

Module 5 – Menu planning

TERMINOLOGY

A **menu** is a detailed list of food to be served at a specific meal, in a specific order, offered by a food service unit, which inform the customer what the caterer has to offer.

A **cycle menu** is compiled over a given period of time and consists of a number of set menus that are rotated for a particular establishment.

Module 5 – Menu planning (continued)

THE MENU AS A TOOL OF MARKETING

The menu is used as a:

- Purchasing guide;
- Means of advertising food and beverages;
- Form of merchandising and an important marketing tool;
- A design to appeal to the guests and to stimulate sales;
- Size easily handled, spotlessly clean and simple in format; highly legible and interesting in colour and design.

Module 5 – Menu planning (continued)

PRE-PLANNED AND PRE-DESIGNED MENUS

ADVANTAGES

- Good menu planning is practised.
- After planning, there is time for the planner to review and revise menus to meet changing needs.
- Repetition aids in standardising preparation and efficient use of equipment.
- The quality of food is likely to be higher because kitchen staff have prepared dishes before.
- Menus are planned and costed in advance and the manager can quote prices immediately to a customer.
- Purchasing, production and service can be simplified.

DISADVANTAGES

- The customer may get tired of the same food.
- It's a long period of initial planning.
- It may reduce job satisfaction for staff who have to prepare the same dishes.
- It may limit the chef's creativity.
- It may not provide for foods that come into the market at different times of the year.

Module 5 – Menu planning (continued)

STRUCTURE OF THE MENU

Several aspects to consider when drawing up a menu include:

- Length;
- Design;
- Language; and
- Presentation.

Module 5 – Menu planning (continued)

FOOD COMBINATION WHEN PLANNING A MENU

When planning menus, one must visualise how the food will look on the plate and sense the combinations of food presented, how the flavours will combine, and whether there is a contrast in texture, shape and consistency.

Module 5 – Menu planning (continued)

ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATION PRIOR TO PLANNING THE MENU

- Location of the establishment and competition in the locality;
- Suitability of a particular establishment to a particular area;
- The type of people to cater for and customer requirements;
- Number of items and price range of menus;
- Space and equipment in the kitchen and supplies and storage;
- Seat turnover and spending power of customers;
- Capability and amount of labour.

Module 5 – Menu planning (continued)

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN COMPILING A MENU

- Type of establishment;
- Type of customer;
- The religious rules if applicable;
- Meat and non-meat preferences;
- Timing;
- Pricing;
- Number of courses;
- Appropriate language;
- Nutritional balance;
- The occasion;
- The menu;
- Leftover foods.

Module 5 – Menu planning (continued)

TYPES OF MENU

- Table d'hote menu;
- À la Carte menu;
- Plat du jour;
- Special function menu;
- Breakfast menu;
- Brunch menu;
- Lunch menu;
- Buffet menu;
- High tea;
- Dinner menu;
- Supper menu;
- Room service menu;
- Canteen menu;
- Cycle menu.