

---

## **UNIT 3 CATERING MANAGEMENT: FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

---

### **Structure**

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Catering: An Integral Element of Event Management
- 3.3 Hygiene, Sanitation and Safety
- 3.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.5 Keywords
- 3.6 References and Suggested Readings
- 3.7 Check Your Progress - Possible Answers

---

### **3.0 OBJECTIVES**

---

Management of food and beverage (F&B) is a necessity as well as an art when it comes to events. In this Unit we will be focusing on planning and preparation of a food corner, the serving of F&Bs, and other aspects of catering management for events. It is to be noted that F&Bs are an integral aspect of an event and many a times may be the primary focus. Likewise the arrangement of food layout at the event venue has to be given serious consideration by the event planner. This Unit will focus on all aspects of catering management in events. After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand catering management for food and beverage service in events;
- Learn about the different types of catering operations;
- Understand the importance of types of event catering;
- Discuss the importance and functions of menu designing;
- Identify the different types of food service in catering management; and
- Know the importance of hygiene, sanitation and safety in catering management.

---

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

---

The professional event manager must understand the function of Food and Beverage (F&B) within the purpose of the event, and must also meet the expectations of the event in terms of F&B service. For this purpose, catering management has to go along with the theme and type of the event. If not properly planned, the goals of an event may not be fulfilled. Whether the event is a small birthday party, a large fundraiser gala to attract donors and sponsors to the charity organization, a big fat Indian wedding or even a seven course banquet honoring a visiting head of the state, the right food as well as beverage choice and service can facilitate the achievement of an event's goals and objectives.

---

## 3.2 CATERING: AN INTEGRAL ELEMENT OF EVENT MANAGEMENT

---

Catering in the context of events is the activity of providing F&B. It has evolved over the years and has become an artistic affair which is aesthetically and scientifically done to create an experience. Management of catering applies to the functions of planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling for achieving the goal of effective catering.

### **Catering Management in Events: An Overview**

Catering varies from the provision of fast food or snacks at the food counter or canteen to a full silver-service dining for clients. Contemporary catering at events offers not just an innovative menu but a creative presentation of the menu leading to an effective catering design with an additional component of hospitality service, appealing to the senses of event attendees. Catering management thus, covers all aspects of catering business, menu and food planning, procurement of material and arrangement of other logistics, preparation of food on time, aesthetic display of prepared food and hospitality service to meet all (personal, social, cultural, emotional, aesthetic) needs of the guests.

Catering is based on the type, purpose, scope and objective of the event. Some events require a supply of prepared food on a pre-decided time at the venue for the guests; while others may require setting banquets, cafeterias, cooking centres, setting of temporary kitchens, aesthetic display of food items, innovative plating of food and also personal food service to the guests at the venue. Depending upon the role and scope of catering at events different levels of catering have evolved. While organizing for F&B service, the event manager must determine the following functional needs to create an attractive, efficient and cost-effective catering design: (i) *Who must be fed and why*: this includes the number and demographics of guests/attendees/stakeholder groups, for the purpose of sustenance, energy, attentiveness, hydration, refreshment; (ii) *What must be fed to them*: This comprises of food varieties, meal type, special foods / diets, variety, nutrition, and budget; (iii) *When to feed them*: this includes the time, positioning within the program schedule, speed of food service, trickle/dump arrival; and (iv) *Where must the guests be fed*: at on/off- premise, board room, open lawn, tent, back-stage, break area, and standing / sitting / strolling.

The function of ‘why they must be fed,’ as mentioned above underlines the fact that besides fulfilling the prime need of hunger, food serves various other functions to facilitate the accomplishment of event objectives. Catering designs and types of F&Bs served at events are determined by the functions the event manager wants the food service to fulfill at the event. For example at a corporate event, the event manager might organize a stand-up style of service with most of the food items being finger foods, which allow participants to gain their energy levels and at the same time allow the participants to mingle with each other, which is a requisite before the forthcoming session. In events that feature a particular element, such as a gala dinner, organisers should ensure that the seating layout for the event suits the clients. The symbolic coming together around a table, or in a venue, to share food is usually pleasurable, highlighting the strategic role of food to promote socialization, communication and networking at events.

Silvers has identified seven functions of F&B service. These are: satisfying hunger, raising alertness, enhancing an image, increasing attendance, enhancing performance, encouraging interaction, and sustaining attendance (Fig.3.1).

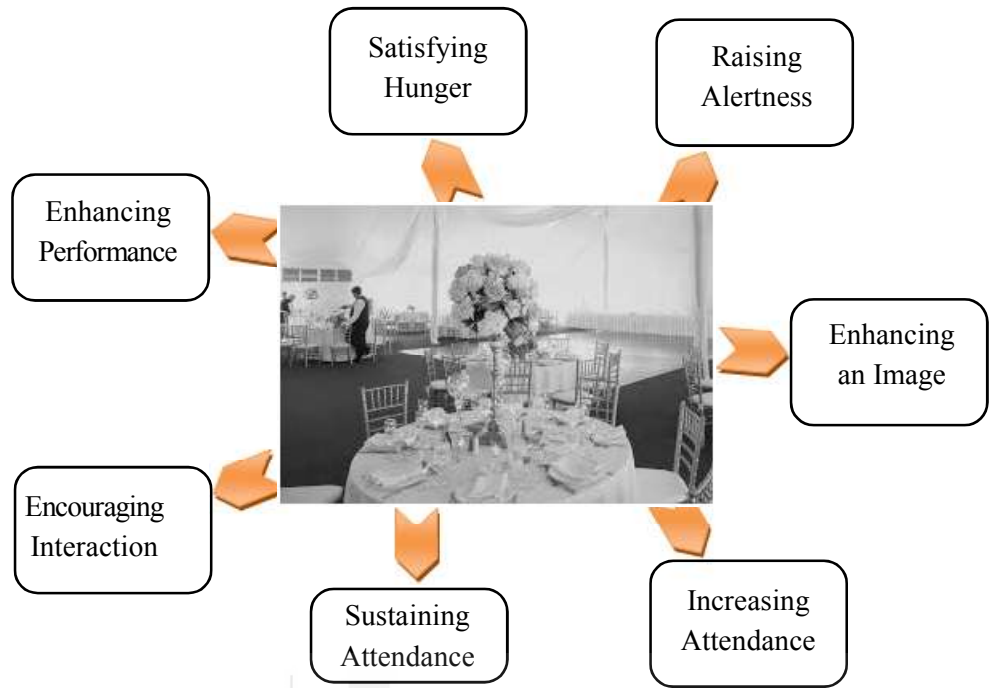
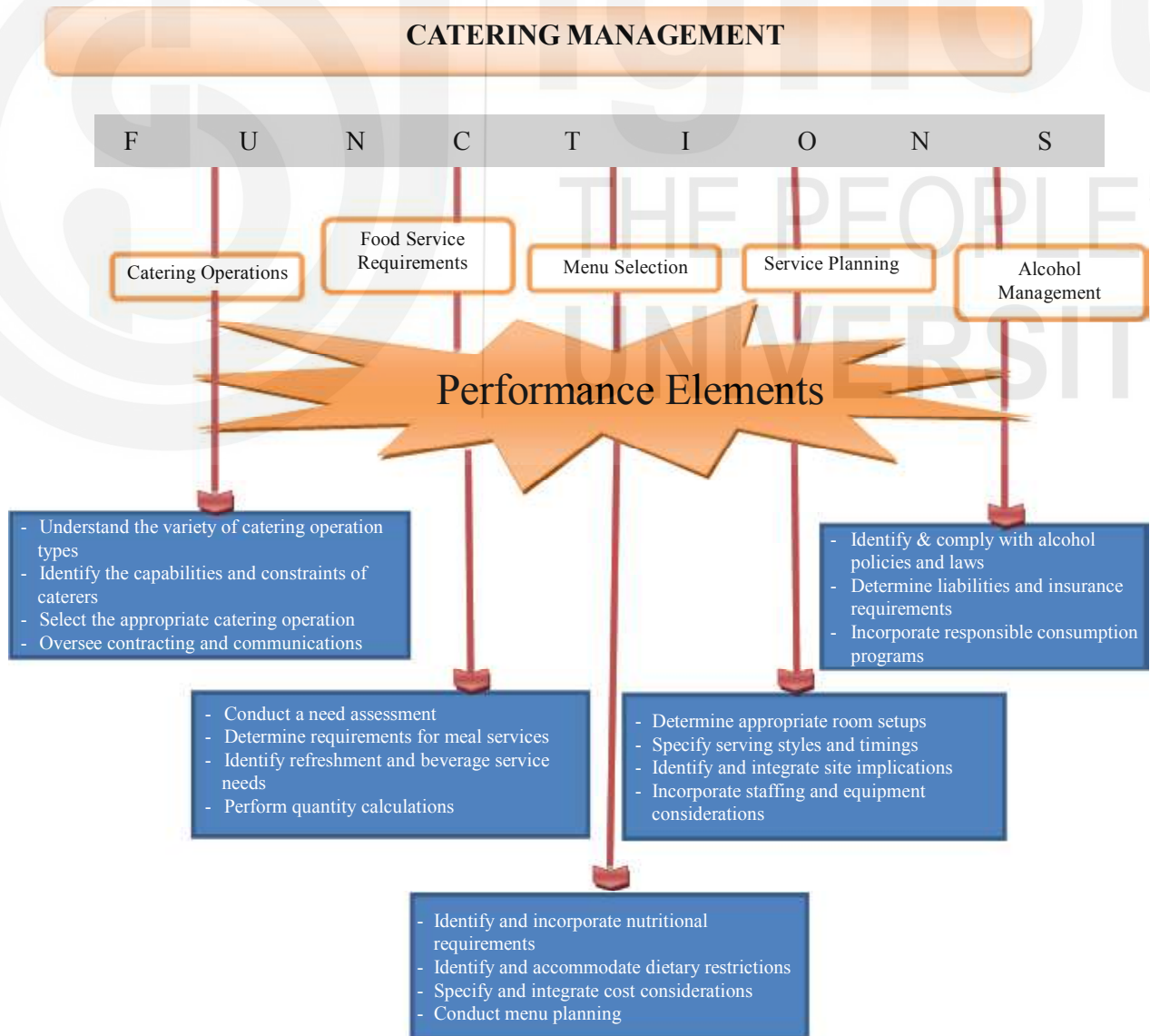


Fig.3.1: Functions of Food and Beverage Service

Source: Silvers (2004)



to meet the F&B needs of the event. Sometimes the event manager is also required to plan the meeting of specific requirements with regard to alcohol management. Fig.3.2 shows the major functions under catering management and the performance elements associated with each function. These functions are catering operations, food service requirements, menu selection, service planning and alcohol management.

### Catering Operations

Catering operation refers to the type of caterer selected for the event. Catering operation used by the event manager may be an *in-house (On-premise) catering operation* or an *independent provider (Off-premise) catering operation*. In catering management the function of catering operation involves four major activities as shown in Fig.3.2. These activities are:

- 1) *Understand the variety of catering operation types*
- 2) *Identify the capabilities and constraints of caterers*
- 3) *Select the appropriate catering operation*
- 4) *Oversee contracting and communications*

On-premise catering operations may have an in-house department at the venue, that is, on-site kitchens involved in food preparation and hence there will be food service as well. In off-premise catering operations, there are independent food providers who prepare the food at an off-premise location, which is then transported to the event site where the food service will actually take place. As highlighted by activities 1 and 2, the event manager decides upon the catering operation based on the research conducted to find best offers in menus, prices, services and experience to meet the specific needs and nature of the event in terms of time, money, infrastructure, manpower and expectations of the stakeholders. Whether it is on-premise or off-premise catering operations, they have their own limitations and demand a different approach when it comes to food preparation and food service. For instance, in off-premise catering, the food items are selected keeping in view the ease with which food items can be transported. Also, in off-premise catering operation, the estimation of quantity requires more accuracy than in on-premise catering operation since it would be difficult to obtain food at the last minute. However though the on-premise catering operation doesn't demand high accuracy in quantity estimation and also provides a wider range of food items for the event, it is not economical for small gatherings.

The next two activities under catering operations are selecting and contracting the caterer. Thorough research enables the event manager to identify the caterer, who is able to meet the specifications of the event and the criteria for budget, menu, services and experience. The process demands intensive research because not every caterer possesses the capacity to take charge of F&B management in every event. For example, a caterer who is well experienced in organizing food service at a corporate event may not do well when it comes to organizing lunch for a wedding.

Selection follows formulation of a proper agreement. The event manager thus, must carry the knowledge of existing catering contract policies standards to negotiate well at the time of agreement. The catering contract should include:

- Date, time and location of the event
- The event's starting, ending and serving time
- Number of guests (minimum and maximum number of guests)
- Food and beverages selected
- Staffing levels
- List of charges including equipment, F&Bs, setup charges, refund and cancellation policies, taxes, deposit policies etc.
- Insurance, licenses and permits

### **Food Service Requirements**

The function of food service requirement (refer Fig.3.2) involves the activities of:

- 1) *Conducting a need assessment*
- 2) *Determining the requirement of meal services*
- 3) *Identifying refreshment and beverage service needs*
- 4) *Performing quantity calculations*



**Fig. 3.3: A Table Arrangement**

The event manager assesses the need for different meals such as breakfast, lunch, dinner or just a snack to be included in the event. Since, the food serves much more than to just satisfy hunger, the need of food service, type of F&Bs, and catering design at any event are determined by the functions they are expected to fulfill. A review of Fig.3.1 tells us that there are various functions performed by food service besides satisfying hunger. Sometimes different stakeholders involved in the event need to be attended separately for food service. For instance, in an event the VIP, sponsors and clients may have a special dining service while the participants may be served food packets. At times the event manager may arrange for purchasable meals for the attendees and staff. Irrespective of the type of food service selected for the event, the event manager must ensure the quality, cost effectiveness and adequate quantity.

Kitchen or preparation tents or any other enclosed area will be required to create and accommodate the catering operations when operating on-premises. Sufficient power and fuels will be required to operate equipments, stoves and grills. There should be sufficient space to conduct preparation, cooking, assembling and plating

operations. Whether on-site or off-site, catering operations should supply service ware, dishes, plates, cups, cutlery, glasses, tables, chairs and linens. Independent or off-site caterers usually itemize these separately in their quote and hence while contracting, the event organizer must confirm this. Upgraded versions of these items such as expensive silverware or decorative china for more formal events are also available.

**Check Your Progress I**

**Note:** Use the space provided for your answer

- 1) Explain the concepts of catering and catering management? What are the functional needs that the event manager must ascertain to create an attractive, efficient and cost-effective design?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

- 2) Name the seven functions of F&B service as given by Silvers.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

- 3) What are the conditions involved in on-premise catering and off-premise catering?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

- 4) List the items in a catering contract.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5) What kind of activities are involved while ascertaining food service requirements?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

6) Differentiate between catering management and catering operation by giving suitable example.  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Menu Selection**

Menu is a detailed list of all foods and drinks planned to be offered by a food service provider. The word ‘menu,’ like much of the terminology of cuisine, is French in origin and derives from the Latin word ‘minutus,’ meaning made small. Depending on the type of set up and the event, menus vary in the number of foods and categories of foods. Menu planning requires wide knowledge of food, their availability, their cost and also the various ways in which food can be prepared and served to the guests.

A menu planning done by giving thought to all aspects of the event including the very purpose, as well as guests’ preferences, can be the pillar of success of events. The main categories of foods within a typical menu are 1) Specialities / Signature Dishes, 2) Snacks, 3) Soups, 4) Main Courses, 5) Desserts and 6) Drinks (non-alcoholic, hot, or alcoholic). Menu selection process involves the following functions:

- 1) *Identify and incorporate nutritional requirements*
- 2) *Identify and accommodate dietary restrictions*
- 3) *Specify and integrate cost considerations*
- 4) *Conduct menu planning*

Selecting the menus for various F&B services at an event will be coordinated between the client, the chef, and the event manager. Menus must meet the nutritional needs of those consuming the F&Bs, as well as meet the goals, objectives, and purpose of the event. Menu planning is an art that involves knowledge, thought, insight, creativity and initiative. Before actually writing down the items on the menu, every planner must consider the basic factors important to the situation and the guest for whom the menu is planned. The important points which should be considered while designing menu are:

**Type of Event:** The type of event for which the catering service is being arranged plays a role in deciding the type of catering menu. The catering menu must go down with the purpose of the event. For example, the type of menu planned for a theme wedding will be entirely different from the menu of any formal convention or a corporate award function.

**Guest Preferences:** Knowing the profile of the event attendees / guests will help design a specialized catering menu. This is especially important while deciding on arranging the type of menu and deciding on considerations based on age, health consciousness, regional preferences etc. For example, a guest from overseas cannot be served only Indian cuisines. The event organizer should plan for a cuisine which can satisfy food preferences of all type of the guests.

**Menu Choices:** It is always recommended to provide choices on the catering menu so that the guests will be able to opt for the food item according to their preferences. Variations may be included in salad dressings, appetizers, desserts, beverages, etc. to satisfy all kinds of guests. Different cuisines add not only a variety to the items presented for the guests but they try to satisfy the hunger of all expected guests for that particular event.

**Event Schedule:** Foods that will be arranged and served also depend upon the time of serving. According to the time, the catering menu will differ as well. One can choose from box lunches, plated meals, buffets, cocktail receptions or working brunches depending upon the time when the event is organized. If the event is between 5 to 7 o'clock in the evening, the host has to serve snacks, and not dinner.

**Special Needs including Dietary Restrictions:** Special needs for the catering menu design should be anticipated. It may be restrictions based on diet, religion, ethnicity, food allergies (such as gluten and lactose intolerance), digestive problems and other disorders. Foods which can be easily consumed and digested by the youth and adults may not be sometimes suitable for aged guests. Some guests may need access to the refrigerator for medicines and water frequently. Consideration on certain religious dietary laws such as caste-specific Hindu (vegetarian and non-vegetarian), Muslim (halal), Jewish (kosher) and other religious dietary laws, will require exclusion of certain foods from the menu and restrictions in food preparation methods. Guests suffering from some known disorders like hypertension and diabetes should be considered while serving foods. Diabetics would require food preparations having low carbohydrates, whereas the hypertensive would require low salt foods or low sodium foods.

**Presentation of the Food:** Food continues to play a key role in the twenty-first century event experience. The production methods, budgets, types of menu, service styles and consumer expectations have changed during the past few centuries, but many of the core values related to giving and receiving hospitality remains the same. One of the values is presentation of food. The presentation of food and right food service style counts on the appeal of a meal. Visually colorful and appetizingly aromatic foods with appropriate food service style make the guests want to have the food. The table linens and decorations must also compliment the theme of the food. However, presentation and serving of food is very important. Creating ambience by the sitting décor, colour combinations of surroundings and a pleasing welcome to the food section are equally important for the success of event catering.



**Budget:** Lastly, the budget is a deciding factor in the event catering service. The event manager has to discuss in detail with the caterer about the arrangements and services, and also make sure that there are no hidden charges that may be accounted to the bill.

**Menu Planning Considerations**

Proper positioning of meal and the selection of right food items to be served in that meal serve the very purpose of the meal. Table 1. lists down the considerations to be kept in mind during menu planning.

**Table 1: Considerations while Planning Menu for Events**

<b>Meal Function</b>	<b>Meal Consideration</b>	<b>Menu Recommendation</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	Provide energy and fuel the brain for morning activities; limit fats and sugars that provide temporary lift and sluggish after-effects.	Proteins, whole grains (cereals and breads), dairy, fresh fruits.
<b>Breaks and Refreshments</b>	Refresh, motivate, and relieve boredom; include hot and cold beverages for hydration, hand-held portions, chewy foods (chewing has been proven to be a de-stressing and relaxing action).	Whole fruits, muffins, energy bars, nuts, dried fruits, cookies, raw vegetables with dip.
<b>Luncheon</b>	Refueling and re-energising for afternoon activities; avoid heavy meals that will make people drowsy or sluggish.	Proteins followed by complex carbohydrates; hearty salads with protein are popular
<b>Reception</b>	Circulation of guests preceding or replacing dinner, usually with alcohol service or soft drinks; avoid too many salty foods that would increase alcohol consumption; foods should be bite-sized.	Pre-dinner functions offering appetizers and receptions meant to replace dinner must have sufficient quantities and varieties of food.
<b>Dinner</b>	More elaborate meal with fewer time constraints, often including several courses including a rich dessert or a variety of deserts; broad latitude with theme and style.	Often includes soup and/or salad course, meat/fish, starch, vegetable, bread, rice, cheese and/or dessert course, followed by coffee/tea.
<b>Concessions</b>	Refueling and refreshments as a profit center.	Snack or comfort foods, sandwiches, beverages.

**Source:** Adapted from Silvers (2004)

Adequate planning and preparation is necessary to ensure good menu so that the purpose of event catering is served. The overall menu should have a pleasing balance of flavors, textures, colours and taste. A customized catering menu is being increasingly preferred by event companies who arrange for event catering service. When choosing catering service for an event, make sure that the catering menu is specifically tailor-made to guests’ preferences. Designing of menu should be systematic and must follow certain steps:

- Decide on the menu pattern suitable for the event purpose and meal function
- Decide on degree of flexibility to be incorporated
- Write down the main dish and plan side dishes around it
- Match starter and salad
- Decide on the dietary restrictions and special needs if any
- Selection of desserts should relate to the main course

Event creators are beginning to acknowledge the fact that good nutrition, provided through food and refreshments in events, can help in achieving long term health benefits for participants, while also resulting in better attention, performance and alertness at the event.

**Types of Menu:** There are different types of menu available in the food and beverage service industry which may or may not be suitable for all kinds of events. Menu can be categorized based upon selection (selective or non-selective), frequency of usage (single use and cyclic) and methods of pricing (A la Carte menu, Table d Hote, and Du Jour).

Types of menus which are commonly used in the food service operations are (i) A la Carte menu (ii) Table d Hote menu (iii) Combination menu (iv) Cyclic menu (v) Du Jour and (vi) Single-use menu. The categorization of the menus is based on the requirements of the commercial set up, which may or may not be used as such for all event purposes. But for any special event, these different kinds of menus can be used singly or in combination depending upon the requirements of the event, because menu planning is different for different sets of event. Let us discuss each one separately focusing on the usability of the menu for the various events.

#### i) A la Carte Menu

‘A la carte’ is a French term and means according to the card or order. In this menu, the guests may select separately to compile their menu. This is basically a choice menu and offers choice of dishes or items for the guests under each food category namely starters, soups, main dishes, side dishes, salad, desserts, sandwiches, snacks and beverages. This type of menu is used extensively nowadays in different kinds of events because of its suitability to the preferences of guests. A la Carte Menus may range from being limited to a few items such as in informal family functions to being extensive in case of high profile weddings, providing waiter service. Advantages and disadvantages of this type of menu have been listed below.

Advantages:

- Guests have extensive choice to choose from.
- Guests can take dishes which they like.
- Needs of children, the aged and others can be catered to.
- Freshly cooked food can be offered easily.

Disadvantages:

- Needs more kitchen space, kitchen and service equipment.
- More space is required to be done.

- Requires more kitchen staff.
- Work load of the kitchen and service staff is not evenly distributed.
- More food wastage is there.
- Food costs cannot be controlled, as the guest's preferences cannot be predicted.

ii) Table d Hote Menu

This is also a French term and means table of the host. This menu is a set menu, in which a number of dishes are planned by the host. A limited choice may be given for each course or between courses. Foods are prepared before hand and are available at a set time. This type of menu used to be very popular in traditional Indian parties where fixed 'thali' menu was served. In fact in some parts of the country, this type of menu is still used. But as the event industry is growing today with events witnessing the presence of an international, diverse, prestigious and demanding clientele with food preferences, this type of menu has limited use. Advantages and disadvantages of this type of menu have been listed below.

Advantages:

- Less kitchen space and service equipments are required.
- Less space arrangement is required to be done.
- Less labor is required, as the number of dishes is limited.
- Less food storage space required.
- Food wastage is minimal.
- Food cost is easier to control.

Disadvantages:

- Choice for the guest is limited.
- Fixed amount has to be paid by the host to caterer, irrespective of the dishes consumed.
- Needs of children, old aged and others cannot be catered to.

iii) 'Carte du Jour' and 'Plat du Jour'

'Carte du Jour' means card of the day. It is a special menu for a particular day. 'Plat du Jour' means plate of the day. These menus signify its utility in the commercial set up. This type of menu alone cannot fulfill the need and purpose of any event. This menu in combination with A la Carte can be used for any event by providing the attraction / specialty of the day.

iii) Combination Menu

Combining two types of menu, as discussed earlier for A la Carte and du Jour can serve the purpose of some event like new year celebrations, carnivals, fundraisers and so on. Similarly Table d Hote menu with in-built choices as far as possible can fulfill the needs of some events. This type of combination menu can be used in events like conferences, seminars etc. where guests have less time to choose their dishes but need to satisfy their hunger as well as nutritional needs.

iv) Cyclic Menu

This is a menu which changes every day for a certain set of days (say for a week) before the cycle ends. This type of menu does not have any relevance for event purpose. After the completion of the cycle, a new set of menu is prepared and followed, keeping in mind the seasonal availability of dishes. This type of menu can be planned for educational and training workshops which are carried out for several days and need catering.

**Check Your Progress II**

**Note:** Use the space provided for your answer

- 1) Name the important aspects that should to be considered while designing the menu.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

- 2) Why is it essential to have proper positioning of meal and the selection of right food items to be served in that meal? Explain by giving details of menu recommendations with respect to meal consideration.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

- 3) Describe 'A la Carte' Menu. Enlist advantages and disadvantages of A la Carte Menu.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Service Planning (Food Service Style)**

Service planning or food service style is the manner in which the food is presented to guests at an event and affects their impression to a large extent. Food service style in turn gets affected by the budget, time allotment for food function, purpose /objectives of the event, needs of guests and spatial availability. Food Service Style thus plays a crucial role in the success of any event whether small or big. The function of food service planning includes the following activities:

- 1) *Determine appropriate room setups*
- 2) *Specify serving styles and timing*
- 3) *Identify and integrate site implications*
- 4) *Incorporate staffing and equipment considerations*

Whichever food service style is opted for the event, the aim is to satisfy the guests with food of good quality, served in an attractive manner at correct temperature, and with food safety, for acceptability. The style of food service selected should be as per the particular type of food service operation and should contribute towards achieving the objectives of the event. The event manager together with the caterer can choose those that may be less expensive (cost effective), entertaining and can contribute significantly to guest satisfaction. The type of food service method chosen by the event manager together with caterer would basically depend on the following factors:

- type of establishment
- type of food or menu being served
- cost of the meal or food
- time available for the meal
- type of guests
- number of guests expected
- availability of skilled serving staff

Food can be served in many ways and no service style is better than another - the appropriate style for a particular event depends on the purpose, goal and objectives of the event and the needs of the attendees being served. Certain styles require highly trained staff, and others require specialized equipments. Certain styles facilitate circulation whereas others communicate formality and elegance. Service styles requiring more or highly trained staff may cost more than self service because of labor cost. Self service style, however requires more food per person, because it is not known who will eat how much of what food item. Certain foods are not suitable for preset or plated buffet service because they will cool off, warm up, or melt while waiting for guests to enter the event or serve themselves.

We are aware that food patterns of different regions in the world are different and so are the food service styles / methods. Sometimes the same style of food service is named differently at different places. The most common methods of service may be classified into three categories: i) waiter service, ii) self service, and iii) vending.

### ***Waiter Service***

This is a formal type of service in which a skilled person / waiter presents the menu to the guests. The tables are preset with napkins, cutlery, water tumblers, salt and pepper cruets and other accessories. The dining area gives a formal appearance and provides an atmosphere of dignity, hospitality and leisure. The degree of formality in a waiter service style varies with each type of establishment, from very formal (in which each course is served in new plates) to semi-formal, in which the starter or soup is served, plates removed, and a fresh plate offered for the entire meal. This is then removed only when the dessert and coffee is served.

The waiter service requires special skills and training, carried out preferably on the job and out of peak service hours. The more formal the service, the more expensive it becomes for management. Waiter services have been described differently in catering literature as English, French, Russian, American or Compromise styles of service. But basically all these styles require one waiter to serve every 8-10 diners / guests. Waiter service has been used in a number of ways depending upon the response and the demands. They are (i) Banquet service, (ii) Restaurant service, and (iii) Room service.

- i) Banquet service: This is the most sophisticated style of waiter service and is usually carried out when the heads of states or of the government are being entertained. It can also be used for small events where sophistication is required. It is therefore extremely formal and calls for perfect etiquette at the table. Meals are served in courses, which may vary from four to six, and the cover is left clean after each course. This sophisticated style cannot be used for the type of events which expect large number of guests such as community gatherings, exhibitions, concerts etc.
- ii) Restaurant service: The objective of restaurant service is to provide an atmosphere for leisure dining to the guests. For events like exhibitions, conferences, seminars, forums, conventions and summits, this type of service is relevant. Temporary restaurants or cafeterias are setup to satisfy the hunger of a large number of guests at the event venue.
- iii) Room service: This type of service is used when the event company has made stay over guest arrangement for events lasting for more than a day. In this style, food is served in the room where the guest is staying. Food is proportioned and laid out on a tray / trolley or packed in a box and presented to the guest. In events like conferences where guests stay for more than one day, room service is required.

### *Self service*

In this type of the service, guests come to the counter, bay or table to serve themselves. This is a very commonly used style of food service and suits almost all kinds of events. There are many types of self service styles, each adapted to the needs of the host and for different occasions. Mainly this has been grouped into (i) Buffet service, and (ii) Cafeteria service.



Fig. 3.4: A Dessert Buffet

- i) **Buffet service:** Buffets may be arranged in many ways depending on the space available, the occasion, number of people eating, and the degree of formality desired. All the menu items are dished out and placed on the table in as attractive a manner as possible. Guests move around the table to help themselves to foods of their choice. Selections usually are numerous and elaborate and eye appeal is an all-important factor in the foods offered.

During the meal hour, proper equipments to keep food hot or cold, as desired are essential. Food served buffet style is popular in many Indian weddings. This style of food service can also be used for almost all formal or informal, small or big events like religious gatherings, product launches, birthday parties, live performances, office parties and so on. Buffets may be classified into three main types according to the menus planned, and the type of dining arrangement desired : (i) Full buffet, (ii) Finger buffet, and (iii) Fork buffet. Important points about these three types of buffet have been highlighted in Box No. 2.

### Box No. 2: Types of Buffet Service Styles

#### ***Full Buffet***

- May be formal or informal
- Seating tables are laid out with cutlery, linen, accompaniments, and water or beverages
- Single or more tables can be used to place whole menu items depending upon the place availability
- Hot foods with rechauds or cold foods can be laid on service tables.
- Guests with their plates go to the tables and serve the food
- For second help, staff may circulate among the guests depending upon the formality desired
- Tables are cleared by the service staff after dining

#### ***Finger Buffet***

- Used at tea time, cocktail parties or festive occasions
- Less use of cutlery for eating
- Informal

#### ***Fork Buffet***

- Informal, used mainly for conferences, seminars etc.
- Completely self help service style
- Used when there is less time for dining

- ii) **Cafeteria service:** Temporary cafeteria can be set up specifically at the event venue site for event duration in events like exhibitions, large conferences, seminars etc. The whole meal is served on the tray or plate. In cafeteria service style, emphasis is given on standardized portions and speedy yet courteous service. This service can be classified as i) Traditional ii) Hollow square / Free flow / Scramble system. In Traditional system staffs are stationed behind the counter to serve the guests and help them in selection of foods as they move along a counter of foods. Menus are fixed, example, vegetarian

or non-vegetarian foods on separate counters/tables. In the Hollow square / Free flow, or Scramble system, separate tables or counters are provided for different menu groups, such as hot foods, salads, desserts etc.

The sections are usually placed along three sides of the provided space for food corner. Guests move from the centre to any section of food they like. Hot foods are held in bainmarie in full view of the guests. Cold foods like desserts, ice creams, and cocktails are displayed in refrigerated cases for selection. Foods are separated from the guests by sneeze guard to protect from contamination. Service staff prepares plate for each individual according to the selection of food items made by the guests from the choices provided.

### ***Vending***

This type of food service is relevant for all major and mega events where menu items like cold drinks, coffee and tea, chips and other packaged foods are served to a large number of event attendees like in exhibitions. Vending originally consisted of a seller or vendor who brought food at the desired place like at home, at the place of event etc.

### ***Food Service Styles used in Presentation***

Food service methods / styles have also been classified as per the way foods/ menu are being presented to the guests. They are (i) table service methods where meals are served to seated guest, (ii) counter service methods where meals are collected by the guests, and (iii) personal service methods in which meals are delivered. Table 2 summarizes different types of food service styles with descriptions and typical use. The table also highlights the different names by which the particular food service styles are commonly known.

**Table 2: Different types of Food Service Styles**

	<b>Service style</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Comments and typical use</b>
<b>Table service style</b>	Plated service (American service)	Pre-plated meals from the kitchen and then served to the guest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good portion control, efficient and economical</li> <li>• Popular for large banquet events</li> </ul>
	Family style service (English service)	Dishes are put on the table where spoons are provided and guests serve themselves passing the container to one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular for casual events</li> <li>• Less portion control</li> <li>• Easy and quick to serve</li> <li>• Suits families with young children</li> <li>• Needs big tables to fit all the dishes on</li> </ul>
	Silver service (Russian service)	Full Silver Service is where the steward brings the meal to the guest who is seated at the table. The plate is placed in front of the guest who is then shown the dish before serving it on to the guest's plate; the main course can either be plated or served to the guest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used at upscale or very formal events</li> <li>• A more personal guest experience</li> <li>• Staff costs are high as it needs more serving staff</li> </ul>



<b>Counter service style</b>	Guéridon (French cart service)	Food is served from a side table or trolley using a spoon or fork. Sometimes dishes are assembled or cooked in front of the customer on a portable cooking stove (rechaud) on a table side cart with wheels (gueridon).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not often used for banquets</li> <li>• Sometimes used for preparing Caesar salads or flaming desserts</li> <li>• Very specialist, skilled service</li> </ul>
	French Banquet service	Platters of food are arranged, guests select foods. The server then portions and serves each food item selected to individual plates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often used at formal banquet events</li> </ul>
	Butler table service	Platters of food are arranged, servers present platters to each guest in succession, and guest serve themselves with utensils from platters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used at upscale elegant dinners</li> </ul>
	Cafeteria (free flow)	A single long display counter but can sometimes be multiple counters. Similar to buffet service, except guests are served by counter attendants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often used for participant meal service</li> <li>• Queuing is often required.</li> <li>• A simple, basic experience for guests</li> </ul>
	Buffet service	Foods are arranged on tables. Guests usually move along the buffet line and serve themselves. When their plates are filled, guests take them to a dining table to eat. Servers usually provide beverage service at tableside. A very elegant buffet would have servers carry guests' plates to their tables for them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular at hospitality functions, social gatherings, and less formal events</li> </ul>
	Food stations	Similar to buffets, but with a different type of food or part of the menu at each station, and with stations located in different places within the event space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used to increase circulation and draw guests to different areas within the event</li> <li>• Used for dessert or coffee stations</li> </ul>
<b>Personal service style</b>	Tray or trolley	An assembled meal provided or a choice of food and drink from a trolley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used in room service for an event like marriage party where guests stay over night</li> </ul>
	Vending	Sold from a machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drinks, snacks and meals can be offered including hot meals</li> </ul>

The event managers can select any of the food service methods from the list or the combinations of methods for their event depending on their budget, place and the need of the events.

## Alcohol Management

Serving alcohol is not the same as serving other foods at any event. Alcohol cannot be served without license and proper insurance and these need entirely a different perspective in catering management. Alcohol management at an event involves following activities:

- 1) *Identify and comply with alcohol policies and laws*
- 2) *Determine liabilities and insurance requirements*
- 3) *Incorporate responsible consumption programs*

Alcohol at any event can be served only when certain points are considered like: (i) selection of caterer who has license to serve; (ii) place of event whether alcohol can be served or not; (iii) kind of drinks to be served, whether hard or soft; (iv) size of serving; (v) trained bartenders; (vi) security aspects etc. Thus, serving alcohol requires a lot of management and implementation of a number of strategies to reduce the risks associated with alcohol serving. As suggested by Silvers, the strategies which a professional event coordinator can employ to reduce risks associated with alcohol service are:

- Use only licensed liquor providers and trained bartenders.
- Always provide food with alcohol service, avoiding salty snacks.
- Do not place bars near the door, but place food stations near the door so that guests will begin eating before drinking.
- Use a portion-control system (Jiggers or Posi-pour dispensers) rather than free pouring.
- Limit portions to 1 oz of distilled spirits per mixed drinks, 5 oz of wine, and 12 oz of beer.
- Do not allow doubles or shots.
- Never allow self-service.
- Close bars 30 minutes to one hour before the scheduled end of an event, offering coffee or other nonalcoholic beverage service for the remainder of the event.
- Do not announce a 'last call.'
- Feature attractive alcohol-free drinks.
- Implement a designated driver program (perhaps offering free non-alcoholic beverages to drivers).
- Arrange for a subsidized taxi or other transportation service to drive guests home.
- Purchase liquor liability insurance for the hosting organization.
- Monitor entrance to the event and issue credentials.
- Arrange for security personnel.
- Provide 'family' or 'dry' (alcohol-free) seating areas at sporting or festival venues.

**Check Your Progress III**

**Note:** Use the space provided for your answer

1) What are the decisive factors for selection of food service methods?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2) Name the different types of Buffet Service styles.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3) Explain briefly the following:

A) Buffet service

.....  
.....

B) French banquet service

.....  
.....

C) Plated service

.....  
.....

4) Write down the strategies which can be implemented by the event manager to reduce the risks associated with alcohol service.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

---

### 3.3 HYGIENE, SANITATION AND SAFETY

---

In catering management right from the beginning handling, preparation and service of food is required. Most of the foods being perishable in nature are liable to contamination, during various stages from preparation to consumption. Contamination of food materials lead to the spread of infection and disease. This affects health of the persons involved in handling as well as the people who consume those foods. In catering therefore, hygiene and sanitation play a vital role in promoting and protecting the health and well being of people in large numbers. Thus, all food service and catering operations must comply meticulously with all health and food safety measures. Hygiene and sanitation in catering management means environmental hygiene, hygienic food handling, and personal hygiene. In addition to this, safety measures in catering operations are equally important.

***Environmental Hygiene and Sanitation:*** For general cleanliness of the catering establishment, preventive measures must be implemented throughout the establishment and all the outside areas, apart from food preparation and storage areas. The entire set up, that is, the building structure, site, equipments, furniture and fittings, should be so constructed and maintained that dust, dirt, cockroaches and rodents have no entry. The working place should be well ventilated and properly lit. Water supply and drainage system should be satisfactory with suitable traps and grills.

***Hygienic Food Handling:*** Foods and food processing areas which basically include collection, preparation and holding areas are the ones which are more susceptible to contamination, as well as to growth of microorganisms. Safety management systems to identify, monitor, and control contamination risks and hazards associated with food borne illness should be established. There should be proper arrangements for collection of waste materials and garbage disposal.

***Personal Hygiene:*** Food handlers are the people involved in the food processing activities from receiving, storage, preparation, cooking and food serving till waste disposal. Personal hygiene refers to all the conditions and measures necessary to ensure the cleanliness of a person's clothes and body, and also working habits of people. Personal hygiene is very important for food handlers to prevent contamination of food. To safeguard food contamination through food handlers, there should be strict rules for their personal hygiene:

- No food handlers should have any kind of disease or infections
- Hands should be clean at all times with short nails and no nail paint
- Illness must be immediately reported
- Leaning and sitting on working table is objectionable
- All staff reporting on duty must be fresh, well groomed and clean
- Food must be handled correctly and as little as possible
- There should be no smoking, spitting, chewing, eating, sneezing or coughing over unprotected food.

**Safety during Catering:** Safety is important in all areas of a catering establishment. Food processing and preparation areas, being the centre of catering operation, are most vulnerable to different types of accidents. Every catering establishment therefore needs to develop a safety policy which ensures protection to property, equipment, materials, and people within the establishment at all times. Accidents may be due to physical, environmental or psychological causes and may lead to falls, cuts, burns, fire, fumes, broken glass etc. Safety regulations need to be enforced through discipline at work, close supervision of all activities in vulnerable areas particularly at peak hours, closing of all switches for fuel supply and water taps when not in use, immediate attention to any kind of repair, regular maintenance and servicing of equipments, and by motivating staff to develop safety habits. We have now come to the end of this Unit on Catering Management. In that next Unit we shall be learning about the significance and use of technology and equipments in events.

**Check Your Progress IV**

**Note:** Use the space provided for your answer

1) How important is safety during catering?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

---

**3.4 LET US SUM UP**

---

In this Unit, we focused on all aspects of catering management. We learnt that catering management is an art which is aesthetically and scientifically done to provide F&Bs at an event for satisfying a large number of people in a cost effective manner. We discussed about the aims, goals and objectives of catering management. Catering operations include all activities relating to collection, preparation, cooking and serving of food and beverages. The type of catering operations used may be an in-house department at the venue or an independent provider at an off-premise location. We learnt about how different types of food service methods / styles can be used for various events purposes. Under menu designing, we discussed about different functions of menu and several points which should be considered for menu designing. There are basically three types of menus, namely A la Carte Menu, Table d Hote Menu and Combination Menu which can be used singly or in combination for any event purpose. Hygiene, sanitation, and safety in catering management, have been discussed, elaborated and its importance has also been highlighted.

---

## 3.5 KEYWORDS

---

<b>A la Carte Menu</b>	:	Choice menu
<b>Table d Hote</b>	:	Fixed menu
<b>Plat du Jour</b>	:	Plate of the day
<b>Rechaud</b>	:	Portable cooking stove
<b>Gueridon</b>	:	Table side cart with wheels
<b>Bain-marie</b>	:	A cooking utensil containing heated water
<b>Beverage</b>	:	A drink of any type other than water
<b>Jigger</b>	:	A jigger or bar jigger is an hourglass shaped measuring device used by bartenders to ensure that they pour accurate amounts of alcohol into every drink
<b>Posi-Pour</b>	:	Posi-pour spouts help bartenders to portion every shot to the amount the event management wants customers to receive

---

## 3.6 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

---

Allen, Judy (2000). *Event Planning: The Ultimate Guide to Successful Meetings, Corporate Events, Fundraising Galas, Conferences, Conventions, Incentives and Other Special Events*. Etobicoke, ON: John Wiley & Sons Canada Ltd.

Robinson, N.S. and Clifford, C. (2011). 'Authenticity and Festival Foodservice Experiences,' *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2): 571-600.

Sharples, Liz (2014). 'Food and Function,' In Sharples, Liz, Crowther, Pjil, May, Daryl, and Orefice, Chiara (eds.), *Strategic Event Creation*. Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers Limited, pp. 166-186.

Shone, Anton and Parry, Bryn (2010). *Successful Event Management: A practical handbook*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Hampshire: Cengage Learning.

Silvers, Julia Rutherford(2004). *Professional Event Coordination*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

### Links

[www.eventfaqs.com](http://www.eventfaqs.com)

<http://www.minimalisti.com>

---

## 3.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

---

### Check Your Progress I

- 1) Catering in the context of events is the activity of providing food and beverage (F&B). Today it has become an artistic affair which is aesthetically and scientifically done to create an experience. Catering varies from the provision of fast food or snacks at the food counter or canteen to a full silver-service

dining for clients. It is not just about an innovative menu but a creative presentation of the menu leading to an effective catering design and hospitality service. Catering is also based on the type, purpose, scope and objective of the event. Some events require a supply of prepared food at a pre-decided time in the venue for the guests; while others may require setting banquets, cafeterias, cooking centres, setting of temporary kitchens, aesthetic display of food items, innovative plating of food and also personal food service to the guests at the venue. Catering management applies to the functions of planning, organizing, coordinating controlling for achieving the goal of effective catering. It covers all aspects of catering business, menu and food planning, procurement of material and arrangement of other logistics, preparation of food on time, aesthetic display of prepared food and hospitality service to meet all (personal, social, cultural, emotional, aesthetic) needs of the guests. The functions of management for any catering operation, small or large, are basically the activities which a manager performs to get people to work harmoniously to achieve a goal of satisfying the functional need of food service.

The event manager must keep in mind the following functional needs to create an attractive, efficient and cost-effective catering design: (i) *Who must be fed and why*: this includes the number and demographics of guests/ attendees / stakeholder groups, for the purpose of sustenance, energy, attentiveness, hydration, refreshment; (ii) *What must be fed to them*: This comprises of food varieties, meal type, special foods / diets, variety, nutrition, and budget; (iii) *When to feed them*: this includes the time, positioning within the program schedule, speed of food service, trickle / dump arrival; and (iv) *Where must the guests be fed*: at on / off- premise, board room, open lawn, tent, back-stage, break area, and standing / sitting / strolling.

- 2) The seven functions of F&B service as given by Silvers are: satisfying hunger, raising alertness, enhancing an image, increasing attendance, enhancing performance, encouraging interaction, and sustaining attendance.
- 3) There are limitations and different approaches when it comes to food preparation and food service, in on-premise or off-premise catering operations. For instance, in off-premise catering, the foods items are selected keeping in view the ease with which food items can be transported. Also, in off-premise catering operation, the estimation of quantity requires more accuracy than in on-premise catering operation since it would be difficult to obtain food at the last minute. However though the on-premise catering operation doesn't demand high accuracy in quantity estimation and also provides a wider range of food items for the event, it is not economical for small gatherings.
- 4) The catering contract should include the following:
  - Date, time and location of the event
  - The event's starting, ending and serving time
  - Number of guests (minimum and maximum number of guests)
  - Food and beverages selected
  - Staffing levels

- List of charges including equipment, F&Bs, setup charges, refund and cancellation policies, taxes, deposit policies etc.
  - Insurance, licenses and permits
- 5) The function of food service requirement involves the following activities:
- Conducting a need assessment
  - Determining the requirement of meal services
  - Identifying refreshment and beverage services needs
  - Performing quantity calculations
- 6) Catering management covers all the aspects of catering business, menu and food planning, procurement of material and arrangement of other logistics, preparation of food on time, aesthetic display of prepared food and hospitality service to meet all (personal, social, cultural, emotional, aesthetic) needs of the guests. Catering operation, on the other hand, is one of the functions under catering management and refers to the type of caterer selected for the event. Catering operation in events may be an *in-house (On-premise) catering operation* or an *independent provider (Off-premise) catering operation*. On-premise catering operations have on-site kitchens involved in food preparation and food service as well, whilst in off-premise catering operations, there are independent food providers who prepare the food at their site which is then transported to the event site, where the food service will actually take place.

### Check Your Progress II

- 1) The important aspects which should be considered while designing menu are:
- 1) Type of Event
  - 2) Guest Preferences
  - 3) Menu Choices
  - 4) Event Schedule
  - 5) Special Needs
  - 6) Presentation of the Food
  - 7) Budget

For details on the above mentioned aspects, the respective section in the Unit could be referred.

- 2) Proper positioning of the meal and the selection of right food items for it, serve the very purpose of the meal. Moreover, besides considering in the menu a pleasing balance of flavors, textures, colours and taste, event creators are beginning to acknowledge the fact that good nutrition, provided through food and refreshments, can help in achieving long term health benefits for participants, while also resulting in better attention, performance and alertness at the event. For example, if breakfast is served in the event, it also actually marks the first meal of the day. Therefore, the food items selected for the breakfast should provide energy and fuel to brain for the morning



activities and should contain proteins, whole grains (cereals and breads), dairy, fresh fruits instead of fats and sugars which provide temporary life and sluggish aftereffects.

**Figure:** Meal Consideration along with Meal Recommendation

Meal Function	Meal Consideration	Menu Recommendation
<b>Breakfast</b>	Provide energy and fuel the brain for morning activities; limit fats and sugars that provide temporary life and sluggish after-effects.	Proteins, whole grains (cereals and breads), dairy, fresh fruits.
<b>Breaks and Refreshments</b>	Refresh, motivate, and relieve boredom; include hot and cold beverages for hydration, hand-held portions, chewy foods (chewing has been proven to be a de-stressing and relaxing action).	Whole fruits, muffins, energy bars, nuts, dried fruits, cookies, raw vegetables with dip.
<b>Luncheon</b>	Refueling and re-energising for afternoon activities; avoid heavy meals that will make people drowsy or sluggish.	Proteins followed by complex carbohydrates; hearty salads with protein are popular.
<b>Reception</b>	Circulation of guests preceding or replacing dinner, usually with alcohol service or soft drinks; avoid too many salty foods that would increase alcohol consumption; food should be bite-sized.	Pre-dinner functions offering appetizers and receptions meant to replace dinner must have sufficient quantities and varieties of food.
<b>Dinner</b>	More elaborate meal with fewer time constraints, often including several courses including a rich dessert or a variety of desserts; broad latitude with theme and style.	Often includes soup and/or salad course, meat/fish, starch, vegetables, bread, cheese and/or dessert course, followed by coffee/tea.
<b>Concessions</b>	Refueling and refreshments as a profit center.	Snack or comfort foods, sandwiches, beverages.

- 3) The name ‘A la Carte’ is derived from French and means according to the card or order. In this menu, the guests may select separately to compile their menu. This is basically a choice menu and offers choice of dishes or items for the guests under each food category namely starters, soups, main dishes, side dishes, salad, desserts, sandwiches, snacks and beverages. This type of menu is used extensively nowadays in different kinds of events because of its suitability to the preferences of guests. A la Carte Menus may range from being limited to a few items such as in informal family functions, to being extensive in case of high profile weddings, providing waiter service. Advantages and disadvantages of this type of the menu have been listed below.

*Advantages:* - Guests have extensive choice to choose from; they can take dishes which they like; the needs of children, the aged and others can be catered to; and freshly cooked food can be offered easily.

*Disadvantages:* - Needs more kitchen space, kitchen and service equipment; more space is required to be done; requires more kitchen staff; work load of the kitchen and service staff is not evenly distributed; more food wastage is there; and food costs cannot be controlled, as the guest's preferences cannot be predicted.

### Check Your Progress III

- 1) The type of food service method chosen by the event manager together with caterer would basically depend on the following factors:
  - type of establishment
  - type of food or menu being served
  - cost of the meal or food
  - time available for the meal
  - type of guests
  - number of guests expected
  - availability of skilled serving staff
- 2) Buffets may be classified into three main types according to the menus planned, and the type of dining arrangement desired. They are: (i) Full buffet, (ii) Finger buffet, and (iii) Fork buffet.
- 3)
  - a) French Banquet service: Platters of food are arranged, guests select foods, and the food server then portions and serves each food item selected to individual plates.
  - b) Buffet service: Foods are arranged on tables. Guests usually move along the buffet line and serve themselves. When their plates are filled, guests take them to a dining table to eat. Servers usually provide beverage service at tableside. A very elegant buffet would have servers carry guests' plates to their tables for them.
  - c) Plated service (American service): Pre-plated meals from the kitchen and then served to the guest.
- 4) The strategies which can reduce the risks associated with alcohol serving are as follows:
  - 1) Use only licensed liquor providers and trained bartenders.
  - 2) Always provide food with alcohol service, avoiding salty snacks.
  - 3) Do not place bars near the door, but place food stations near the door so that guests will begin eating before drinking.
  - 4) Use a portion-control system (Jiggers or Posi-Pour dispensers) rather than free pouring.
  - 5) Limit portions to 1 oz of distilled spirits per mixed drinks, 5 oz of wine, and 12 oz of beer.
  - 6) Do not allow doubles or shots.
  - 7) Never allow self-service.

- 8) Close bars 30 minutes to one hour before the scheduled end of an event, offering coffee or other nonalcoholic beverage service for the remainder of the event.
- 9) Do not announce a 'last call'.
- 10) Feature attractive alcohol-free drinks.
- 11) Implement a designated driver program (perhaps offering free non-alcoholic beverages to drivers).
- 12) Arrange for a subsidized taxi or other transportation service to drive guests home.
- 13) Purchase liquor liability insurance for the hosting organization.
- 14) Monitor entrance to the event and issue credentials.
- 15) Arrange for security personnel.
- 16) Provide 'family' or 'dry' (alcohol-free) seating areas at sporting or festival venues.

#### **Check Your Progress IV**

- 1) Safety is very important in all the areas of catering establishment. Food processing and preparation areas, being the centre of catering operation, are most vulnerable to different types of accidents. Every catering establishment therefore needs to develop a safety policy which ensures protection to property, equipment, materials, and people within the establishment at all times. Accidents may be due to physical, environmental or psychological causes and may lead to falls, cuts, burns, fire, fumes, broken glass etc. Safety regulations need to be enforced through discipline at work, close supervision of all activities in vulnerable areas particularly at peak hours, closing of all switches for fuel supply and water taps when not in use, immediate attention to any kind of repair, regular maintenance and servicing of equipments, and by motivating staff to develop safety habits.