

## A GUIDE TO CHOOSING DRINKS

### **Drink Allowances**

We are often asked for guidance on drinks allowances. In our experience, with a drinks reception taking about one and half hours, a formal wedding breakfast and a toast drink, the average overall adult consumption comes to the equivalent of about one 75cl bottle of wine.

The way we generally operate is to recommend a suitable 'best guess' allowance depending upon how you would like the drinks service to be conducted (i.e. drinks for all for the full duration, or one drink per person then they purchase their own, etc.). This will be quantified and assuming you are happy with our guidance this is what we will charge for. Should all of your drinks be consumed on the day we will always have more available should you require it. Conversely if there are drinks left at the end, these will be credited back to you so in effect it is a sale or return arrangement that offers maximum flexibility. It is for you to guide us, prior to the day, as to your wishes and budget regarding drinks. Should you wish for additional drinks to be served on the day we will however require our credit facility form to be completed in advance.

Below is a guide to estimating quantities for the day:

### **Drinks Reception**

Obviously you can provide as much or as little as you wish but assuming the following:

- Duration of drinks reception is approx. 1 ½ hours
- You want there to be enough drinks to last the duration (as opposed to a glass pp for example)

...then we would suggest providing the following:

- 2 glasses pp (1/3 of a bottle) for sparkling wine, champagne, bucks fizz, Elderlinis
- 1 ½ glasses pp (1/2 a bottle mixed) for Pimms, Fruit Punch

You can serve a mix of drinks so the picture can become more complicated!

### **Wine with the Meal**

As a general rule we suggest allowing ½ a bottle per person. If the budget is tight this can certainly be constrained a little however it is relatively rare for this to be exceeded. If you chose a red and white wine of the same or similar cost then we would suggest not specifying how many red and white you want, rather the total number of bottles and we will serve according to demand.

### **Drinks for Toasts**

Toasts are the easiest bit to budget. We normally pre-pour the drinks and serve them from silver trays. One bottle serves six glasses, hence 1/6 of a bottle per person!

### **Soft drinks**

Jugs of iced water with lemon are available throughout the entire day. Generally soft drinks are served to guests during the drinks reception and a good guess is 1 litre per 10 guests. Slightly more if there are lots of kids or it's likely to be hot!

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### **Bar**

We have two bars at South Farm. The main bar is in the Tudor Barn has a full range of drinks and beers on tap. The Outside bar services the garden and has a smaller range of drinks available. Bar service can operate at any stage of the day after the ceremony and we offer as much flexibility as possible. You can specify the following is you wish:

- The bar to be open during the drinks reception
- The bar to be open during the meal
- Guests to purchase their own drinks
- You can put money behind the bar and specify how much, when and what it is for (beer, wine and soft drinks is popular to provide a balance between responsible drinking and being a generous host)

The bar in the Tudor Barn has a card machine for payment. Please note that we will only run one pre-paid tab per event.

### **Real Ale**

We like to stock real ale, and our house beer is Speckled Hen, which we only stock if we have several consecutive events due to its short shelf life. You may ask us to pre order Real ale of your choice but we ask you to underwrite any surplus remaining by paying us the cost price to us, in the order of £1.20 to £1.50 a pint. You may of course take away any leftover if you have suitable vessels. An easy alternative is to ask us to stock polypins (35 pints) of real ale from our excellent microbrewery, Potton Beer. You should let us know at your planning meeting if you want us to order real ale for you and if you wish to discuss the options please contact us.

**Option 1:** *We sell it over the bar at normal bar prices and you underwrite what's left at cost price. We can get Polypins (35 pints) or Firkins (70 pints) depending on what you prefer from our local brewery in Potton. We can sell this as normal from the bar and any remaining pints will be charged to you at cost and you can then take anything left home (polypins are easier to take home as they are portable containers!!).*

**Option 2:** *You pay for the barrel in advance at the full bar price and we serve it free of charge to your guests. You purchase the Polypin or Firkin of ale at the full bar price in advance and we will serve it on a complimentary basis to your guests – the pints would be charged to you at standard bar prices and any unconsumed would be refunded to you at cost price and you would be free to then take it away with you.*

### **Drinks Service**

#### **Water**

We make jugs of iced tap water available throughout the day without charge.

#### **Wine**

As a rule we place open white wines in coolers and red wines on each table just before guests are seated, and we leave guests to help themselves. We then replace wines as needed up to your pre-agreed limits. Unused wine can be refunded or served to guests from the bar in the evening.

### **Toasts**

Our usual format is to pour the Champagne or sparkling wine in the kitchen and serve it to your guests from silver trays. This makes service swift and unobtrusive.

### **Drinks brought to South Farm**

Guests may not bring drink to South Farm for consumption on the premises except by prior agreement and notification. This rule applies to alcoholic wedding favours.

### **Beer & Wine Corkage**

Corkage is offered as an option to provide flexibility to our clients when deciding what they would like to serve to their guests. It does not, as a general rule, offer a cost saving. The fee is not simply for the actual uncorking of the wine itself but as a fee for permitting the bottle to be brought onto our licensed site in lieu of purchasing a bottle from the wine list and to cover the staff costing and providing/cleaning glasses. It is also a convenience charge for receiving, storing and chilling and handling your drinks.

We have pitched the corkage fees a little higher than the average margins we make on wines we supply to discourage the practice. We have to take in stock, usually far more than is consumed, segregate it, chill it and deliver surpluses back. When we have a succession of weddings this is very laborious and puts our refrigeration under strain. The corkage option really comes into its own if you choose to serve fine wines that don't figure on our list, or if you want wines of particular origin, which again will not be available from us. However it is more economical to use our list than to bring comparable wines, unless you have a few cases of champagne under the stairs!

Corkage generally applies to wine and sparkling wines however under certain circumstances we can also offer a corkage service for speciality bottled beer. Corkage for bottles beer is £2.20 /3.30ml bottle (+ VAT)

### **Spirits Corkage**

We are unfortunately unable to allow spirits to be brought on site on a corkage basis. The only exceptions to this rule are if you would like an unusual spirit serving at some point, such as the toasts, in which case it is best to discuss it with us.