impressions

Ambience

Impact of the location, view or other surroundings on the dining experience.

Cleanliness

Cleanliness throughout the restaurant.

Comfort

Functionality and overall impression of the furnishings.

Condition

Condition throughout the restaurant.

Illumination

Functionality, design and effect of the lighting.

Information Design & Presentation (menu, business card, etc.)

Character of the menu, wine list and business cards.

Noise Level

Impact of noise on the dining experience.

Other

Optional category for including additional observations or increasing the impact of a separately recorded observation.

Section Three

THE LISTING

Once an establishment is included in the AAA Diamond Program, we use factual property information and descriptive details to create restaurant listings in AAA travel information products. Basic listings do not contain advertising or promotional verbiage, and are published at no cost to the establishment.

While you provide the objective information contained in restaurant listings, the descriptive narrative is composed by AAA experts to convey key property components to guide AAA/CAA members. All listing information is updated annually, and establishments are contacted accordingly. Failure to provide information in a timely manner may result in the removal of your establishment from our products.

AAA Restaurant Listings: Rich in Inspection Details

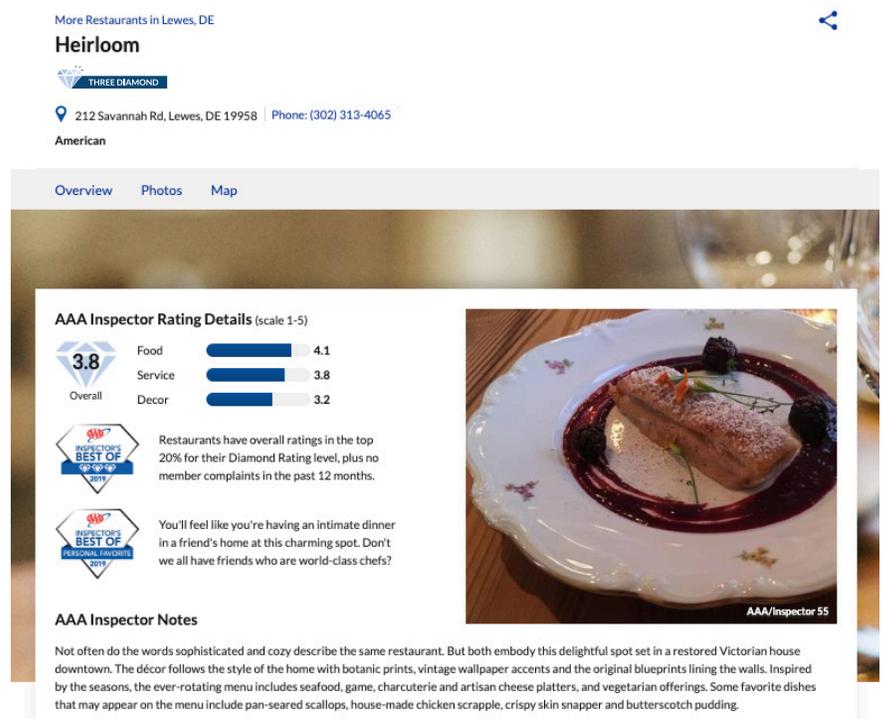
Foremost in your listings across AAA travel information products is your **AAA Inspector Designation**, which conveys the type of experience you provide.

In the AAA Travel Guides and TripTik Travel Planner on AAA.com, additional inspection details provide deeper insight to guide decision-making.

AAA Inspector Designation Details are your actual overall, food, service and vibe inspection scores.

AAA Inspector's Best Of Badges recognize exceptional achievements or offerings in areas members consider when choosing restaurants.

AAA Inspector Notes provide descriptive details, tips and insight on attributes on attributes that distinguish your restaurant.



More Restaurants in Lewes, DE

Heirloom

THREE DIAMOND

212 Savannah Rd, Lewes, DE 19958 | Phone: (302) 313-4065

American

Overview Photos Map

AAA Inspector Rating Details (scale 1-5)

Overall	3.8	Food	4.1
		Service	3.8
		Decor	3.2

INSPECTOR'S BEST OF 2019

Restaurants have overall ratings in the top 20% for their Diamond Rating level, plus no member complaints in the past 12 months.

INSPECTOR'S BEST OF PERSONAL FAVORITE 2019

You'll feel like you're having an intimate dinner in a friend's home at this charming spot. Don't we all have friends who are world-class chefs?

AAA Inspector Notes

Not often do the words sophisticated and cozy describe the same restaurant. But both embody this delightful spot set in a restored Victorian house downtown. The décor follows the style of the home with botanic prints, vintage wallpaper accents and the original blueprints lining the walls. Inspired by the seasons, the ever-rotating menu includes seafood, game, charcuterie and artisan cheese platters, and vegetarian offerings. Some favorite dishes that may appear on the menu include pan-seared scallops, house-made chicken scrapple, crispy skin snapper and butterscotch pudding.

AAA/Inspector 55

Best Of Badges:

ALIGNING RESTAURANT STRENGTHS WITH MEMBER PRIORITIES

AAA determines a restaurant's eligibility for one or more badges using the objective and subjective criteria below. Establishments are not notified as badges are added or removed since changes occur any time as a result of ongoing inspections and member feedback. The badges provide real-time information to help meet member priorities.



Restaurants that earned an overall inspection score in the top 20% for restaurants with your Diamond designation.



Restaurants identified by inspectors for remarkable offerings in one of these areas:

Beverages	Family-Friendly	Personal Favorite	Scenic View
Desserts	Local Hangout	Pet-Friendly	Value
Entertainment	Outdoor Seating	Romantic	Wow Effect

FYI Designation



This designation identifies restaurants that have not yet been evaluated by a AAA inspector but offer potential member value. These establishments do not have a Diamond designation due to one of the following reasons:

- Undergoing extensive renovations.
- Has not been inspected.

CLASSIFICATIONS AND CUISINE TYPES

ALL DIAMOND DESIGNATED RESTAURANTS ARE CLASSIFIED BY THE OVERALL DINING AND SERVICE CONCEPT, AGE OF OPERATIONS AND/OR HISTORIC STATUS OF BUILDING.

Brewpub: Specializes in the brewing of beer; typically limited food menu and full table service.

Buffet: Typically traditional comfort items available at self-service food and beverage stations; limited table service.

Casual Dining: Full table service in a relaxed atmosphere.

Classic: Renowned and landmark restaurant operations in business longer than 25 years; known for unique style and ambience.

Diner: Typically small, informal, and inexpensive with an extensive menu, booths and a sit-down counter with direct service; often made from or designed to resemble a modified railroad dining car.

Dinner Theater: Full or limited table service; typically limited food and beverage menu; entertainment provided in conjunction with the dining experience.

Fast Casual: An intermediate concept between quick-serve and casual dining. A high-quality self-service restaurant offering dishes that are prepared to order and more expensive than those available in a typical quick-serve restaurant.

Fine Dining: Full table service; notable, upscale and complex elements are evident throughout.

Food Hall: A collection of food counters, stalls and/or restaurants inside a single location offering a wide variety of artisanal or niche restaurant concepts. Typically features local chef food concepts in a bustling communal setting.

Gastropub: Full table service; relaxed ambience of a tavern/bar but with enhanced focus on cuisine similar to that of a more advanced full-service restaurant.

Historic: Includes at least one of the following documented historical features:

- Maintains the integrity of the historical nature
 - Listed on the National Register of Historic Places
 - Registered as or located in a National Historic Landmark or located in a National Register Historic District
- Note: If a restaurant is located in a National Historic Landmark/District, it must retain the original historic character and/or significantly contribute to the historic value of the associated area to be designated as Historic.*

Quick-Serve: Counter- or self-service food and beverages; includes traditional fast food menu items and casual setting.

Sports Bar: Full table service; sports theme experience.

Restaurants are also identified by more than 100 cuisine types (such as Italian or French) and, if applicable, additional descriptors (such as Northern or Traditional) to provide user a general sense of the type of cuisine offered.

Accessibility



Accessible Features Icon

Denotes a restaurant that has some accessible features. It may be fully accessible, semi-accessible, or meet some of the needs of hearing-impaired individuals.

Accessibility is not a AAA Diamond Program requirement and will not affect your Diamond designation. However, we strongly encourage you to make every effort to meet the needs of all your guests – including mature travelers and those with disabilities.

MEMBER COMMENT PROCEDURES

AAA MEMBER RELATIONS CLOSELY MONITORS THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF COMMENTS SUBMITTED ABOUT AAA INSPECTED RESTAURANTS. All comments are carefully reviewed for validity and included as part of the property record.

If complaints are received, AAA will notify the establishment and provide an opportunity to resolve the matter within a reasonable period of time. If a member complaint is determined to be of an extreme nature, AAA may act to remove a restaurant's AAA designation and listing immediately.

If your restaurant no longer meets AAA Diamond Program requirements because of member complaints, you may submit a written request for a re-inspection one year from the date of last inspection. The request should include an explanation of the actions taken to limit future complaints and be addressed to:

AAA Diamond Program

1000 AAA Drive, Mailstop 51
Heathrow, FL 32746-5063
AAAInspections@national.aaa.com

THE AAA APPEALS PROCESS

THE APPEALS PROCESS IS A RESOURCE FOR ALL INSPECTED ESTABLISHMENTS.

What can I appeal?

You may appeal your restaurant's AAA Diamond Program status or Diamond designation. Each situation is handled on an individual basis.

What is the process to file an appeal?

Before you file an appeal, please contact AAA Customer Service to discuss your questions or concerns. An analyst may be able to answer your questions immediately or, if additional information or discussion is needed, will direct you to the AAA Diamond Program regional manager of inspections for your area.

AAA Customer Service

407-444-8370, Option 2
AAAListings@national.aaa.com
M-F, 8:30 a.m. - 5:15 p.m. (ET)

If an issue remains unresolved after the above steps, an establishment may choose to present relevant information to the AAA Appeals Committee for objective review. All appeals must be submitted by property management in writing and may include pictures, documents or other pertinent materials to support the appeal. In order to expedite this process, appeals should outline the specific concerns in a succinct manner.

Each appeal is thoroughly researched and given thoughtful consideration and a substantive reply by the committee. The committee's decision on your appeal is considered as AAA's final response. You will be notified as to the status of your appeal within 45 days of receipt of your written statement.

AAA Appeals Committee

1000 AAA Drive, Mailstop 51
Heathrow, FL 32746-5063

Green Programs



AAA supports environmental management and sustainability throughout the restaurant industry to the extent that truly effective programs maintain quality standards of guest comfort. We strongly encourage continued use of programs that offer guests choices without negative consequences for noncompliance. Effective green programs are intended to reduce waste without reducing guest comfort.

In AAA travel information products, restaurants certified by approved green programs are identified with an ECO icon in their listing.

ECO This icon indicates restaurants that are environmentally sustainable in their use of food, water, energy, waste, chemicals, disposables and more.

QUESTIONS?

Establishments in all areas of the U.S. (excluding Southern California; see below), Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean should contact AAA at:

AAA Listings/Customer Service

AAAListings@national.aaa.com

407-444-8370, Option 2

AAA Diamond Program

1000 AAA Drive, Mailstop 51

Heathrow, FL 32746-5063

Inspection Applications:

AAAInspectionApplication@national.aaa.com

Inspection Customer Service:

AAAInspections@national.aaa.com

Official Appointments and Advertising

salesinfo@national.aaa.com

407-444-8280

Establishments in Southern California should contact the following AAA club:

Automobile Club of Southern California

P.O. Box 25001

Santa Ana, CA 92799-5001

Inspections and Official Appointments

714-885-2247

Advertising

714-885-2394

A HISTORY OF SERVICE

In 1937 to provide improved travel information for members, AAA employed its first inspectors, called field reporters, to personally visit and report on hotels and restaurants. This information was made available to members in the three regional TourBook guides published at that time. Today, AAA's professionally trained inspectors continue this practice as they inspect and assess more than 59,000 hotels and restaurants to help travelers enjoy a positive experience.

