

## [TripAdvisor reviewers rave over non-existent restaurant](#)

August 2,

**Oscar's seafood restaurant was one of the quirkiest and best eateries in England. Cuisine there had a special twist.**

**The floating restaurant, converted from an old fishing trawler, employed divers to swim down into the depths and catch whatever fish customers fancied. The catch was then served up with a French flavour.**

**The only flaw – and another twist in a fishy tale – is that Oscar's never existed.**

The English hoax restaurant lived only in cyberspace. A businessman made the whole thing up, according to the Huffington Post in the US, as a reaction to a friend's hotel receiving a swag of negative criticism, which he suspected was from a rival hotel owner.

So he created Oscar's – and the restaurant took off. It was rated "excellent" by seven of eight total reviews on TripAdvisor and ended up ranked 29 of 63 restaurants in England's Brixham area – purportedly acquiring Michelin-star status. The restaurant was said to be located at New Quay Lane, Brixham TQ5 8AJ. But gourmets heading there found just a deserted alley filled with garbage bins.

TripAdvisor's members exposed the hoax by reporting the listing through the site's online help centre.

"With over 70 pieces of content coming in every minute covering more than 2.7 million properties around the world, occasionally a review or business that does not meet TripAdvisor's guidelines may slip through the cracks," TripAdvisor admitted in a media release about the gaffe.

The admission is embarrassing for a company which cops a lot of flak from hoteliers about allegedly dubious hotel reviews. **TripAdvisor wouldn't comment on who created the listing, but news leaked out.**

Here's an example of the rave reviews that Oscar's generated on TripAdvisor:

*"Unexpected"*

*Reviewed July 16, 2013*

*Trying to book a table can be a nightmare, Fridays and Saturdays are booked well in to 2014. Getting a table midweek for two in 2013 is a major achievement. I just wish they didn't close for most of the winter months. Weird too, because this restaurant moves venues depending on the time and tide. It seems to cover most of South Devon at present with future plans to incorporate the Channel Islands. So if your lucky enough to get a booking, check where the restaurant is going to be that night. You might think your booking for Exeter Quay when the boat is in Salcombe.*

*Chef Colette has an incredible sense of humour, her gastronomic inspirations, imagination and modern creations are ground breaking and mind blowing. She seems to be in another orbit to the rest of us. Expect the unexpected.*

Expect the unexpected indeed.

The review went on to give Oscar's the absolute maximum points for value, service, food and atmosphere. As did almost all the other reviews, come to think of it.