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The perfect menu

Wondering how to please everyone when it's time to eat at your wedding? One of the region's head chefs shares his tips for creating the perfect menu.

For every bride-and groom-to-be, one of the most important elements in planning a wedding is choosing the food to be served at their reception. Creating an inspired menu that reflects personal tastes, syncs with the theme of the big day and which appeals to an often-diverse group of guests can be tricky to pull off.

Ideally, spend time with your venue, meeting the event planning team and tasting food over several sessions to ensure that the right selection of dishes is made.

Seasonality, theme and fresh thinking are all essential ingredients in creating a wedding menu that is inspired and as memorable as the rest of your day.

"We work closely with our wedding couples," says head chef Richard Bargewell at Briarfields Hotel in Titchwell on the north Norfolk coast.

"Some people choose a menu to reflect their personalities, and that's great, but think about each of your



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guests and be comfortable that every one of them will enjoy what you are serving.

"Seasonal menus work extremely well and while everyone knows what's in season these days, ask your caterers how they use those ingredients creatively."

Richard goes on: "Smoked salmon is a staple for many wedding menus, but we smoke our own fish on site and, in the summer months, combine this with freshly-caught, local crab to create a classic dish with a twist."

He said for 2015 the team is having fun creating 'duo dishes' which extend a fantastic ingredient by taking it in a fresh direction and developing stand-out meals.

"For example, lamb is a perennial favourite for many wedding menus, but we'll combine a beautiful lamb cutlet with braised shoulder of lamb, that has been gently cooked over many hours in a sous-vide until it is meltingly tender. The combination of different textures and flavours creates a sensational meal." >

Food and drink

< Talk to your chef team too about presentation, crucial to create a big impact at a wedding.

Dessert presentation can be particularly exciting. Imagine a fabulous white chocolate cheesecake, piped into tulle, standing upright on the plate and inside – popping candy.

“It was a huge success and guests commented that it was the course that really stood out,” says Richard.

Consider extending the number of canapés so they can double as a starter for guests. That way while the bride and groom have photographs taken, family and friends can enjoy the views at the venue and take the edge off their appetite.

“It does increase the opportunity to get creative with a wide variety of ingredients for a range of small tastes that don’t spoil the main event,” adds Richard.



What will you have?

Picnic, pulled pork, posh canapés, five-course dinner, fish and chips or an Asian fusion? What are you planning to have at your wedding? We’d love to hear about your plans for food.

Write to
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Credits

The journey from menu planning and tasting to wedding day delight was shot on location at **Briarfields at Titchwell**, www.briarfieldshotelnorfolk.co.uk

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