

The Application of Michelin's Star Standards in Restaurant Business; Hamburg Le Canard Sample

Assistant Prof. Doc. Turgay Bucak¹ & Zeynep Ceren Kose²

Abstract

Food and beverage businesses are the corporations that allocated to specific standards within its own and established to perform the act of delivering people's basic needs for food and beverage. The standards that has been applied at the food and beverage managements ranges at the present day and progressing continually. Especially implemented for many years and gradually increasing standards of Michelin Star standards is the best example for this. Additionally, The Michelin Guide, has become a status by the restaurant businesses and has a direct affect on the conditions and envirements of the competiton between the restaurant businesses. The purpose of this study is to elaborate the facts and the implementation clauses of a star-making process and after of it by reaching the informations about Michelin standards. For the case study, Le Canard restaurant which is located in the city of Hamburg – Germany and operated by the only Turkish Michelin_star chef Ali GUNGORMUS is selected. In the research, the Semi-structured interview technique was applied.

Keywords: Restaurant business, Michelinstar, Michelinguide, Le Canard, Michelinstandarts

Introduction

Food and bevarage businesses are stated as firms that established to provide profit in exchange of goods and service while people are out of their homes for various reasons or in temporary travels (Sokmen 2003: 20).A lot of small or large scale, food and beverage serving business type, primarily aims to serve the food and the beverage directly to the guests.

¹ Canakkale 18 Mart University, Faculty of Tourism, Email: tbucak@yahoo.com

² Institute of Social Sciences, Tourism Management Department. Email: z.cerenkose@gmail.com

Restaurant businesses can be considered as the head of the list among this type of corporations (Kocak 2007:4). The concept of quality in the restaurant business, takes part in each stage of the activities carried out within the business. Because, every experiences the customers have, from the very beginnig until their departure, is very important. For obtaining these experiences, there are some factors that affect the quality of service offered such as; the taste and the price of a served food or beverage, enviromental factors, personel, service quality, hygine, cleaning and atmospheric elemets (Kocbek 2005: 21). Hence, the restaurant businesses need to adopt both within its own and the given standarts from certain organizations. This adaptation makes the restaurant disciplined and provides a positive development.

As a part of these standards, taking place in the Michelin Guide that the importance of which is rapidly increasing and having a Michelin Star was examined in this study. In addition, implemantation of the Michelin standards in a restaurant business was investigated by taking the example of Le Canard restaurant into consideration.

The purpose of the research is to examine the Michelin standards and to consider the process of getting a star and the implementation clauses after having it. And also to examine the affects of the process itself, the applied standards during the process and all the benefits that comes with the Michelin star to Le Canard restaurant.

Considering the lack of the informations about the process, importance of these source is increasing. Additionally, this work is thought to be a good guide for whom that wishes to have information about this project from the ones that in – or outside the industry, organizations, corporations and for the academic works.

General Information about Restaurant Businesses

The restaurant concept was first come out in France after the French Revolution. The businneses that produce and sell food and beverage to provide people's needs, gave themselves the name "Ristereuter" which means "to restore" in French. These businneses are considered to be the first step in today's restaurants. In the context, this name was transferred as "Reastaurant" to the international languages (Bingol 2007: 27). In Turkey, restaurant businesses are considered to begin with the coffee shops in the 15 th century (Bingol 2007: 42).

The first restaurant to sell many products in the same place was opened in Konya in 1879 (Sarısık ve Hatipoğlu 2009:42).

Although the definitions of “restaurant” may range in many ways, a Corporation needs to have these following four main features to be considered as a restaurant (Sökmen 2003: 38):

- Having tables and chairs that are ready for the customers use
- Having a variety of food and beverage that guests can choose from
- Selling the food and beverages at a certain prices
- After the guests orders, the food must be prepared and served

After taking the orders from the guests and prepared them, these orders need to be served in a specific order (Dökmenoğlu 2008:46).

Turkish Language Association (TDK) defines the restaurants as; dining places opened for the purpose of profit that providing food in exchange for money. And also Define “cookhouse” as the synonym of it.

Ministry Of Culture And Tourism defines cookhouses as; facilities that provides table d’hote - a la carte or special foods to eat and appropriate services to meet the needs of the food and beverages.

The Classification of Restaurant Businesses

While classifying restaurants, it is possible to see different approaches from different sources. The classification of American Restaurant Union and other Restaurant Professionals is as follows (Goldman 1993: 59-60);

- Traditional Restaurants
- Speciality Restaurants

Ministry Of Culture And Tourism of Republic Of Turkey classifies the restaurants as follows;

- First-Class Restaurants : Restaurants that arranges main hall with at least 50 people capacity and seperate the rooms with the rest of it that total capacity up to 150 people
- Second-Class Restaurants : Restaurants that have a dining room with the capacity of at least 50 people.

The classifications of the restaurants, according to thernagement structure and the properties are accepted both in the theory and in the practice. The restaurants are devided into two groups according to their managerial structures as; the chain restaurants within its own and the independent restaurants.

- Chain Restaurants : are the businesses that generally part of an greater restaurants or provides a standard a service in a certain group. For example; Mc Donald's, KFC and Burger King are chain restaurants in the fast-food category, while The Hard Rock Cafe, Planet Hollywood and Rainforest Cafe can be listed as themed chain restaurants (Broherton 2003: 36).
- Independent Restaurants : are corporations that founded by a certain entreprenur or entreprenurs which are not part of any chain. Independent restaurants, except from the law and the rules, are free at production, service and management and composed of a single section(Dorf 1992: 51) .

The restaurants that are mentioned above and the others are applying many standards to provide a quality service. For example; Some institutional standards can be shown it the system that the companies themselves have set, the ISO (International Organization for Standartization) 10002 Customer Satisfaction Management System to improve guest satisfactions, or Food Safety Management System HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) and ISO 22000 Food safety management system in foodfor the safe food production.

General Information about the Michelin Guide

In 1900, French tire producer Andre Michelin and his brother Eduardo have published the first edition of the guide fort he French drivers. In France, less then 300 vehicles were in use at that time. The Michelin Guide was first aimed to improve the claim to the cars and then to tires in concequence. (Henly 2004: 2).Approximately 35.000 units from the Michelin Guide was published and distributed free of charge.

Guide consist of a lot of helpfull informations fort he drivers like; the maps, repair instructions, tire change, car repair, hotels and petrol stations. In 1904, the brothers published a similar guide in Belgium and has recieved more attention than expected (Dawson 1974: 40-43).

The purpose of publishing the Michelin Guide is to help to the tourists or businessmen, visiting major European cities, like finding a hotel near the convention center or inviting their customers to a easily finding restaurant after a meeting(<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb>) .

The Guide contains lots of usefull informaion like city maps that shows hotels and restaurants, keywords that describe the style of each institution, practical informations about cities (landmarks, tips to walk about the city.etc) and the written informations for the tour(<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/InfoWeb>) .

Graphic 1 : The cover of the Michelin Guide published in 1900



Reference: <http://www.histoire-gueret.fr/images/mdupont/GU> Eriřim Tarihi: 23.03.2014.

Michelin Guide, identified at least two lines to describe each organizations based on an extensive system of symbols. In the last editions, a lot of new informations has been added to the description of the stared-restaurants in the guide. This informations are written in the languages of the published countries, but the symbols are remains the same in all guides

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/foodanddrink/foodanddrinknews/6998093/Michelin-Guide-2010-UK-has-more-starred-restaurants-than-ever-before.html>) .

Despite being distributed for free in the beginnig, the Guide begun to be sold for 7 Franc per copy in 1922. The Guide has steadily expanded it's scope from France to Europe. For instance; the first edition of Italy in 1956 and the first edition of United KÍngdom was published in 1974. Guide has expand abroad with New York Guide in 2006 and has spread to the major cities of U.S.A, China and Japan(<http://www.andyhayler.com/michelin-history>) .

In 2012, Michelin published the guieds including Germany, Switzerland, Benelux (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg) Italy, Spain, Portugan, United KÍngdom, Ireland and France. In addition, Honk Kong & Macau, New York, San Francisco and Chicago guides are also become avaiable. The scope of Michelin in Japan has been expanded in 2012 with Tokyo, Yokohama, Kamakura, Osaka, Kobe and Nara's guieds in April 2012. Other Europen countries are partly included in the guied with "The Guide of Main Cities Of Europe" (www.andydyhyler.com/starsystem).

The first editions of the guide is New York Guide which is being published at the beginning of October. And France tranditionally has the title of "the las guide" by being published by the end of February. One month after that "The Guide of Main Cities Of Europe" is published (www.andydyhyler.com/starsystem).

While considering an establishment for a star, Michelin Guide is asking that is it their first star or moving from one to two or two to three stars. Firstly, the inspector with responsibility for that particular area analyses the region, than another inspector is sent to these restaurants for the second report. If the second consideration is equally as good as the first, a further series of inspections takes place to test the consistency. There is a guaranteed minimum of three very strong visits before being awarded a first star, plus as many as eight, nine or even ten visits in a year for potential two and three star promotions

(http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/11/23/091123fa_fact_colapinto#ixzz29X2IhNlo) .

The meetings about granting or withdrawing of a star, is being made during the year. Inspectors, editor of the Guide and director of the Michelin Guides participates in the meetings. During the star meetings they discuss their different restaurant tests, review the different places where they ate and compare their inspection reports. At the end of work-year, related investigators presents their opinions about the candidates and determines the state of the star (granting or withdrawing it) by discussing and by providing unanimity. At this stage, if any doubtful thought comes out about the restaurant, they suspend or withdraw the star next year by making a detailed examination. The reason for this is the Michelin byword of consistency. Michelin want to ensure that if they are telling their readers that they will eat well, then it shouldn't be just a classical meal. For being sure about the consistency, inspectors makes weekend, mid-week, lunch and dinner time visits, to try both the a la carte and the set menus

<http://www.lasvegassun.com/blogs/culture/2009/jun/26/michelin-bad-economy-means-no-2010-guide-las-vegas/>.

General Information about Michelin Stars

Michelin one-star system begun in 1926. Along with the additions of the second and the third stars in 1931 and in 1936 the definitions of the stars started to be used.

- **Three stars**: for exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey.
- **Two stars**: for excellent cooking, worth a detour.
- **One star**: for a very good restaurant in its category.

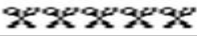
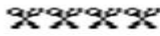




The symbols used in the Michelin Guide, provides a general information about the conditions and the menus about the restaurant in the guide (www.beyond.tr/food/michelin-guide-history.html) .

The chart in the guide uses symbols for accommodation and restaurant businesses, offers a clear information and a catchy sign language for the people how have the guide(<http://www.docstoc.com/docs/100278281/The-MICHELIN-Guide-Great-Britain-and-Ireland-2011-statistics>).

In Michelin Guide, different symbols and categories are also being used like the “big gourmet” concept which was introduced in 1997, means “appropriate cooking at reasonable prices”. This concept is a degree that is generally using for smaller businesses which are not included in star category. There is a separate symbol using for this concept in the guide and it becomes a certain criteria for rating (<http://www.lokantadunyasi.com/edeta.asp?type=1&id=102>).

In addition, listed restaurants, regardless of their stars or bib gourmet status, may also receive the “fork and spoon” symbol as a reflection of the restaurants’ comfort and quality. And the rating ranges from one fork and spoon that imply a simple bistro and five a luxurious restaurant. Restaurants can also get a series of rating symbols from their lists, independent from the rating of the guide(<http://www.michelintravel.com/michelin-guides/>).

Graphic 2: Symbols using in the Michelin Guide

	Luxury
	Top class comfortable
	Very comfortable
	Comfortable
	Quite comfortable
	Pubs (GB), tapas bar (E)

Reference: <http://www.somebits.com/weblog/culture/travel/guideRouge.html>

What the symbols mean from 1 to 5 stars is seen in the graphic 2. And bar and pub’s symbols are also added.

Graphic 3: Other Symbols being use in the Michelin Guide

The MICHELIN Guide Great Britain and Ireland 2011 statistics				
1697 Hotels		3418 Establishments		1721 Restaurants
31		Luxury in the traditional style		2
115		Top class comfort		25
320		Very comfortable		168
378		Comfortable		618
281		Quite comfortable		388
572		Other recommended accommodation		
		Traditional pubs serving food		520
225	 to	Particularly pleasant establishments (Red symbols)	 to	142
220		 Very quiet, secluded hotels		
BIB GOURMAND				
	Good food at moderate prices			118
BIB HOTELS				
	Good accommodation at moderate prices			91
MICHELIN STARS				
 123 (12 new)	 16 (2 New)		 4	

Reference: <http://360.here.com/2012/12/13/michelin-guide-powered-by-here-platform/>

Michelin Guide and the Star, has been a respected application in the food and beverage sector from the very beginning of the guide until today. And will continue spreading with the incorporation of the countries and the businesses in theyearsahead.

Information about Le Canard Restaurant Hamburg

Le Canard restaurant is a business that belongs to a Turkish Chief Ali GUNGOR, with an 570 square meter of area that has the capacity to serve special servis for 100 people and a la cart efor 70 people, in the city of Hamburg – Germany. Le Canard welcomes the guests in a place with a rich architecture near the Elbe River. Provides a Japanese room, a kitchen stand and a terrace section to the guests.

Making changes at the menü in certain periods, restaurant often renew itself. Le Canard Restaurant commence to business in 2006, and has gained the first Michelin Star in 2007. Five chefs, five assistant chefs, eight serves staff and a booker have been working in the business. Restaurant open at 12.00 and closes at 22.30 on Tuesdays and Saturdays only.

Le Canard uses the order of First course, Starter entree, Main course and Desert at the presentation, and has an extensive wine menu. Also the owner of the business Ali GUNGOR, uses Turkish brand and regional flavors .

When Michelin Scope the Le Canard of; location and the menu variety has drawn a considerable attention and they bring this to forefront at the reviews. The business started to pay more attention to internal and external auditings and begin to a preaudit policy to reduce the risks before occuring, after recieving the star. Le Canard also following closely the trends and the innovations in the gastronomy field and keep the food & beverage sector in the forfront to respond and to fulfil the high expectations of the earn star. This business "high quality food and quality service" concept and the quality service approaches are consistent with the Michelin Star discipline.

Graphic 4 shows the "Star Stiker" that only Michelin Star restaurants can have. And Le Canard restaurant has thestikerlocated at the entrance door.

Graphic 4: Visual of the Michelin Star that Le Canard owns



Reference: Le Canard restaurant entrance door.

Research

The aim of the research is to examine the star-making process and the conditions after the application by reaching informations about Michelin Standards. And also the answer of the following question has been asked within the research :

- How does a restaurant carry out the process of having a star and the applications after having the star ?

Method

At this research, Michelin Guide, its standards and the star system was analysed, and added to this Le Canard's example was studied. The path that Le Canard followed during the introduction to the Guide, the star-making process and the standards of the stars were analysed.

For the case study, Le Canard restaurant which is located in the city of Hamburg – Germany and operated by the only Turkish Michelin_star chef Ali GUNGORMUS is selected. In the research, the Semi-structured interview technique was applied. And supported with the observation technique.

Face to face interview forms which will be used as data collection tool, were examined and sufficiency of the questions has been analyzed by an expert. All the questions were first examined for being correctly understood by the participants, and then included in to the study.

Le Canard Restaurant, located in Hamburg – Germany, is the basic case of the study. The reason of choosing this business was that, the owner of the Le Canard Ali GUNGOR is the only Turkish Michelin-Star chef.

Interview with the participant took 60 minutes. Although the questions were determined during the research, it was reconstructed during the interview according to the answers of the participant. Questions have been analyzed in a flexible perspective due to the questions that were open to comments.

Findings

Findings that obtained in the context of interview analysis, has been evaluated in the star-making process, the characteristics of the business and the employee, menu and service concept sub-titles.

Star-Making process according to the research : Inspectors are examining the restaurants in every aspects by considering the standards. Inspectors are performing this analysis without informing the restaurant, under cover. Not knowing the identity of the inspectors, always requires a high quality service and service level.

After the inspections, Michelin Center compare the inspection reports and decide whether or not to give the star. Moreover, they decide whether to give one or more stars to an establishment. There is a guaranteed minimum of three very strong visits before being awarded a first star, plus as many as eight, nine or even ten visits in a year for potential two and three star promotions. The burden and the responsibilities of the Michelin-Starred restaurant has ben hardened. For example; the new stared restaorant do not have an obligatory of using silverwear utensils. Besides, the increasing expectations creates a psychological pressure on the staff. Even this pressure affect the business in a negative way, it can be uses to scale the situation by using a good plannig and coordination.

Properties of the business and the staff : The people in the Le Canard are all well trained on their professions. Service personnel is experienced and have at least two foreign languages. The kitchen staff are divided into groups in themselves; Different departmens has an expert chef in the speciality of first course (appetizer), starter entree, main course, sauses and deserts. Every chef has an assistant chef. The master chef of Le Canard Ali GUNGOR summarized that “ you should offer the high quality and provide the continuity of it” , and added that with the pleasure of a quality atmospere and dishes, it turns in to a different experience and the guest comes back to rejoin it. And also sad that the restaurant is also to provide continuity.

The menu and the service concept: The most important feature of Le Canard is, that None of the dishes served to guests contains any take-home foods. Bread, pasta and the garnish of the starter entree's are made by their chef's daily. Most of the dishes on the menu are made by Turkish raw supplies. A universal approach is adopted in the kitchen and creative work are being held. Having a Michelin star affects the prices and the price polisy and it increases the prices. Hovewer, guest receive the value they pay from the preparation of food to service, employees and the quality of the atmosphere.

The Michelin Star both provides the quality issue and support the uniqueness. Getting involved in Michelin Guide also provides prestige on the gastronomy field.

The restaurant that considered on this research, has the concern about the sufficiency for Michelin Star Standards.

Then, aims to keep the quality at the highest level. Furthermore; now have the purpose of improving the business by using these standards as a goal and tool.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The concept of Gastronomy is gaining importance and becomes a factor that can't be dissociate. Because the reason that there is no possibility of an end to this sector, gastronomy and tourism synthesized with each other every day and show significant improvements.

The criteria that food and beverage businesses applied, are divided into certain criteria in itself. Michelin Guide is the most prestigious among these and includes a universal feature to the starred businesses.

Having a star and getting involved in Michelin Guide provides a serious advertising opportunity and enables a continuing development. The business should develop and provide continuity not to affect the star-making process badly. Employed staff, offered menus, service quality, used forks, knives, plates, cups vs. malz description quality, menu richness and flavor, the wine menu innovation and richness of all these elements are being audited during the star system process, affects the position of the restaurant in the Michelin Guide directly. Some negativities can be seen among the staff because of the quality importance in the analysing businesses. Staff needs to behave and pay more attention to the guest because of the intense and high expectations on the contrary of a restaurant without a Michelin Star. This situation makes a pressure on the staff and affects their performance negatively. To deal with this, in the business staff should be given the feeling and the awareness of ownership.

Despite of being in a good position in terms of the location and the atmosphere, Le Canard Restaurant varies in itself due to the responsibilities. The city that the restaurant is located has a bad weather conditions for a long time of a year and this makes the terrace section unusable. But both the prestige of the Michelin Star concept in Gastronomy field and the universality concept coming forward with the Michelin Guide makes a guest portfolio ready.

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