

QUESTIONS TO ASK A WEDDING *Caterer*



CATERER:	
CONTACT INFO:	

The Basics

DO YOU HAVE MY DATE AVAILABLE?:	HOW MANY WEDDINGS DO YOU SERVICE PER YEAR?:	HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN BUSINESS?:
☐ YES ☐ NO		

HAVE YOU DONE EVENTS AT MY VENUE?: <i>TIP: If you haven't booked a wedding venue yet, ask your caterer if they can help you select one.</i>	ARE YOU LICENSED BY THE STATE? ARE YOU LICENSED TO SERVE ALCOHOL?:

WILL I NEED ANY PERMITS FOR MY EVENT? IF SO, WILL YOU HANDLE OBTAINING THEM?:	DO YOU PROVIDE A BANQUET MANAGER TO COORDINATE THE MEAL SERVICE, OR AN ON-SITE COORDINATOR TO RUN THE EVENT?:

CAN YOU ASSIST WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE WEDDING, LIKE SELECTING OTHER VENDORS OR EVENT DESIGN? <i>(e.g. specialty lighting or rentals, elaborate décor, theme events, etc.)</i>

Food & Presentation

GIVEN MY BUDGET, GUEST COUNT, AND EVENT STYLE, WHAT FOOD CHOICES WOULD YOU RECOMMEND? DO YOU SPECIALIZE IN CERTAIN CUISINES?:

DO WE HAVE TO WORK OFF A PRESET MENU OR CAN YOU CREATE A CUSTOM MENU FOR US? IF I HAVE A SPECIAL DISH I'D LIKE SERVED, WOULD YOU ACCOMMODATE THAT?:

DO YOU OFFER FULL-SERVICE CATERING PACKAGES OR IS EVERYTHING À LA CARTE? WHAT EXACTLY DO YOUR PACKAGES INCLUDE?:

DO YOU USE ALL FRESH PRODUCE, MEAT, FISH, ETC.? CAN YOU SOURCE ORGANIC OR SUSTAINABLY FARMED INGREDIENTS?:

CAN YOU ACCOMMODATE DIETARY RESTRICTIONS, SUCH AS KOSHER, VEGAN, ETC.?:

WHAT DÉCOR DO YOU PROVIDE FOR APPETIZER STATIONS OR BUFFET TABLES?:

DO YOU OFFER PACKAGE UPGRADES SUCH AS CHOCOLATE FOUNTAINS, ICE SCULPTURES, ESPRESSO MACHINES, OR SPECIALTY DISPLAYS?:

CAN YOU DO THEME MENUS (E.G. BARBECUE, LUAU, ETC.)? WOULD YOU ALSO PROVIDE THE DÉCOR?:

WHAT'S THE PRICE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PASSED APPS AND APPETIZER STATIONS?:

WHAT'S THE PRICE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BUFFET AND A SIT-DOWN MEAL?:

IF WE HAVE A BUFFET, ARE THERE ANY STATIONS THAT COST EXTRA, LIKE A CARVING STATION?: *NOTE: Don't automatically assume that a buffet is going to be the least expensive option.*

HOW MUCH DO YOU CHARGE FOR CHILDREN'S MEALS?:

HOW MUCH DO YOU CHARGE FOR VENDOR MEALS?:

DO YOU DO FOOD TASTINGS AND IS THERE AN EXTRA CHARGE FOR THIS?:

WHAT TYPES OF LINENS, GLASSWARE, PLATES, AND FLATWARE DO YOU PROVIDE?:

NOTE: You don't want to be surprised with disposable dinnerware instead of the real thing, so it's good to ask.

CAN YOU PROVIDE PRESENTATION UPGRADES SUCH AS CHAIR COVERS, LOUNGE FURNITURE, CHIAVARI CHAIRS, ETC.? WHAT WOULD BE THE ADDITIONAL FEES?

DO YOU HANDLE RENTAL EQUIPMENT SUCH AS TABLES, CHAIRS, ETC.?:

WHAT IS YOUR POLICY ON CLEANUP?:

TIP: Be very clear about what "cleanup" means and who's responsible for handling it—and be sure to get it in writing.

IF THERE IS LEFTOVER FOOD FROM MY EVENT, CAN WE HAVE IT WRAPPED UP FOR GUESTS TO TAKE HOME OR HAVE IT DELIVERED TO A LOCAL SHELTER?:

notes

Cake & Beverages

DO YOU DO WEDDING CAKES? IF SO, IS THIS INCLUDED IN THE PER-PERSON MEAL PRICE OR IS IT EXTRA?:

CAN YOU SHOW ME PHOTOS OF CAKES YOU'VE DONE IN THE PAST?:

IF WE USE AN OUTSIDE CAKE DESIGNER, DO YOU CHARGE A CAKE-CUTTING FEE?:

IF I DECIDE NOT TO SERVE CAKE, CAN YOU PROVIDE A DESSERT DISPLAY INSTEAD?:

DO YOU PROVIDE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND BARTENDERS? CAN YOU ACCOMMODATE SPECIALTY COCKTAILS?

WHAT BRANDS OF ALCOHOL WILL BE SERVED?:

CAN WE PROVIDE THE ALCOHOL AND YOU PROVIDE THE BAR LABOR?:

DO YOU CHARGE A CORKAGE FEE IF WE PROVIDE OUR OWN WINE OR CHAMPAGNE?:

☐

YES

☐

NO

☐

YES

☐

NO

HOW DO YOU CHARGE FOR ALCOHOLIC AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES? PER CONSUMPTION OR PER PERSON? WHICH IS MORE COST-EFFECTIVE?:

WILL YOUR STAFF SERVE THE WINE WITH DINNER?:

☐

YES

☐

NO

HOW LONG WILL ALCOHOL BE SERVED?:

IS THE CHAMPAGNE TOAST AFTER THE CEREMONY INCLUDED IN YOUR MEAL PACKAGES OR IS IT EXTRA?:

IS COFFEE AND TEA SERVICE INCLUDED WITH THE PER-PERSON MEAL CHARGE? WHAT BRANDS DO YOU OFFER, AND DO THEY INCLUDE DECAF AND HERBAL TEA OPTIONS?:

notes

Business Matters

WHAT IS THE RATIO OF SERVERS TO GUESTS?:

HOW WILL THE SERVERS BE DRESSED?:

HOW IS YOUR PRICING BROKEN DOWN (E.G. FOOD, BAR, CAKE-CUTTING, TAX, GRATUITY)?:

NOTE: Be prepared—usually tax and a service charge, which can range 18–23%, are tacked on to your final cost.

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU REQUIRE FOR SETTING UP AND BREAKING DOWN MY EVENT?:

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL FEES FOR SETUP AND BREAKDOWN SERVICE?:

IF MY EVENT RUNS LONGER THAN CONTRACTED, WHAT ARE YOUR OVERTIME FEES?:

WHAT IS YOUR PAYMENT POLICY? DO YOU ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS?:

HOW MUCH OF A DEPOSIT IS REQUIRED TO HOLD MY DATE? WHEN IS THE FINAL PAYMENT DUE?:

WHAT IS THE LAST DATE BY WHICH I CAN GIVE YOU A FINAL GUARANTEED GUEST COUNT?:

CAN YOU PROVIDE A LIST OF RECENT REFERENCES?:

ARE THERE ANY FEES THAT WON'T BE INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSAL THAT WE SHOULD BE AWARE OF?:

ONCE WE BOOK WITH YOU, HOW QUICKLY CAN WE EXPECT A CONTRACT?:

IF WE MAKE CHANGES TO MENU CHOICES OR OTHER ITEMS, WILL YOU UPDATE US WITH A REVISED ESTIMATE AND CONTRACT?:

WHAT IS YOUR REFUND OR CANCELLATION POLICY?:

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