



THE WHOLE HOG

CATERER PHILIPPA SAYER OFFERS HER ADVICE ON THE ULTIMATE CARVERY

The aroma of roasting meats fills the air and the sight of a large gas spit turning a vast beast catches the eye. The thought of succulent meat and above all the wonderful golden, crispy crackling makes taste buds tingle. To really impress your guests, a traditional hog roast is a spectacular option for the wedding breakfast.

Historical images of a spit suggest hordes of hungry village folk devouring pounds of pig, washed down with tankards of beer aplenty amidst an ambience of live music and general bonhomie: a true celebratory gathering. Recreating this brilliant atmosphere is the wish for any successful wedding.

For starters, try something light and a complete contrast to meat. Offer seafood and vegetarian canapés to guests as they mingle. Try filo baskets filled with scallops in sweet chilli sauce, fresh crab mairiettes, sun-kissed tomato, black olive and fresh basil bruschetta, Avocado and goats cheese crostini, feta cheese and sesame seed tarts, gamba prawns cooked in garlic, ginger, coriander and limes.

In the marquee itself, colour and texture are a vital part of making a buffet table look visually spectacular and inviting - try long buffet tables displayed with an array of crisp bright salads.

The pig has been turning for about five hours, and as the flesh has turned a delicious gold it is ready to be eaten and enjoyed. Once removed from the spit, the beast is transferred to a vast roasting tray surrounded by bay and rosemary, caramelised apples and nasturtiums, a spectacle that will sit in guests' memories and become a talking point for years to come. Home-made relishes line the nearby buffet table, including traditional apple sauce, apricot, apple, sage and walnut stuffing, and a spiced gooseberry relish.

Carving in front of your guests really heightens that wow factor. Along with the incredible smell from the spit and the sight of ribbed golden crackling, the long-awaited moment when your friends and family can sink their teeth into the pork finally arrives.

Of course, a hog roast is the ultimate carnivore dish, so it's worth remembering that some guests, especially vegetarians, might prefer an alternative dish. Local kiln-roasted smoked salmon, garnished with crevettes and served with a dill and lemon crème fraiche, is delicious, as are Thai chicken, Gruyere and avocado roulades, and roasted vegetable and goats cheese tarts.

A traditional wedding cake could prove a little heavy after such a hefty amount of meat. A sure favourite among the guests is a beautifully presented layered chocolate torte. Served with bowls of fresh strawberries and clotted cream, this alternative complies with the visual effect of a wedding cake, stepped and lined with white chocolate cigarillos, and the ideal after-dinner pudding of chocolate.

To take away the stress of organising such an extravagant masterpiece, Sayers Catering and Cater Hire are well-equipped to find provide a pig along with the spit. Supervision of the roasting and the carving all tasks that Sayers are happy to undertake, along with the organisation of staff, china hire, linen, food and serving of drinks.

If you wish to undertake the pig roast yourselves, Caterhire can provide you with the roasting machine and a locally reared pig ready on the spit for you to cook. With prices from as little as £4.50 per head, this is a very economical way of feeding a large number of guests. The gas roaster with an electric powered rotator takes a lot of the work out of the process, enabling you to enjoy your party along with your guests.

Philippa Sayer and Caterhire have been running their Devon based businesses for the last 21 years. Philippa specialises in wedding receptions, and can tailor your day to suit your requirements, be it a hog roast, hot or cold sit-down meal or finger buffet. Alternatively, Caterhire can provide you with everything that you need - china, cutlery and glassware - they will even wash up for you too.

For more information please contact Philippa or Stephen on 01548 856714.