

5 TIPS TO START CATERING AT YOUR RESTAURANT

Get your restaurant catering game plan in check with tips from industry professionals. This handy guide provides five essential steps to help your catering program thrive.

1 CHOOSE YOUR CATERING METHOD

Select the catering method that best fits your business model and capabilities:



On-Premises:

If you have additional spaces that your patrons can rent out to provide a private dining experience



Off-Premises:

Offer catering platters for pick-up, delivery, or full-off-premise service

2 HIRE AND TRAIN YOUR CATERING STAFF FOR DIFFERENT EVENTS



Before launching your catering program, you need a reliable crew. Catering requires a different skill set depending on the event and space.



If you provide off-premises service, train staff to be comfortable navigating new environments



Train your crew on your menu, service styles, and expectations



Consider acquiring a catering manager to help with the onboarding and training process

3 CURATE AN EFFORTLESS CATERING MENU & PRICE FOR SUCCESS

Your catering menu should reflect your current brand and cuisine style with a few minor tweaks. Catering prices can be charged per person, per pound, or platter.

- Keep your offerings straightforward, simple, and easy to execute
- Provide variety to serve wider client needs
- Consider using your staple ingredients in new ways to manage inventory and maximize food costs
- Catering costs should include delivery, special equipment, staffing, and room rentals



3 MARKET YOUR CATERING PROGRAM

Get the word out about your new venture to entice customers.

- Contact your customer list via email and newsletters
- Post on social media
- Put up flyers in your restaurant
- Update your website
- Have a catering manager reach out to potential clients and help book sales



2 CHOOSE A REPUTABLE RESTAURANT FOOD AND EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER



For a successful catering program, you want to ensure you get exceptional products—including service items—at reasonable prices.

Partner with a wholesale restaurant supply store for your menu ingredients

Buy in bulk to keep costs down while meeting guest counts

Stock up on other catering essentials like service ware, paper products, and cleaning supplies