



Survival Phrases S1

Cantonese Restaurant: Part 2 - Reservations

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Traditional Chinese

想
訂
枱
兩
八
點
幾點

Jyutping

soeng2
deng6
toi2
loeng5
baat3
dim2
gei2 dim2

English

to want
to make a reservation
~~table~~
eight
o'clock
what time

Vocabulary

Traditional	Jyutping	English
想	soeng2	to want
訂	deng6	to book
枱	toi2	desk
兩	loeng5	two (2)
八	baat3	eight (8)
幾點	gei1 dim2	what time
點	dim2	o'clock

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

唔該，我想訂枱。	m4 goi1, ngo5 soeng2 deng6 toi2。	Can I make a reservation?
唔該，我想訂枱。	m4 goi1, ngo5 soeng2 deng6 toi2。	Can I make a reservation?
唔該，我想訂枱。	m4 goi1, ngo5 soeng2 deng6 toi2。	Can I make a reservation?
兩位。	loeng5 wai2。	For two.
佢住喺八樓。	keoi5 zyu6 hai2 baat3 lau2。	He lives on the eighth floor.
幾點啊？	gei2 dim2 aa3?	What time?
十二點半	sap6 ji6 dim2 bun3	12 : 30

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Grammar Points

To make a reservation either by phone or in person, you can say 唔該，我想訂枱 (m4 goi1, ngo5 soeng2 deng6 toi2.) - "Excuse me, I want to book a table." This sentence contains two co-verbs. This combination of two verbs describes a series of actions. In this instance, we combine the two verbs 想, soeng2 ("to want") and 訂, deng6 ("to reserve"): the word is not "to want to order."

The waitstaff may ask you what time you want the reservation for: 幾點? (gei2 dim2?) - "What time?" To say a time, state the hour followed by 點, which means "o'clock." To reserve a table for "eight o'clock," say 八點, 唔該 (baat3 dim2, m4 goi1.) - "Eight o'clock, please."

Cultural Insight

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Quick Tip

Eating is considered a national pastime in Guangdong, and people take it seriously wheeling out the entire family and circle of friends for dining experiences. While most restaurants don't need a reservation, if you know that it is a special holiday or occasion, it is best to call ahead first.