

Now, your favourite Pune restaurant can flaunt its ‘stars’, as 350 eateries opt for FDA’s hygiene rating system

Restaurants will receive their certification under the star-based ‘hygiene rating’ system. To earn the certificate, any restaurant can fill a form on the FDA website and open themselves to a detailed hygiene assessment. The audit report will be submitted to FSSAI, Delhi, to generate a score in terms of ‘bad,’ ‘good,’ ‘very good,’ or ‘excellent.’ The score will be displayed on the door of restaurants.

Aug 28, 2018

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Janjira hotel in Navi peth got a rating of ‘very good’ from the FDA.(Rahul Raut/HT)

You can now walk into the kitchen of your favourite restaurants and check out their hygiene standards. More than 350 restaurants have opened themselves for a detailed hygiene assessment, two months after the food and drug administration (FDA), Pune, in association

with the food safety and standards authority of India (FSSAI), decided to issue hygiene rating certificates to hotels and restaurants in the city.

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Of the 350 restaurants in the city, 10 eateries have managed to get hygiene certificates which have ranked them either "good" or "very good". The 'score on door' project is a way to increase transparency between food industry and its customers.

According to assistant commissioner (food) of FDA, Pune, Sampat Deshmukh, FDA launched this initiative on June 7, which was celebrated as world food safety day. Once the restaurant fills up form for assessment, the FDA assess the place based on multiple parameters including cleanliness, food quality, and overall hygiene.

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"Under the 'score on door' initiative we have initiated the process of hygiene rating to around 1,000 restaurants in the city. Actually this rating is not mandatory at all. However, we have given a target to our inspectors to bring restaurants under this rating system," said SS Desai, joint commissioner, FDA, Pune division.

SCORE ON THE DOOR

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One of the city restaurants that opted for the rating. RAHUL RAUT/HT

Ratings (% score)	
Very Good: 81-100	Good: 61-80
Fair: 41-60	Needs Improvement: 21-40
Poor: 20 or below	

1 Hotel Janjira, LBS road Very good	5 Hotel Aishwarya, Pimpri Good
2 Hotel Sayaji, Wakad Very good	6 Hotel Swaroop, Wakad Good
3 Hotel Blue Diamond Very good	7 Hotel Citrus, Pimpri Good
4 Hotel Taj Vivanta Very good	8 Hotel Kalasagar Good

How does the rating take place?

To earn the certificate, any restaurant can fill a form on the FDA website and open themselves to a detailed hygiene assessment.

FDA assess the place based on multiple parameters including cleanliness, food quality, and overall hygiene.

A FDA inspector would visit the restaurant and verify the hygiene and cleanliness standards maintained in the kitchen and on the hotel premises.

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PARAMETERS ASSESSED

- Cleanliness in kitchen
- Raw material used
- Expiry date of food material used
- Cleanliness in store room
- Health condition of workers
- Drinking water used
- Complaint management
- Fire safety audit
- Preservatives used
- Disposal of surplus food

Officers informed that the hygiene rating should be based on the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 guidelines. Restaurants which will secure higher rank in this rating system will be declared as, 'Top Place To Eat' in the city.

Under this hygiene rating system, individual restaurant owners should apply to the FDA for this rating certificate. Then, the FDA inspector would visit the restaurant and verify the hygiene and cleanliness standards maintained in the kitchen and on the hotel premises. The food inspector would inspect the restaurant under parameters like cleanliness in kitchen, raw material used, expiry date of food material used, cleanliness in store room, health condition of workers,

drinking water used, complaint management, fire safety audit, preservatives used and disposal of surplus food.

However, the Pune restaurants and hoteliers association (PRAHA) is not happy with this initiative. They are alleging that this rating system will entitle arbitrary powers to food inspectors.

President of PRAHA, Ganesh Shetty, said, "Yes, hygiene rating is not mandatory, but such initiatives will entitle arbitrary powers to food inspectors. While applying for the FDA licence, we have already cleared these criterias, then, why should we do the same things again. This is against of the ease of doing business initiative of the central government."

Shetty also said that FDA started the hygiene rating system for hotels and restaurants only. Then, what about 10,000 small eateries in the city? They are also in the business of food preparation. Such hygiene rating systems will definitely influence the decision making process of customers. It will also help improve competition between restaurant owners, added Shetty.

Customers can themselves share their views directly with officials through the FDA website which is being developed as an interactive platform.