

## Finding the Perfect Wedding Caterer



So here you are, embarking on the journey towards the most important day of your life – your wedding day. It is likely that, from the minute you get engaged, planning your wedding may consume your life, in a good way of course! The venue, the dress, the honeymoon, the guest list, the invites, and last but absolutely by no means least – the catering.

There is no doubt that one of the most crucial parts of the day is the wedding food. Lunch or dinner, budget or expensive, the wedding breakfast (as it is traditionally called) is immensely important. It may be fish and chips from a seaside van for 20 guests, a hog roast in a field for 100, or a sumptuous five course banquet in a palace for 500, but whichever it is, the food really matters.

Most couples are faced with a dizzying array of caterers. And choices. But many of the catering decisions are effected by the theme and style of your day. Informal and laid back? A barbecue in the garden maybe. Formal and elegant? A silver service three course dinner. Either way, the meal is the part of the day where all your guests, young and old, and from both families – bride's and groom's – will sit down, relax, chat and eat together. Oh and listen to the all-important speeches too! Of course, by choosing the right caterer at the very outset, you can be sure a team with relevant skills and experience will be responsible for getting it right, and you can leave this part of the day in someone else's more than capable hands.

As far as finding your caterer is concerned, make sure you do some homework – ask for recommendations, speak to other brides, or to the planning staff at your chosen venue (venues often provide a list of professionals they prefer to work with). Alternatively, ask your photographer, florist and other wedding suppliers whether they can recommend a great caterer. Search bridal magazines, local county magazines and phone directories.

Some of the larger more luxurious caterers such as "**rhubarb**" food design or Alison Price can work in pretty much any space and even in any country, so don't just assume you can't have who you want! Always look for testimonials that might give you a steer on whether this company really knows what they are doing. If a number of brides have recently written glowing letters of recommendation after their big days, then you can be pretty sure a caterer is able to do the same for you. Then, when you've found two or three potential companies, pay each one a visit with your ideas and a ballpark budget.

At the outset, it is very important to focus on the menu – and you can talk to your potential caterers about this very early on. Get them to suggest ideas. Talk about what suits you as a couple, and get advice on what is right for the venue, the overall

occasion and for your guests. If the produce is excellently sourced and excellently cooked, even sausages and mash can be perfect for a wedding meal. Ask your caterer about what is seasonal, and what they think of as their signature wedding dishes. Popular choices still tend to be chicken, lamb, beef and salmon. They're generally well-liked and, if your caterer is any good, they don't have to be boring either. If you want canapés before the meal, when people arrive and drink their first glass of icy champagne, then ask to see a canapés list – getting these right really makes an important first impression and is a great way of wowing your guests before they have even sat down!

If you want to save money, think about serving substantial canapes or bowl food instead of a starter, and a very luxurious chocolate wedding cake can easily double up as your pudding. Think about a tower of rainbow coloured initialled cupcakes – not only are they a stunning wedding centerpiece, but they solve the problem of wedding favours for your guests too!

The wedding day can be a long one, and many couples like to provide additional food towards the end of an evening. It's a lovely idea to serve hot dogs or bacon sandwiches at midnight for example, or if you are having a wedding lunch how about tea and sandwiches at 5pm? It doesn't have to be expensive, but it can make your guests feel really well looked after.

Once you have decided on your caterer, and when you are almost there with your menu, ask if you can have a tasting. When you are spending so much money, it's a good idea to make sure you absolutely love what they will be serving. You wouldn't buy your wedding dress without trying it on would you? This is also a good opportunity to choose the wine you feel best suits your menu and the champagne for the toasts. And don't forget to discuss cocktails, soft drinks and any special dietary requirements too!

Never underestimate how crucial the caterer is to the decorative side of things as well. You may have planned the colour and theme of the room or venue, and certainly you will have given a great deal of thought to the flowers, but what about the plates, the glasses, the linen and cutlery? You may be able to choose the colours and designs. Bridesmaids wearing baby blue? How about baby blue table cloths? Seaside themed wedding? How about shell candle holders? Or pebble placenames? And the staff can even get in to the spirit of things too - dressing up for a 60s themed wedding for example.

Overall, just try to focus on finding a catering company, good [wedding caterers](#) who you feel sure will absolutely make your dream day a reality. If everything is in place and running perfectly on the big day all you have to worry about is remembering every last second of the best day of your life. And that is just as it should be.

- **Author Sara Allom**

**View Source: [Rhubarb Food Design – Wedding Catering](#)**