

photos supplied by Philippa Sayer



Planning the wedding feast

With her wedding planned for September, Fran Bos seeks advice on catering requirements from **Philippa Sayer** of Sayer's Catering

I am planning to have a marquee on my front lawn at home. What sort of catering do you suggest for this type of wedding?

I would suggest a buffet, where the guests come and help themselves to a range of food on trestle tables in a marquee.

Alternatively, you could have a hot or cold, served meal where waitresses can serve meats to the table and a

selection of salads or vegetables will be placed on the table for guests to help themselves.

What do you feel works best?

A buffet laid out on dressed trestle tables is less complicated and more visually spectacular.

What sort of menu do you recommend for this style of feast?

You can have whatever you want. You can either choose off menus supplied

or you can make your own recommendations.

Can you give me some examples?

Menus should cater for both meat eaters and vegetarians.

The most popular range would include a selection of meats and fish such as fresh poached salmon, cold seafood pasta, marinated crevettes with garlic mayonnaise, spiced peppered fillet of beef, Thai chicken salad, glazed gammon with honey and oranges, local



Devon smoked salmon (superb with champagne), gruyere roulade filled with avocado mousse and a roulade of leeks filled with blue cheese. All can be complemented with a selection of bright, colourful salads made with fresh fruits and vegetables. Living in Devon and by the sea it is always nice to incorporate fresh Devon produce and seafood caught off our shores.

I anticipate it will be sometime into the reception before we eat. Would you offer anything prior to the meal?

If you are planning to spend time having photographs taken, talking to your guests and/or having a line-up, then I would recommend that you offer your guests a drink and some canapes. Guests are always hungry when they arrive back from the ceremony. The canapes can complement the meal and can be varied. Examples would include crab mairiettes, stuffed cherry tomatoes, beef croutes with a mustard mayonnaise, sesame seed tartlets filled with feta cheese, scallops wrapped in smoked bacon, and bruchetta with a variety of toppings. The choice is endless.

Is wine provided to accompany the meal?

Experience has demonstrated that clients usually prefer to organise their own wine according to their particular taste. However, recommendations can be made should you wish. Bar staff

and wine waiters can be provided to serve drinks at the table and around the marquee.

Who serves the food?

A team of experienced, friendly waiters and waitresses can be provided. They will lay up tables, serve drinks and clear away with the minimal amount of bother. You will not even notice they are there.

Will I need to help with the catering at all?

Absolutely not. The whole point of having caterers is to enable you to enjoy this special day without any stress or worries about feeding and serving your guests.

I live in the middle of nowhere – is that a problem?

Not at all. Everything needed for the day can be provided – even fresh water and ice for drinks if there is none. Should you choose to have a hot meal, cookers can be hired and a complete kitchen can be arranged in the marquee. A large refrigerated trailer will be on hand to keep all food at the correct temperature according to environmental health regulations – of vital importance when catering for any number of people.

Do we have to clean up afterwards?

No – everything supplied on the day is taken away on the day, except for tablecloths and glasses. Staff can hap-

pily return the following day for a final clear up.

Can you tell me what service Sayer's Catering offers?

We offer a complete wedding service – whatever the venue, ranging from a marquee at your own home, to a village hall or banqueting rooms. We will come to your own home to discuss your requirements and, if you are choosing a marquee wedding, we will suggest an appropriately sized marquee. We will discuss the size, venue and theme (if any) of your wedding and will talk through a whole range of menus with you.

Do you provide crockery and cutlery?

Many firms, including our own, use another business from which crockery can be hired. It would be delivered and laid up as part of the catering service.

And finally – how much will this cost me?

The final cost obviously depends upon your requirements but for the type of wedding feast we have discussed today I would recommend that you budget around £25 per head. ■

● Philippa Sayer has run Sayer's Catering for the past 18 years from her South Devon based kitchens. To discuss your wedding or crockery hire requirements call her on 01548 856714.