## 23 Small talk



1.60 Wilbur Meeks is having a business lunch with Marcus Todd, from the Twin Rivers Corporation. This is Wilbur's first meeting with Marcus.

Marcus: Great! Here's the soup. They do an excellent clam chowder here.

Wilbur: So I hear. Now, I wanted to explain more about the contract ...

Marcus: I really enjoy seafood. Have you ever been to New Orleans? That's the place for seafood.

Wilbur: No, I haven't. But, you see, my company will be at least 10% cheaper than anyone else and ...

Marcus: The weather's been great today. I love the fall. The air feels so crisp.

Wilbur: Did you read our brochure, Mr. Todd? We offer a superb discount for ...

Marcus: Wilbur! We can talk business after we eat lunch.

Come on, your soup's getting cold. Anyway, just call me
Marcus!

Wilbur: Uh huh, sure. Yes ... um ... Marcus. I just wanted you to look at page ten in the brochure. I have it here.

Marcus: I can see that. It's in your soup!



- 1 Find out:
  - a What kind of soup they're eating.
  - b Whether Wilbur has been to New Orleans.
  - c Where Wilbur's brochure is.
- 2 Many people only 'talk business' after the meal. What topics would you choose? Decide whether these topics would be suitable or not.

the weather families sports traveling vacations work automobiles music food and drink politics medical problems religion your country acquaintances the news the environment money jokes

3 Think of a sentence that could introduce each topic. Use these phrases to help:

Have you ever ...?
Are you interested in ...?
Did you hear about ...?
Do you know ...?
How do you feel about ...?
Have you been to ...?
Do you like ...?
What do you think of ...?

4 Make a conversation which introduces all the wrong topics. Then try again with the right ones.

Culture File 23 Topics of conversation