



## Food & Beverage WEDDING MENU PLANNING AND CATERING – FOODIE TRENDS & HELPFUL HINTS

July 29, 2014 by Guest Blogger

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Every wedding season brings new and exciting trends that either grow and develop over the season, or fade out as quickly as they arrived. One element of weddings that is certainly influenced by trends is your menu. But how do you go about keeping your menu current, pleasing all your guests' palates and staying within budget? Wedding Concepts' Kate Rawbone shares a few foodie tips for prospective brides. While we're on the subject of menu planning be sure to also see her very helpful tips for planning your wedding day bar.



### SO WHAT'S ON TREND?

For wedding receptions, serving large, family sized platters to your wedding guests to encourage social interaction is still very much a hot trend and will stick around for years to come. However, interactive food is reinventing itself based on the concept and produce available from local "foodie" markets. The pre-dinner drinks timeslot has become a fare of goods from local artisan producers, gourmet merchants and specialty connoisseurs. The food is of high quality and presented to your guests in a fun and artistic way. Ice-cream cones and homemade lemonade have both been given a facelift with a side order of nostalgia. Charming ice cream "scoop counters" are popular with a range of amusing toppings with flavours that are seasonal and handmade. Artisanal Butchers, cheese connoisseurs and bread boffins all present their skillfully crafted produce as canapé size portions for your guests to sample, all whilst being on hand to answer any foodie questions that might come their way! The practice of canapés roaming the room does still exist but this time around oysters are being shucked and dressed right in front of you, macaroons are mobile and cleverly dispensed – in the wedding colours of course – and champagne circulates with new style and flair.



## STAYING WITH-IN BUDGET

Although the above sounds like an incredible starter to the main course, too many options across all courses can push your wedding budget up faster than you can think! So some quick tips to keep in mind once you begin designing your menu:

- Don't go overboard with the amount of canapé options. Six or seven different types are more than enough!
- Remember the vegetarians - you may be a carnivore but don't limit them to only olives and nuts!
- Stay within season. Just like flowers, ingredients are also seasonal and their prices can affect the overall cost of your menu.
- Platter styled dinners are fun and give your guests more choice, but this will also push up your hiring costs. Keep it simple and rather look at serving a plated tagine or a curry for each guest and then having small bowls of sambals or salads served to the table to keep the platter look and feel.



## HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR CATERER AND WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK

Whether your wedding venue comes with in-house catering, or if you have the option of bringing in your own caterer - use our list below of how to initially approach your menu planning as some of the same principles would still apply:

- Contact more than 1 caterer so that you can compare initial costing's and sample menus
- When enquiring, give them as much information as you can. Tell them about yourself, your partner, the profile of your guests, as well as your favourite restaurants, recipes and the best foodie memories you may have from your time spent in Greece - the more information the better!
- Don't be shy to ask for sample menus to make comparisons - many caterers have tons saved from previous weddings or events.
- Assess the budget for your menu from the get-go but also be realistic. We all know what a 3 course meal costs, but add to that canapés as well as late night snacks - and you've already got yourself a 5 course menu!

### *Credits:*