



Service with a Smile

Our island is famous for many things: **stunning** scenery, beautiful **landscapes**, cultural and ethnic diversity, and **scrumptious** food. However, nothing is perfect. Sometimes, the service in Reunion is far from **satisfactory**. Sometimes, it is very near to satisfactory. But the experience I had at a restaurant in the west of the island last month was so **awful**, so bad, so atrocious, that if 'Satisfactory' were a town, I can say that the service would have been so **far** from Satisfactory that I could have found myself in another galaxy.

There we were, five adults and four kids, all enjoying a Friday night meal of **mussels** and chips.

Halfway through the meal, one of us discovered, in the bottom of the pot, a **maggot**. A big dead maggot. Now, you're wondering what a 'maggot' is. Have a look at the vocab. Got it? I know. I nearly **threw up**. We told the waiter. He told the boss. The boss told his waiter to apologise. "**No harm done**" we said, "these things happen".

Then my friend ordered a rum. Inside was something dark. Something **crooked**. Yes, it was the leg of a cockroach. I had had enough! My friends were being far too patient, so I picked up the cockroach leg and went to see the boss.

Typically British, I felt that all this was clearly my fault. But my Gallic side took over, and my **guilt** disappeared. "Erm, after the maggot, we have this..." I showed him the offending object. "It's part of a **cockroach**." He replied 'no, that's a bit of vanilla.'

I said, 'I'm not an expert on vanilla, and I'm not an expert on cockroaches, but THIS is part of a cockroach.'

His wife appeared from the kitchen. She looked very angry indeed. "It's impossible. We have no cockroaches in our kitchen!" she announced proudly.

"Are you suggesting that I go out to restaurants with bits of cockroach in my pocket for fun?" I countered.

Her reaction? She took a close look at my finger. Then **grabbed** the cockroach leg. And then yes, my friends, she put it in her mouth and she ate it. Like Luke Skywalker, I shouted 'Nooooooooooooooooooooo!'

Chewing away, she went back into her kitchen shouting "you see, perfectly good!"

The boss then advised ME to go and sit down, as he was concerned that I would **lose my temper**. I was just trying not to throw up...

What could I do? What would you have done?





I didn't want to annoy them. I just wanted to inform them of the problem. These things happen, even in 5 star hotels, it's not the end of the world. But it's all about how the situation is **handled**. And the way this situation was handled was **light years** from satisfactory.

Vocabulary

stunning - époustouflant

landscapes - paysages

scrumptious - succulent

satisfactory - satisfaisant

awful - affreux

far - loin

mussels - moules

maggot - asticot

to throw up - vomir

no harm done! - ya pas de mal !

crooked - crochu

guilt - culpabilité

cockroach - cafard

to grab - saisir

to lose your temper - perdre son sang froid

to handle - gérer

light years - années lumières

