



Survival Phrases S1

Cantonese Restaurant: Part 4 - At the Table

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Traditional Chinese

菜單
小菜
主菜
甜品

Jyutping

coi3 daan1
siu2 coi3
zyu2 coi3
tim4 ban2

English

menu
small dish
main course
dessert

Vocabulary

| Traditional | Jyutping | English |
|-------------|------------|-----------|
| 菜單 | coi3 daan1 | menu |
| 小菜 | siu2 coi3 | dish |
| 主菜 | zyu2 coi3 | main dish |
| 甜品 | tim4 ban2 | dessert |

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

菜單，唔該。

coi3 daan1 , m4 goi1.

Menu, thanks.



Grammar Points

To order food at a restaurant, wave the waiter over and request a menu with the phrase 菜單, 唔該。 coi3 daan1, m4 goi1? ("Please can I have the menu?") You can break down the word for "menu." 菜 is a mid-flat tone, and it means "vegetable," and 單 is the high-flat tone meaning "list." The menu doesn't only have vegetables of course, and it can include a variety of different types of food depending on the restaurant.

If you want to order a drink, listen for this phrase from the waitress: 想飲啲咩啊? (soeng2 jam2 di1 me1 aa1?)

The verb "to drink" is 飲. In previous lessons, we covered co-verbs. The two-character co-verb in the previous example is 想飲, soeng2 jam2 ("to want to drink").

Cultural Insight

Quick Tip

3 Dinner and eating in general is a communal affair. Oftentimes, dinners and banquets are used as an excuse to honor a special guest, improve business ties, or to just have a good time. Since a lot of people are usually getting into the eating action, a lazy Susan is placed in the middle of the table. The lazy Susan allows all guests to have equal access to every dish on a rotating plate.

Don't be shy when eating and taking large portions. Usually more food is ordered than can be eaten, so there will most likely be leftovers. Dinners can drag on for quite some time, up to three hours. Remember it is a marathon and not a sprint, so pace your eating.