Raising the Check Average: 5 Moments, the Right Words

Forget "upselling." **You're guiding, not pushing** — helping guests have a better meal. A bigger check is what happens when they get more of what they'd enjoy anyway.

1 The first drink

Name two drinks. Let them pick.

× **DON'T SAY** ~~*Can I get you something to drink?*~~

✓ **SAY** "Have you tried our house lemonade? We make it fresh with basil. Or we have a nice Pinot Noir by the glass."

2 The appetizer for the table

One starter, by name, to **share**.

× **DON'T SAY** ~~*Do you want any appetizers?*~~

✓ **SAY** "While you look at the menu, a lot of tables start with the _____ to share. They come out fast."

3 The add-on with the entrée

One upgrade that fits the dish. Never three.

× **USUALLY** *Most servers say nothing — the sale nobody asks for*

✓ **SAY** "Would you like grilled chicken or shrimp on that? It turns it into a full meal." · "Our sautéed mushrooms go great with that." · "Add bacon?"

4 Dessert

Describe it while you clear. Show it if you can.

× **DON'T SAY** ~~*Did you save room for dessert?*~~

✓ **SAY** "Our _____ is warm, with _____. It's big enough for two if you want to split one."

5 Coffee or an after-dinner drink

The easiest yes of the night.

× **USUALLY** *Most servers say nothing — the sale nobody asks for*

✓ **SAY** "Can I bring you a coffee with that, or a cappuccino?"

THE FOUR RULES

1. **Be specific.** Name the dish. "An appetizer" sells nothing.
2. **Describe it.** Warm, crispy, fresh, house-made.
3. **Two choices, never yes or no.**
4. **Read the table.** One "no" means stop.

TONIGHT, SUGGEST...

Manager fills in before pre-shift

Drink _____

Appetizer _____

Add-on _____

Dessert _____

+$30 One shared appetizer and two desserts on a four-top ≈ **$30 more on the check** ≈ $6 more in your tip. Five tables like that ≈ **$30 more a shift** for you.