

Tip no 1: Interrogate the Quote to Ensure all Costs are Included

It's important to understand exactly what is included in any quotations you receive, and ensure that the cost of crockery, cutlery, table linen and glassware is accounted for.

Tip no 2: Start the Conversations Early

We recommend you begin the dialogue with your caterers as soon as you can as they will help with your questions on timings, your budget, style of food, how it's presented etc.

An initial chat with your caterers can be invaluable to talk about your thoughts on the food, how you want it to be served, whether in a relaxed style or in a more formal way. We love talking to our couples about food and work with you on your ideas and how we can help turn them in to reality!

We want to build up the relationship with our couples as early as possible. Our dedicated team of chefs and event managers who look after our couples on their big day are there to help not only on the day itself but in the run up to the wedding right from initial enquiry. The team will help in delivering your wedding food as you imagined and ensure any personal touches are included.

Tip no 3: Work with Your Team to Create a Wedding Menu which Reflects You

We believe the wedding menu should truly reflect the happy couple and what they enjoy eating. That's why we provide an array of options to choose from. Whether you're opting for a three-course meal, a BBQ, sharing platters, a buffet or an elegant afternoon tea – we can help. Our motto is "anything is possible".

Menus should be seen as a guide to what we can do, not the only thing that can be done, and we are happy to work with our couples to create bespoke menus for them. Our menus are designed to be flexible and if there is something in particular you would like, or a twist or a style of eating that couples would prefer, we can adapt our menus to suit. Being creative with our dishes is such an exciting part of what we do.

100% vegetarian and vegan menus are becoming more popular as well as all gluten free for example.

Tip no 4: Keep it Seasonal

We're proud and passionate to provide fresh, seasonal produce, some of which comes from our farm in the Cotswolds. Our menus are designed with the seasons in mind so we can recommend which menus work well for a particular date. Seasonal, local food always tastes better. Asparagus in November is never quite the same as freshly picked English asparagus when it tastes sweet and succulent! Beautiful vibrant colours showcasing the food of the season is a win-win and is a more sustainable option.

Tip no 5: Get Creative with Canapés & Beyond for Your Drinks Reception

The time of day you are getting married and how long you plan for the drinks reception will determine the number of canapés you should choose. We recommend three per hour.

Canapés are not the only option for drinks reception, and this is where creativity comes in. Think antipasti cones, oyster shells, an ice-cream bike, grazing tables, bruschetta and olive station... anything is possible.

Tip no 6: Take Your Food Ideas into Your Drinks as Well

Think about taking your food ideas into your drinks as well. For example, a delicious English cocktail using edible flowers for a summer garden theme works beautifully. We are always on hand to help guide you on the drinks that will work well with your chosen food.

Tip no 7: Ensure the Food Timings Work with the Flow of Your Day

We recommend two hours for a traditional three course wedding breakfast. However, this will increase if you are offering guests a choice menu and your speeches will need to be taken in to account.

If your timings are looking a bit tight one recommendation would be to opt for a mini dessert station for example, served with tea and coffee. This creates a physical movement for your guests, whereby they will leave the wedding breakfast tables and enable us to clear away the wedding breakfast and turn the room around ready for the evening food.

We have lots of clever ways of using food to help with the timings and flow on your wedding day.

Tip no 8: Plan Dietary Requirements in Detail for Seamlessly Smooth Enjoyment

We are used to catering for a number of different diets and allergens. Once you have chosen your menu, we would work with you and recommend adaptations that will make your chosen dishes work for those with allergies and dietary requirements so that everything looks uniform. When our couples have allergies themselves, we have even designed menus that exclude the allergen for the entire wedding without compromising on the quality or taste of the food.

If you are opting for a menu with choices, you will need to let us have guests' meal choices (including any dietary requirements) along with a seating plan showing where each guest is sitting and their choice of meal so that we can deliver the correct meal to each guest.

Tip no 9: Consider Sharing Your Wedding Menu with Guests before the Day

If you are not opting for a choice it is still worth letting guests know your wedding day menu in advance. This pre-empts non-dietary eating preferences and avoids a guest telling us on the day that they do not eat beef, for example, allowing them to pre-select the vegetarian option in this case.

Tip no 10: Use Your Table Setting to Further Enhance the Dining Experience

Elements of the table setting can help to bring to life the theme you have in mind and further enhance the dining experience. We can help you source vintage or coloured glassware, for example, or coloured linen.

We can also help make the planning and logistics easier, so if for example you want to fold your napkins in a certain way, we can ensure the napkins are delivered to your home in advance of the wedding to allow you to start the preparations early for a smooth and stress-free build up to your wedding day.

Tip no 11: Tailor Evening Food to Your Plans

Depending on the time of your wedding, and if you are inviting additional evening guests, you will need to think about whether to include evening food. We can offer our mini classics - individual portions of fun fast food, like fish and chip cones, to elaborate buffets and food stations.

When catering for evening food we recommend for individual items which are walked around the venue on trays at least one per person. For food stations and buffets, we recommend 80% of guests are catered for. Live cooking is always a hit as it creates theatre seeing our chefs cooking in front of your guests.

The evening food can be as much a reflection of you and your theme, and we can work with you to create the perfect evening food menu.

Tip no 12: Don't Forget Your Suppliers

Your photographer and videographer will usually be there for a very long day and will need feeding. It is worth checking the terms of your contract with the suppliers as sometimes it will state that they require a hot meal, for example.

Band members may require feeding before they start their performance so you will also need to tell your caterers the timing of the meal service of the suppliers.

Berry Blue

berry-blue.co.uk

@berrybluecatering

01453 790669