

When You're Here, You're Family

An Olive Garden LARP, by Jeff Stormer (@PartyOfOnePod)

Finally, after years of hardship, you have made it here; your home, the place where you will make your stand and raise your families as a community.

Before you sit at the table--while you're en route to the restaurant, while you're waiting for your table--discuss the land you left behind. What you will miss. Why you're leaving. Each person in the party should add one detail about your former home.

When you arrive at the table, you are the first settlers of a new community. Go around the table; each person present should state one value or fact of the community in its early days.

Soon, the waitstaff will come by. Don't involve them in the game, and treat them with respect. [Don't be a dick to the waitstaff](#). Order the unlimited soup, salad, and breadsticks promotion, and choose your first round of salad and soup.

When the breadsticks arrive, time has passed—you are now the second generation living in this community. Go around the table; each person should now describe either one way the new generation has broken from tradition, or one way the community has kept tradition alive. As a table, speak about how the previous generation has disappointed you, and let you down, or how their legends have grown and taken on a life of their own.

When the first round of soup or salad arrives, more time has passed, and you are now the third generation of this community. Go around the table; each person should describe one way the misremembered legends of the first generation has informed the actions of the third. As a table, share legends of the community elders, and talk about how the previous generation has betrayed their values.

When the next round arrives, you are now the fourth generation of this community. Go around the table; each person should share one way in which times have changed, and the values of the first settlers no longer apply. As a table, discuss new approaches to these emerging problems.

Continue this cycle with each subsequent round of soup and salad. Time passes, and another generation comes to prominence within the community. Previous generations become legend, or become pariah. Traditions grow and evolve, or wither and die. The community grows. Values shift and change.

As the breadsticks get eaten, problems emerge within the community. Decide on these problems as a group. When the breadsticks are all eaten, the community comes to a crossroads, and drastic action must be taken. Discuss the consequences for the community, large and small. Savor the quiet before a new basket of breadsticks arrive, and a new problem emerges.

When everyone has eaten their fill, order coffee and get the check. When the coffee arrives, take one final leap in time, to the day when a group of pilgrims decide they cannot live in the community any longer. Each person at the table should add one detail about why you're leaving, where you're headed, or what you're leaving behind.

Get the check. Tip your waiter *extremely* well. And embark for your new home.

A Note From The Author

This is a work of satire, from which I make no money (and therefore, cannot be sued--that's how it works, right?). That said, if you read and enjoyed this game, and wanted to, completely separate from the experience of reading this game, buy me lunch from the Olive Garden (because they WILL NOT respond to my Tweets), you can do so here:

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