



The MICHELIN guide **Dictionary**



This **dictionary** defines the words most commonly used to talk about the **MICHELIN guide** and to describe how it works, its **history** and its **commitments**.



ANONYMITY

MICHELIN guide inspectors test restaurants and hotels anonymously and regularly, just like a normal customer. They book their table or room, order, eat, sleep and pay their bills in the same way as any other guest. This anonymity is what makes the MICHELIN guide so successful. It is only after paying their bill that inspectors may introduce themselves and ask for more information, if necessary.

AWARD

Stars are awarded based on a consensus reached jointly by MICHELIN guide inspectors, the country editor-in-chief and the Director of Publications for the guides. They are awarded to a restaurant for the work of the chef and his or her team. They reflect a holistic approach, with inspectors judging what's on the plate, over several meals, and without considering the reputation of the chef or the venue. The distinctions belong to Michelin; a chef cannot "give back" a distinction.

BIB GOURMAND

Introduced in 1997 and symbolized by the 🍷, the Bib Gourmand distinction takes its name from Bibendum, the character thought up in 1898 by the Michelin brothers, André and Edouard, and drawn by cartoonist O'Galop. Over the years, Bib has morphed into the Michelin Man, the Group's mascot. It indicates a restaurant serving three-course meals offering good value for money, i.e., in the case of France, for less than €35 in Paris and €29 elsewhere. In France, the Benelux countries and Spain, the restaurants are featured in a special guide.



BONNES PETITES TABLES

The Bonnes Petites Tables guides showcase the Bib Gourmand restaurants selected by inspectors in France (since 2007), the Benelux countries (Bib Gourmand Benelux, since 2009) and in Spain (Buenas mesas a menos de 35€, since 2009). First published in July 2011, the Bonnes Petites Tables Tokyo guide is a selection of the best French restaurants, bistros, brasseries, creperies and wine bars in the Japanese capital.

COLLECTION

Today, the MICHELIN guide collection comprises 27 guides covering 23 countries on three continents, with more than 45,000 addresses worldwide.

27 guides : France; Paris; Bonnes Petites Tables France; Escapades en Chambre d'hôtes; Italia; España & Portugal; Portugal; Buenas mesas a menos de 35€; Belgique/België & Luxembourg; Nederland/Netherlands; Bib Gourmand Benelux; Deutschland; Suisse Schweiz Svizzera; Great Britain & Ireland; London; Eating Out in Pubs; Main Cities of Europe; New York; San Francisco; Chicago. Hong Kong Macau, bilingual English-Chinese; Tokyo Yokohama Kamakura Shonan in Japanese and

English; Kyoto Osaka Kobe Nara in Japanese and English; Bonnes Petites Tables Tokyo in Japanese.

23 countries: Austria; Belgium; Czech Republic; Denmark; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; People's Republic of China; Poland; Portugal; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; United Kingdom; United States of America.

The restaurant selection from the European and American guides is also available online and in smartphone applications (see Digital).

COMMITMENTS

Every year, in each guide's introduction, Michelin expresses its commitment to respecting the five values that have shaped each one since the beginning: anonymous visits, independence, selectivity, annual updates and consistent selection criteria.



CRITERIA

Michelin has defined five criteria for awarding stars: the quality of the ingredients, the flair and skill in preparing them and combining flavors, the chef's personality as revealed through the cuisine, value for money and the consistency of culinary standards. Stars reflect «what's on the plate and only what's on the plate.» In other words, their award does not take into consideration the restaurant's décor, the quality of its service, amenities and equipment or the availability of valet parking. Nor is the price of ingredients taken into account; a restaurant does not have to serve caviar or foie gras to earn a star. Instead, the star rewards the quality of the selected products.

CONSISTENCY

The exact same ratings criteria are used in every country covered by the MICHELIN guide, so that the quality of a three-star restaurant is the same in Paris as in New York City and the quality of a two-star restaurant is comparable whether in Milan or London.



DIGITAL

In 2001, Michelin enhanced its ViaMichelin.fr website with content from the MICHELIN guides and Green Guides in dedicated hotels, restaurants and travel tabs. At the same time, smartphone applications offering the entire restaurant selection from the European and American MICHELIN guides have been steadily introduced since 2009. Thanks to the apps' multi-criteria search engines, smartphone users can easily find suitable nearby restaurants, check the description of each one, display their locations on a map and show the itinerary. Users can also post their comments. Today print and digital versions complement each other perfectly. The paper guides are easy to use, practical to carry and pleasant to read, while the digital variants offer multi-criteria searches to prepare for a trip or journey.

DISTINCTIONS

Level of comfort is systematically indicated using a rating system (see Ratings). Furthermore, to help readers make the best choice, a number of particularly outstanding establishments have received a special distinction, such as stars and Bib Gourmands 🍷 for the quality of cooking. These may be combined in any number of ways, such as five forks and spoons 🍴🍴🍴🍴🍴 ("luxury in the traditional style") but no star 🌟, or else one fork and spoon 🍴🍴 ("quite comfortable") but three stars for a remarkable dining experience.

HISTORY

1900 : André and Edouard Michelin publish the first MICHELIN guide. The brothers foresaw that for the automobile to be successful, motorists had to be able to find places to refuel, charge their batteries or change their tires wherever they traveled. The MICHELIN guide was therefore created to offer drivers all of this useful information, free of charge.

1904: First MICHELIN guide Belgique

1910: First MICHELIN guides España and Deutschland

1911: First MICHELIN guide Great Britain & Ireland

1920: The Michelin guide is no longer offered free of charge.

1926: The first stars are awarded.

1937: First MICHELIN guide Paris

1956: First MICHELIN guide Italia

1997: The Bib Gourmand distinction is introduced in France.

2000: Descriptions of the selected establishments are added.

2001: The selection is published online on the ViaMichelin website.

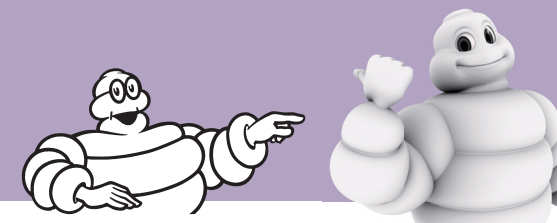
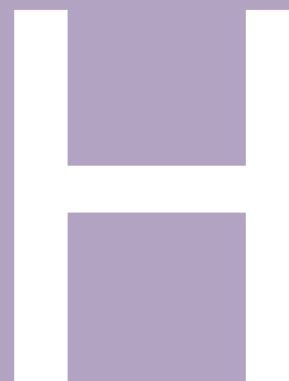
2005: The first US guide is published, with the MICHELIN guide New York City.

2007: First Asian guide is launched, with the MICHELIN guide Tokyo, and the Bonne Petites Tables France guide is introduced

2009: 100th edition of the MICHELIN guide France; first iPhone application launched; first MICHELIN Bib Gourmand guide in the Benelux countries and Buenas mesas in Spain; first MICHELIN guide Hong-Kong Macau.

2011: The selection is extended in the United States, to Chicago, and in Japan, by adding Kobe to the Kyoto Osaka guide and Yokohama and Kamakura to the Tokyo guide; the first MICHELIN Bonnes Petites Tables Tokyo guide is published.

2012: New Japanese cities added, with Nara in the Kyoto Osaka Kobe guide, Shonan in the Tokyo Yokohama Kamakura guide, and the new Hokkaido guide.



INDEPENDENCE

Hotels and restaurants are selected independently of any other consideration than the reader's benefit. The selection is made based on the consensus opinion of the inspectors and the guide's editor-in-chief, who decide which establishments to feature in the guide. In addition, the inspectors eat or stay anonymously and systematically pay their bill after each visit.

INSPECTOR

Whether man or woman, young or not so young, blond or dark-haired, thin or well built, the Michelin inspector is a guest like any other – a food lover who is passionate about the dining experience. Inspectors are all Michelin employees, and are generally hotel school graduates with five to ten years of experience in the restaurant and/or hotel trade. They are committed to selecting the best restaurants and hotels in each comfort and price category, anonymously. For the country guides, each inspector travels around 30,000 kilometers a year, eating some 250 meals and sleeping in more than 160 hotels. They always pay their bills in both restaurants and hotels. After each meal, stay or visit, they prepare a report that will be used to determine which establishments are selected and which distinctions, if any, are awarded.

INTERNATIONAL

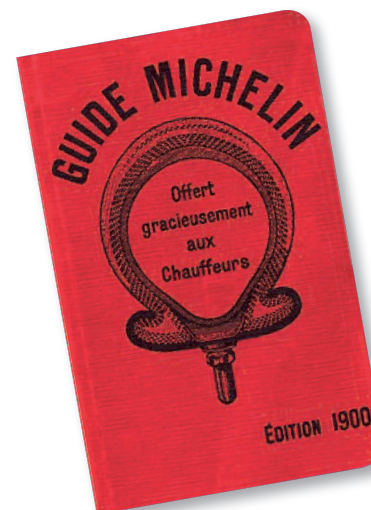
While the MICHELIN Guide moved quickly to cover other destinations in Europe (publishing a guide to Belgium, its first venture outside France, in 1904), it wasn't until 2005 that the guide made its first entry into the United States with the launch of the MICHELIN guide New York City, followed the next year by San Francisco, and later Los Angeles and Las Vegas. In late 2007, the guide turned to Asia, and particularly Japan, where the first MICHELIN guide Tokyo appeared in November. It was an instant success, with more than 120,000 copies sold in less than 24 hours. In 2008, the People's Republic of China became the 23rd country to be covered, with the MICHELIN guide Hong-Kong Macau.

This international expansion has naturally been coordinated with Michelin's industrial development strategy. However, when considering a new destination, Michelin also takes into account the quality of a city or country's culinary culture, the number of restaurants (including the number of restaurants that could be awarded stars), the number of hotels and the potential number of readers for a new guide.



MOBILITY

When introduced in 1900, the MICHELIN guide was intended to encourage France's rare motorists at the time to travel more by providing the addresses of the best places where they could eat and sleep, thereby getting them to use their tires more. More than one hundred years later, Michelin is still committed to improving travel conditions by developing solutions that enhance mobility. Michelin employs 111,000 people around the world who produce 176 million tires, 10 million maps and guides and 875 million itinerary calculated by ViaMichelin each year.



PLEASURE

Providing useful information for an enjoyable experience, the MICHELIN guide has always been a companion to travelers, regardless of whether they are looking for a cozy B&B, a typical country inn, a luxury hotel, a talented yet little-known young chef or a restaurant serving dishes made with ingredients from the local market or products from far-away places. When the guide's inspectors recommend a hotel or restaurant, it's their way of sharing with the reader a memorable meal, a charming venue... or simply a great deal.

R

RATINGS

The MICHELIN guide chooses the best hotels and restaurants in each comfort and price category. Establishments are ranked from one to five pavilions (🏠...🏠🏠🏠) for hotels and from one to five fork-and-spoon pictograms (🍴...🍴🍴🍴🍴) for restaurants, or from “quite comfortable” to “luxury in the traditional style”. Symbols shown in red indicate particularly pleasant establishments in terms of atmosphere, decor, customer reception or level of service.

READER

Because it is rich and varied, the MICHELIN Guide's selection has something for everyone, depending on each reader's tastes, situation or budget. Whether for a business lunch, a romantic dinner for two, or an al fresco lunch with friends, all types of restaurants, in every price range, are covered in the MICHELIN guide, from three-star restaurants to bistros, from luxury grand hotels to family inns. But readers of the print and digital guides are also invaluable sources of information for the MICHELIN guide, which every year asks them to express their opinions on the selection. What's more, Michelin receives some 45,000 letters and emails a year, as well as comments on the ViaMichelin site or via the smartphone apps, which help to guide inspectors in their visits and further improve the quality of the selection.

RED

Since the very first edition, Michelin Guides have always been red, a color chosen because it was strong, highly visible and, at the time, an effective means of attracting the eye. In fact, the guide was even called “The Red Guide” from 2000 to 2003 before going back to its original name.



SELECTION

Of all the key MICHELIN guide words, «selection» is the most important, because the Guide is above all a selection of the best restaurants and hotels in each comfort and price category. Prepared by professional inspectors who make anonymous visits, the selection reflects the rigorous application of the same method in every country.

SYMBOLS

Symbols have been the MICHELIN guide's “universal language” since the beginning. Easily understood by everyone, the symbols were originally used to indicate whether a hotel had electricity and hot water. Many others have since added, including the “Wi-Fi” 📶 and “spa” 🛀 pictograms in the latest editions.

STAR

The first star was awarded in 1926, followed a few years later, by the one to three-star rating system introduced in the provinces in 1931 and in Paris in 1933. Ever since, the famous “Michelin stars” have been the Guide's claim to fame, recognized the world over as synonymous with quality cuisine.

- ***: Exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey. One always eats extremely well here, sometimes superbly.
- ***: Excellent cooking, worth a detour
- ***: A very good restaurant in its category

Stars reflect «what's on the plate and only what's on the plate.» This means they rate only the quality of the cuisine. They are awarded on the basis of five criteria (see Criteria). While the starred

restaurants get the most media coverage, they represent barely 10% of the guides' selection. To have earned one or more stars means that a restaurant is one of the best not only in its country but also in the world.

TRENDS

The MICHELIN guide does not indicate tomorrow's culinary trends. Instead it observes what is happening right now – such as the increasing numbers of young chefs, of different nationalities, the growing interest in traditional recipes and local ingredients, as well as in ethnic cuisine, and the popularity of restaurants that offer excellent value for money, like the Bib Gourmands.

UPDATES

All of the practical information, ratings and distinctions are revised and updated every year to give readers the most reliable information possible.

