

Advertising Standards Authority cans 'best steak' claim

A claim to have the best steaks in Johannesburg's East Rand has landed a popular restaurant chain in hot water.



In case you're wondering, this is not one of the steaks in question. (Image: Wikimedia Commons)

The Advertising Standards Authority has ordered the Boksburg branch of Parrots Restaurant & Coffee Shop to withdraw immediately an advert boasting the best steaks in the East Rand after a customer took the restaurant to task over its "false" advertising.

Johannesburg marketing manager Lionel Schultz also complained that his right to take home a doggy bag was infringed by the restaurant's no-doggy-bag policy. "Surely the consumers [sic] has the right to ask to take home what they have not consumed, as they have paid for their entire meal," he said.

Parrots restaurant franchise manager Marco Benetriou yesterday said the restaurant had done a "comprehensive survey" with its customers about the steaks. But the advertising authority ruled that the advert's claim would be understood as implying that it was supported by an independent survey, but the restaurant failed to provide any suitable documentation to verify this.

It thus had "no choice but to conclude that the claim is unsubstantiated" in terms of the advertising code. It ordered the restaurant to retract the advert immediately.

Benetriou confirmed that the advert had been withdrawn.

The advertising authority found that it had no jurisdiction to hear the doggy-bag-related complaint as Schultz was aware before he went to the restaurant that he could not take any leftovers home.

However, it agreed with him that there was nothing to back up the restaurant's claim to have the best steaks - as the restaurant had boasted in an advert placed in a local newspaper in September.

Schultz told the authority that the steak claim was "false" and there was "no indication that quantitative research of an adequate sample was undertaken".

But the restaurant retaliated, telling the authority: "The claim (about the) best steak is true and accurate, as all its consumers have said that the East Rand Galleria Parrots' has the best steak".

Benetriou added that the restaurant had implemented the "disclaimer" on "no doggy bags" for the past 10 years because of the cost involved.

Source: Business Day, via I-Net Bridge

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