

July 30 , 2020

Hello,

On July 24, 2020, I placed an order with your Dallas location (17548 Dallas Parkway) through GrubHub. Specifically, I ordered the Chicken Parmesan Family Pack with Caesar salad and sauteed broccoli, two orders of mashed potatoes, and Cannoli Cake, along with calamari as an appetizer. My partner Kirk and I ordered the food in honor of my birthday.

The salad, the chicken, and the bread included with the meal were all very good. However, the calamari left a lot to be desired; it was very chewy, the breading barely stuck to the squid, and the whole portion had an overwhelming and permeating fishy flavor. It was so fishy, in fact, that, because the container was positioned in the exact middle of the bag, the flavor affected almost everything else—the broccoli and the potatoes had a pronounced fishy flavor. Ee the cake had a vague seafood taste, no doubt because it wasn't properly covered; the slice was so big that the lid for its container didn't fit properly, and it was nearly off when the food reached us. Whether related or not, the potatoes also had a bizarre aftertaste Kirk and I can only describe as "plastic." Needless to say, we didn't enjoy the meal very much at all.

Thinking it would be best to deal with the restaurant directly instead of with GrubHub, Kirk called the restaurant first thing the next morning (July 25), and asked to speak with a manager. The employee who answered the phone said the manager was busy, but someone would call us back soon. Kirk gave him our phone number.

By the evening of July 27, no one had called, so Kirk called again. This time, he was able to speak to a manager named Chassidy, who told us that she was neither aware that he had called, nor whether the other managers knew about our problems. When Kirk explained our situation, Chassidy immediately explained that, "for customer protection," Carrabba's company policy prevented her from adjusting charges for orders over 24 hours old. Kirk immediately and rightly complained that that made no sense; if the first person he spoke with had kept his word and informed a manager promptly, the restaurant would have been well within the 24-hour window. Next, Chassidy tried to offer Kirk compensatory coupons, but he refused—Chassidy didn't appear to appreciate that the COVID-19 pandemic makes a dine-in visit completely unappealing considering that Kirk and I are both high-risk for complications from the virus. She also didn't seem to understand that her apparent inability to take responsibility for the situation was making the prospect of dealing with Carrabba's again less appealing still. It took even more cajoling for Chassidy to admit she would be frustrated if she were in our situation, and she finally agreed to "do some research" and call us back.

The next day, Chassidy did call back and agreed to the refund. When Kirk explained that we had ordered through GrubHub, Chassidy asked us to contact them and have them process the refund, under her authorization. I immediately started a chat with GrubHub on the Web and told their representative what had happened. He pressed me to tell him which items the refund was for, and I explained that the calamari was the main culprit but it affected nearly everything else. The representative soon told me that the refund had been processed.

To my shock and disappointment, I discovered the next day that the refund had only been for \$13.49—the amount I was charged for the calamari. Either the GrubHub representative misunderstood what I meant, or Chassidy heard him mention a refund for the calamari and thought she could get away with refunding me less than she had planned to.

Regardless, I'm sure you can see my point: the calamari was practically inedible, and its fishy flavor was so overpowering that much of the rest of our meal was inedible too—we had to throw out the majority of the broccoli, potatoes, and cake. When you consider that (a) the meal was my birthday dinner and we paid a lot for it; (b) a large portion of the food was inedible because of the calamari; and (c) the refund would not have been an issue had the first Carrabba's employee Kirk spoke with done his job and properly relayed our situation to a manager within the initial 24 hours after our order, we would have been able to resolve this much more fairly. The calamari was the culprit, yes, but because it affected the whole meal, and because so much of the food was ruined as a result, I'm sure you'll agree that something more needs to be done.

To give you a more complete idea of what happened, I've included links to recordings of each of our calls with the restaurant below. The first is the one in which your employee said he would have a manager get back to us promptly, the second is from a few days later when we hadn't heard back from anyone, and the third is Chassidy's follow-up authorizing the refund and directing us to contact GrubHub.

What can Carrabba's do to make this right? This is clearly not how any restaurant experience should unfold, pandemic or not, especially on the customer's birthday. I cannot contact GrubHub again because they have already closed my case and therefore consider it resolved, and Carrabba's clearly bears the lion's share of the fault here, if not all of it. Kirk and I look forward to hearing back from someone to help us resolve the matter.

Thank you,
Luke Jensen

Call recordings:

<https://jcis.us/carrabbas/ob-carrabbas-call1of3.wav>

<https://jcis.us/carrabbas/ob-carrabbas-call2of3.wav>

<http://jcis.us/carrabbas/ib-carrabbas-call3of3.wav>