

A GUIDE TO CHOOSING MENUS

We take great pride in our catering and concentrate on cooking fresh and largely home-grown dishes. Christine, who is responsible for our catering, was awarded the Greene King Caterer of the Year Award in 2007, and our kitchens have always received Five Stars, the highest rating possible, when inspected by South Cambridgeshire District Council Environmental Health Department and we are now rated as an 'Elite' catering establishment.

Christine has a remarkably wide repertoire encompassing Japanese and Thai dishes, Asian cuisine, Lebanese, Mediterranean and Italian recipes, as well as the more popular modern English Country House style menus. We also conserve all our surplus produce as jams, jellies, chutneys, pickles, coulis and cordials.

This document provides useful info for those who have opted to use South Farm's catering services.

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1. Menu and Wine Tasting Evenings - During the winter preceding your wedding (bespoke weddings only) we invite couples to a complimentary menu and wine tasting to help you choose your menu for the wedding day. We usually have two menu tastings a year, the first is normally in November and the second in February/March. This is something of a gastronomic marathon (we advise eating very lightly during the day!) and as a rule Christine prepares no less than six canapés, and eight starters, main and desserts for you to taste, accompanied by a glass of fizz on arrival and four wines from our list for you to taste. In addition, each item is displayed fully plated as it would be served on the wedding day, together with about a dozen other dishes on display only. Additionally we offer all the other wines on our list for you to purchase at half price to taste during the evening or to take away and try at home. You will be able to experience our food and wine service and see the tables fully laid up.

The only exception is if your wedding is booked at short notice after our last tasting day.

Please note that our menus are extensive and it is impossible for chef to cook tasting plates for every dish so we concentrate mainly on the traditional wedding breakfast menu. This is the most general of our menus with many of the items appearing in other menus in some shape or form but we will have a selection of buffet dishes and salads on display for you to see too.

2. Food Service Styles - As a rule we take warm bread straight from the oven to tables (where applicable) as guests take their seats, so they have something to eat as soon as they sit down. If you plan to say grace you may wish to instruct us not to serve the bread until after grace.

Our standard practice is to staff at the rate of one waitress per ten guests, and to serve each table in full at a time. The waitresses each take two plates, so to serve a table of ten guests; a team of five waitresses will deliver the ten plates simultaneously. As a rule we serve the top table first, and then the other tables in order. We serve the dishes fully plated, except of course for buffets. We have become very slick with our service and can place 100 starters or desserts in about 8 minutes, double that for main courses. For buffet service the time taken is about twice as long, even though we stand behind the buffet and serve every guest each item they choose.

Serving buffets takes twice as long and it also reduces the total seating capacity by about 20 guests, to a maximum of 120. It does of course provide variety and hungry guests may return for more.

3. Budget & Numbers - We have a range of catering options to suit your palate, your pocket and your preferences. All our food is home cooked from fresh materials, which rely heavily on our own organic vegetables, fruit and herbs from the garden, fresh eggs and poultry from the barnyard, pork from our own free range organic pigs, fish from the lake at our Nature Reserve and abundant game from the surrounding estate.

Please note that we do not allow any food to be brought for consumption at events without prior permission, with the exception of the wedding cake. Should we agree to food being brought to site there will most likely be a corkage fee applied and all food must be prepared in a suitable manner. The corkage fee will be approximately 50% of the charge we would make for providing the service but this may vary depending upon the equipment and level of service required. If supplied by outside caterers they must prove that they hold up to date food safety and hygiene qualifications and public liability insurance of not less than £5 million.

If your guest numbers exceed 120 then a buffet will not be suitable due to the space required for the buffet tables. We can seat a maximum of 140 comfortably for a formal sit-down meal. The Hot Buffet Menu is the lowest in price and the Formal Wedding Breakfast is the highest in price.

We can offer some flexibility when it comes to our menus and we are always pleased to prepare other recipes of your choice, subject to written agreement and pricing. You can choose any combination of reception canapés if you want them, one main meal type and evening food as you wish. If you specifically wish to have canapés for your drinks reception but budget constraints will not allow you to do this as an added extra, then there is the option of swapping your starter for 5 canapés per person instead. As an extra treat for dessert you may choose a selection of two or three mini desserts known as dessert Assiette (as the surcharges detailed on your estimate) instead of one larger dessert.

4. Special dietary requirements - We can supply vegetarian, most ethnic and special dietary needs and children's menus upon request not less than three weeks prior to the event. We specifically ask that we be advised of any dietary requirements well in advance so the chef can prepare. The safety of our guests is of paramount importance and we must be advised of any known food allergies that present a risk

5. Menu Choices - Our catering contract with you gives you the option to decide which of the menus on our website you would like. The price is fixed at the point of you signing your contract. This means that if we increase prices in the meantime, your own prices stay the same and you are not liable to any surcharge unless VAT rates change.

Buffets – Buffets work well if you want to give your guests lots of choice, if you have lots of picky eaters or you want a more relaxed meal experience. Tables are invited up to the buffet one at a time starting with the Top Table. Our waitresses will serve the buffet to your guests and they are welcome to come back for seconds. We over-cater for buffets to ensure that the hungriest guest is satisfied, and so that our buffet tables look full and inviting. If you elect to have the Formal Buffet or Evening Buffet option, please note that any food left over is not available for you to either roll over to the evening (Formal Buffet) or to take home (Evening Buffet) due to food standards regulations. We will of course package up any leftover wedding cake for you to collect in the morning after breakfast.

Children's meals - For children who may not require our adult menu options, we offer a wide range of children's meals which you can choose from, this includes a main meal and a dessert. We also provide a personalised gingerbread man as part of each child's place setting. Alternatively if you choose a buffet menu then children under the age of 12 may eat from the buffet at the Children's Meal price.

Dietary requirements - If guests have particularly demanding dietary requirements we request that they list what they can eat. On rare occasions the requirements are so complex that we suggest such guests bring their own food which we will happily serve.

Multi choice menus - Our standard practice is to supply a default menu choice for each course plus any vegetarian options and dietary or ethnic requirements at the quoted contract price. We do have a formula that allows you to select and offer your guests a second or even third choice at each course, in addition to the default and vegetarian options. We make a surcharge of £2 p/guest for those choosing the second choice and £4 p/guest for those choosing a third choice to cover our substantial extra admin and catering costs. To illustrate, if you have 100 guests and you specify roast beef for your main course default choice, and supposing other choices as follows, the costings are:

60 guests choose beef charged at standard rate

10 choose vegetarian charged at standard rate

2 ethnic choices charged at standard rate

3 children charged at standard children's rate

15 choose fish £30 extra (£2 per person as the 1st additional choice)

10 choose duck £40 extra (£4 per person as the 2nd additional choice)

Please note that giving your guests this degree of choice will involve you in a lot of extra admin. We need to know in detail exactly what the menu choices are before raising your final catering invoice four weeks before the wedding day, and we need to have an exact seating plan showing where each menu choice is 21 days before the wedding day.

Traditional wedding breakfast – this is our most sophisticated style of meal. Waitresses bring each course fully plated to the table. Please note that there is not enough space to allow us to bring vegetables in large self-service bowls to each table.

6. Dessert Options - We offer 3 styles of dessert which offer different types of service and price.

a) The standard option is to choose one dessert for all which is then served to each guest.

b) The second option is to have a 'Dessert Medley' where you can choose 3 desserts served buffet style and there is often enough for your hungrier guests to have seconds (your Event Manager will invite each table up in turn to make their selection). There is no additional charge for this format.

c) The third option is to have an Assiette of desserts. You can choose 2 or 3 desserts and these are served on stylish black square plates and are a fabulous option if you want to really treat your guests. This option is served formally to each guest and carries a surcharge which you will find detailed on your estimate.

7. Seating Plans and Children - It is crucial that your seating plan is suitable for the guests attending, and to ensure smooth service. Guests with babies cannot have pushchairs/prams or car seats occupying main thoroughfares or blocking fire exits for Health and Safety and waitressing reasons. We can advise you on the best arrangements of your guests and request that you check with us prior to printing any seating plans to be displayed. Children must be supervised during the meal and must not be allowed to run free, as our waitresses carry hot food.

8. Evening Food - We are very happy to discuss menus with you in detail but one frequently asked question is always how much food to serve in the evening after a formal wedding breakfast. If no additional evening guests join the party it is acceptable to offer your wedding cake + bacon butties & Panini's, or a cheese board buffet. However guests joining the party for the evening reception usually come with the expectation of a fuller meal. We would then recommend our evening finger buffet, serving a full ration to each evening guest and a half ration to each day guest. Please see our Evening Food Options for more details.

9. Wedding Cake Logistics - Delivery and setting up the Wedding Cake is your responsibility. We can supply a small round table, white linen cloth and a silver cake knife on request, but we do not have cake stands available. Cake suppliers can cover this item. We can store the Wedding Cake if you wish for a day or two beforehand depending on how busy we are. We will need to know if it should be stored at room temperature or refrigerated.

We usually cut and serve the cake as needed on a self-service basis, either with coffee or served later with evening food, (but see notes below r.e. special cake services) avoiding waste where we can. If you wish to keep a tier or section for later use, please detail this clearly on your Wedding Planner. Left over cake, cake decorations and any cake stands may be taken at the end of the day or stored for you overnight for collection next morning. We find the left over cake is frequently forgotten, so it's a good point to add to your check list.

10. Wedding Cake Service Options

* **Standard Service** - Our quoted prices for all menu options include cutting your cake in the kitchen after the ceremonial cutting and then serving it on a self-service basis either with coffee or with your evening food at no extra charge.

* **Wedding Cake served as Dessert** - If you want us to serve your wedding cake as a formal dessert instead of one of our desserts we will discount your menu charge by £2 per guest. This is approximately what it costs us for the ingredients per dessert. All our other costs of dessert service (e.g. providing crockery, cutlery, and waitress service, clear up and washing up) remain unchanged.

Serving the wedding cake as a dessert or as a special cheese course is by agreement in writing and constitutes an agreed variation to the options in our standard catering contract. If this is an option that you would like please let us know.

Cheese Stack Wedding Cakes - If you wish the cheese to be served on a self-service basis with coffee after the Wedding Breakfast, there is no extra charge, although a small charge is made for biscuits and butter if required. If you ask us to serve the cheese formally instead of dessert, we discount the menu charge by £2 per guest as above.

Alternatively you could opt to serve your cheese stack wedding cake as an evening cheeseboard. If a traditional wedding cake is to be substituted for a cheese cake then the following applies:

- a) Option 1 - A charge of £2.50 + VAT p/p for crackers, hot bread, grapes, SF chutney, cutlery & clearing will be applied.
- b) Option 2 - A charge of £3.50 + VAT p/p for the inclusion of pate, crackers, hot bread, grapes, SF chutney, cutlery & clearing will be applied.

If cheese cake is in addition to a wedding cake (or is not included in your menu choice) then the following will apply:

a) Option 1 - A charge of £3.50 + VAT p/p for crackers, hot bread, grapes, SF chutney, cutlery & clearing will be applied.

b) Option 2 - A charge of £2.50 + VAT p/p will be applied if the couple want to bring their own crackers etc. This covers cutlery, plates, clearing and staff and acts as a 'corkage' charge.