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From Preparation to the Table: Who Owns Each Handoff?

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أحمد عصام المعدراني

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Follow the restaurant order from the dining room through kitchen stations and the pass to see where timing and information matter.

Before the order arrives

A diner may read the menu when the kitchen already knows an item is nearly sold out. Passing that information to the front of house allows the server to explain the choices before taking the order. The actual workflow varies with restaurant layout and staffing.

At the pass

A table’s dishes may arrive from several stations. In an illustrative case, a hot item reaches the pass before its accompaniment. Delays can begin with ordering, station coordination or handoff. Timing each stage helps locate the wait.

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After the dish reaches the table

The front-of-house team brings back context the kitchen cannot see. Did one dish arrive late or did the whole table wait? Was it isolated or repeated? Such details make service notes reviewable.

One order has several timestamps

Suppose an order was entered at 19:10, the main dish reached the pass at 19:22, and the table’s other dishes were complete at 19:29. Recording only the arrival at the table leaves the wait unexplained. The intermediate times locate part of the delay at assembly, while leaving open why the other dishes took longer.

An amendment changes who needs to know

A diner may ask to remove an ingredient after an order is entered. The person taking the change needs to know whether cooking has started. The cook needs to know which dish changed, and the pass needs to connect it to the right table. When information passes between several people, knowing who confirms it matters. In a small restaurant, one person may cover several of these roles.

When does the diner’s wait actually begin?

One restaurant may serve dishes as they are ready, while another promises to serve the table together. The gap between dishes therefore depends on what was understood when the order was placed. The sequence may be clear in the kitchen even if the dining room has not explained it. Following the full journey connects time to expectations and helps distinguish an operational delay from a difference in how the service was understood.

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