

Diaries of a delivery man

BY LEE DUNN

Some sage observations from my two month career as a pizza delivery man.

? Few people turn on their outside lights at night, which means you sometimes have to do arithmetic and count down from the one house that does have its lights on, in order to find their address. Please, if you order something, I assume you want me to find your place.

? After driving around for five minutes trying to find a house in the dark, I walk up to their door (in darkness) and ring the bell. Someone opens it, and still does not turn the light on. I tell them what the total is, and they present their credit card. Still no lights. I confess I got a little impatient and said "could we have some lights on?" Oh sorry they say. They turn it on, they pay, and then immediately turn it off, leaving me to stumble down stairs in the dark. No tip, presumably because of my poor demeanour.

? I pull up to a big fancy house, with the lights on---yay! It's a \$23 order. They want to pay \$5 on debit card, and the rest in cash. Ok then. But the debit card is declined. She has ten dollars in cash, the rest in coin. Mostly quarters, dimes and nickels. Still short by two bucks, so she calls her husband to come out with his debit card. We do it for two bucks. He looks pissed off, and leaves the scene without comment. No tip.

? Next stop....15 km. into the bush. Long and winding road into their country mansion. I pull up, and am just about to get out of the car, when it seems they have released the hounds. Four of them surround my car with ominous growls. I open the window and say to the lady "is it okay if I stay in the car?" She says oh, they are fine. They won't do anything unless I tell them to. I say I would prefer to hand the pizzas out through the window. She looks pissed off. It's a \$110 order. Tip was two bucks.

? Do not always trust Google.

? If a statuesque blonde answers the door, clad in nothing but a towel, struggle to maintain eye contact and keep a straight face. Even if she says "Hi, Pizza Man!"

? If, when the door opens, some funny smelling smoke drifts out, be prepared for semantic difficulties. (One customer could barely speak, then left me standing there for five minutes while he went to find his phone, thinking he could use his banking app to pay. Then didn't know how to use it.)

? Squirrels are notoriously poor decision makers.

I've enjoyed the ambiance of working in a busy well run establishment. The exuberant repartee of the mostly young crew. Their forgiveness of neophyte mistakes. The hugs they give one another when they leave for the night. The absence of any prejudice, within a crew of different races. Just people talking to people working with people.

The pay stinks, but I think I'll stay.