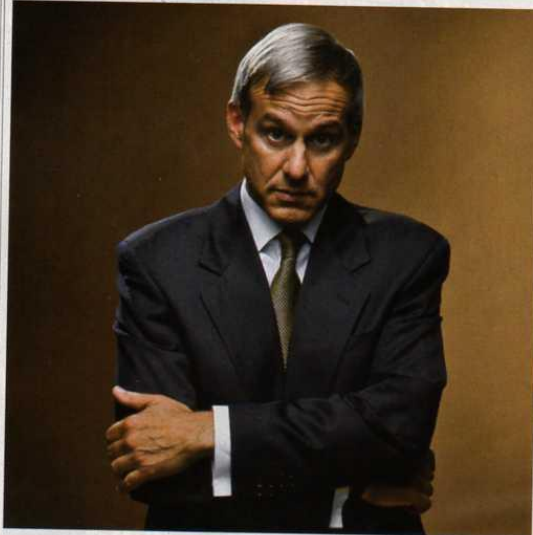


# entertaining

style

## How to get the best table in the restaurant

Always make your reservation directly with the manager or maitre d', says Marc-Olivier Gavin of Decca 77 in Montreal. Specify your needs—a quiet corner to close a big deal, a spot in which to see and be seen—and he'll hold an appropriate table for you. While Gavin says bribes aren't appropriate, dropping the right name can yield results if you must show up without a reservation: "We always keep a few tables open for regular clients. There's always somebody who will call last-minute for their table."



managing

## How to psych out your opponent

Any good athlete knows that the most effective way to intimidate a competitor is through tough body language. So when you're preparing to square off—either on the field or in a boardroom—pay close attention to your non-verbal cues, says Toronto-based image specialist Anne Sowden. Clothes are important, she says: wear all black, preferably a suit, and ditch the jewelry. Assume a powerful stance, such as that of a football coach, with your feet apart and hands on your hips or crossed over your chest. You can also try putting your fingers through your belt loops, which Sowden calls the "gun-fighter pose." "It's a favourite of George Bush," she explains. "It says, 'I got swagger, I'm tough.'" Stand close enough to your opponent to invade their personal space. Look them straight in the eye, don't blink, and don't smile. Pointing with your index finger is always powerful, she says. If all else fails, wave a backwards fist.

style

## How to choose a Scotch

Before buying a bottle of Scotch, above all you must know this: does the recipient like peat? (Peat is a flavour that comes from malted barley being dried over peat fires.) "Surprisingly, a lot of people don't like it," says Ed Patrick, president of Companions of the Quaich, a non-profit society dedicated to the exploration of single malt whisky. "It doesn't agree with their palette, and they wouldn't thank you for a beautiful, expensive bottle of single malt that was heavily peated." Patrick also recommends choosing limited-edition bottles—preferably numbered bottles from a single cask. Exclusivity will often impress collectors and connoisseurs more than a higher price tag will. If you know nothing about the recipient's taste, gift certificates to a local group like the Quaich are a good alternative. Many feature private-order Scottish imports that can be purchased after the tasting.



style

## How to order like a food snob



### LAMB

Lamb should be served rare or medium rare. Local and organic is best. The younger the lamb, the more tender and delicate the flavour. Over the age of two, it's called mutton, and requires slow-cooking to tenderize it.



### STEAK

Instead of size, inquire about the marbling of the steak—that's what gives the meat flavour. A cut that is high in marbling can be cooked for longer without drying out.



### FISH

Freshwater fish, like Arctic char, must be completely cooked through. Saltwater fish like wild salmon may be seared on the outside with a translucent center. Avoid anything endangered, like Chilean sea bass.



### CHEESE

Traditionally, a cheese plate should include a variety of textures and move from mild flavour (like a Double Cream Brie), to medium (try Gouda), to strong (like Stilton or Roquefort blue cheese). Use different knives for each wedge to avoid cross contamination.