

# ABOUT CATERERS

Knowledge shared from the [Preferred Vendor Directory](#)

Choosing to work with an independent caterer (as opposed to one that is part of the service staff of a wedding venue) means that coordinating your wedding day cuisine will require you to cope with yet another contract. But it's more than worth it because if there's one detail that wedding guests appreciate more than any other and remember without fail, it is incredible edibles.

Of course, great food is just one part of the wedding caterer equation – brides also need to think about dependability and service. The gorgeous, fresh salads and amazing apps you nibbled at those private tastings are a wedding caterer's way of hooking you, not necessarily indicative of specific meals they'll provide at your wedding. If you want the exact dishes you sampled presented the exact same way they were at your tasting, make sure that's absolutely clear. In fact, make everything clear in your catering contract, from apps and beverages to the main course and dessert to extras like espresso and chocolate fountains to rentals, staff, and fees.

There are two things you should have in mind when speaking to any potential caterers: The first is a general idea of the kind of menu you want to create. Maybe it's an upscale barbecue buffet or a vegan sit-down dinner featuring comfort foods. Maybe you want butlered apps, maybe not. Or maybe you're looking for a perfect pre-designed menu. You don't need to know exactly what you want, but being able to talk about food from the get-go will make finding a caterer easier. The second thing is a basic understanding of food cost, since this will be a huge part of how a wedding caterer will calculate a price quote. Can the ingredients you want be bought in bulk? (Less expensive) Will they have to be shipped from afar? (More expensive) Are they in season? (Possibly less expensive)

Too often, wedding caterer contracts aren't broken down sufficiently, and in many cases, contracts are incomplete, at least in the beginning. That's finding and reserving the best wedding caterer for your affair is something that you should do ASAP, i.e., long before you know how many people will attend the wedding and how many servers you'll need. At that point, unless you've been planning to serve X, Y, and Z at your wedding reception since forever, your ideal menu will still be somewhat vague. Always ask for an updated contract as details become finalized!

It's okay to be dazzled by an exemplary example plate of culinary delicacies, just don't be so dazzled that you hire a caterer that isn't forthcoming with answers to your questions or, worse, isn't interested in working with you to create a comprehensive wedding catering contract.

Smart Hint: When the number of guests attending your wedding changes, call your caterer to get an updated quote. Never assume that the price per person will remain the same, especially when there is a drastic change in the number of guests who will attend.

Once you hit a certain number of wedding guests, your catering costs per person can become inversely proportional to your guest list. As your guest list grows, the caterer can buy in bulk and

ultimately spend less money on more food so in many cases, the price per person will go down. But don't be fooled if you're on a budget – you won't save money if you're inviting a lot more people.