

En el Restaurante

SER · ESTAR · HAY

Ordering food + describing a restaurant in Spanish | Level A1

◆ SECTION 1 — RESTAURANT VOCABULARY

→ Study these words before the exercises. You will need them in the role-play at the end!

Español	English
el mesero / la mesera	the waiter / waitress
la mesa	the table
el menú	the menu
la cuenta	the check / bill
la propina	the tip
la reservación	the reservation
el restaurante	the restaurant
el bar	the bar

Español	English
el plato	the dish / plate
la entrada	the first course
el plato principal	the main course
el postre	the dessert
la bebida	the drink
el agua (f.)	water
el jugo	juice
el refresco	soda

→ Key Phrases to Order Food

Quisiera... = I would like... (polite)

Para mí... = For me...

¿Qué me recomienda? = What do you recommend?

La cuenta, por favor. = The check, please.

Con... / Sin... = With... / Without... (e.g., sin cebolla = without onion)

◆ SECTION 2 — GRAMMAR: SER vs. ESTAR vs. HAY

→ Quick Grammar Summary

Use these three verbs to describe and talk about a restaurant.

SER → permanent or defining characteristics (identity, origin, nature)

ESTAR → temporary states or conditions (how something feels/looks right now)

HAY → existence (there is / there are — always the same form!)

SER (to be)	ESTAR (to be)	HAY (there is/are)
Yo soy Tú eres Él/Ella es Nosotros somos	Yo estoy Tú estás Él/Ella está Nosotros estamos	Hay una mesa. Hay dos platos. <i>¡It never changes!</i>

In the restaurant: <i>El restaurante es grande.</i> → The restaurant is big. <i>El mesero es amable.</i> → The waiter is friendly.	In the restaurant: <i>La comida está fría.</i> → The food is cold. <i>La mesa está lista.</i> → The table is ready.	In the restaurant: <i>Hay una mesa libre.</i> → There is a free table. <i>Hay dos platos especiales.</i> → There are two specials.
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◆ SECTION 3 — EXERCISES

01 — Choose the Right Verb

Circle or underline the correct option: SER / ESTAR / HAY

- El restaurante _____ muy bonito. (SER / ESTAR)
→ Hint: The restaurant is very beautiful. → permanent characteristic
- La sopa _____ fría. ¡No me gusta! (SER / ESTAR)
→ Hint: The soup is cold. I do not like it! → temporary state
- _____ una mesa para dos personas. (SER / ESTAR / HAY)
→ Hint: There is a table for two. → existence
- El mesero _____ colombiano. (SER / ESTAR)
→ Hint: The waiter is Colombian. → origin (permanent)
- La cuenta _____ aquí. (SER / ESTAR)
→ Hint: The check is here. → location of a thing

6. _____ tres platos en el menú de hoy. (SER / ESTAR / HAY)
→ Hint: *There are three dishes on today's menu.* → existence
7. Nosotros _____ en el restaurante. (SER / ESTAR)
→ Hint: *We are at the restaurant.* → location of a person
8. La comida _____ muy rica hoy. (SER / ESTAR)
→ Hint: *The food is very delicious today.* → current state/condition

02 — Fill in the Blank

Write the correct form of SER, ESTAR, or HAY in each blank.

1. ¿Cómo _____ la comida? — ¡_____ deliciosa!
2. Yo _____ el mesero. ¿Puedo ayudarte?
3. _____ un menú especial hoy.
4. La mesa número cinco _____ libre.
5. Este restaurante _____ italiano.
6. ¿_____ propina incluida en la cuenta?

03 — True or False? Correct the False Ones!

Read each sentence. Write TRUE or FALSE. If it is false, rewrite the sentence correctly on the line below.

1. We use ESTAR to talk about where a restaurant is from. TRUE / FALSE: _____
Correction: _____
2. "Hay" can be: hay un mesero / hay dos mesas. TRUE / FALSE: _____
Correction: _____

3. To say "The soup is cold right now," we use SER: La sopa es fría. TRUE / FALSE: _____

Correction: _____

4. "¿Hay una mesa libre?" means "Is there a free table?" TRUE / FALSE: _____

Correction: _____

SPEAKING & WRITING EXERCISES

Use everything you have learned. Create sentences from scratch.

◆ SECTION 4 — LET'S WRITE!

04 — Describe a Restaurant

Look at the photo and read the restaurant information card. Then answer the questions below in complete Spanish sentences. Use SER, ESTAR, and HAY.



What do you see in the photo? — ¿Qué ves en la foto?

The waiter: young, friendly, wearing an apron (joven, amable, con delantal)

The food: burgers and fries — looks hot and delicious! (hamburguesas y papas fritas — ¡se ven calientes y deliciosas!)

The customers: happy and excited, waiting for their food (contentos y emocionados)

The restaurant: casual, warm, with brick walls — there is also a bar in the background

Right now: the waiter is serving food / the restaurant is busy (ocupado)

→ **Look at the photo and answer each question in a complete Spanish sentence.**

Use the information card above. Each answer must use the verb in parentheses.

1. **¿Cómo es el mesero? (SER)** (*What is the waiter like? — describe him*)

→

2. **¿Cómo está la comida? (ESTAR)** (*How does the food look right now?*)

→

3. **¿Hay un bar en el restaurante? (HAY)** (*Is there a bar in the restaurant?*)

→

4. **¿Cómo están los clientes? (ESTAR)** (*How are the customers feeling?*)

→

5. **¿Qué hay en los platos? (HAY)** (*What is on the plates?*)

→

6. **¿Cómo es el restaurante? (SER)** (*What is the restaurant like? — describe it*)

→

05 — Your Turn: Free Writing

Think of a restaurant you know — real or imaginary. Write 4 sentences about it.

You must use: SER (x1) + ESTAR (x1) + HAY (x1) + one ordering phrase (Quisiera / Para mí / Sin...)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

◆ BONUS — COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

✗ Incorrect	✓ Correct	Why?
La sopa es fría.	La sopa está fría.	Temperature is a state → ESTAR
Estoy colombiano.	Soy colombiano.	Nationality/origin → SER
Están dos mesas.	Hay dos mesas.	Existence uses HAY, not ESTAR
¿Hay el mesero?	¿Está el mesero?	Location of a person → ESTAR
La comida es rica.	La comida está rica.	"Está rico" = it tastes good (state). "Es rico" = it is rich (permanent trait)

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