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2015-1-IT02-KA204-014787



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## PROPOSALS AND STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS



# *Eco-Catering*

TRAINING MODULE

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## *Introduction to Catering Business*

Catering is becoming a fast evolving business today.

Catering is provided at a full range of events, including business meetings, conferences, exhibitions, special events, weddings, and other social occasions. In addition to responsibilities for food and beverage, many caterers also handle event decor and other aspects of the program.

Several things distinguish a catering operation from a restaurant. Catering is usually done by prearranged contract—food and drink provided at a certain cost to a specific number of people. The menu at a catered event is usually more limited than a restaurant menu and is chosen in advance by the client. The way the food is prepared is different, too. Although both restaurant and catering chefs do the *mise en place*, or prepare the food ahead of time to a certain extent, catering chefs prepare their food so that it only needs brief final cooking, reheating, or assembly prior to service.

The opportunities for a catering business multiply every year, given the right demographics—individuals, groups, or businesses that are able to pay for the service.

Catering is a highly recommended business for people who have the passion for cooking and preparing delicacies. The demand for caterers is very high especially for caterers who know their onions and provide excellent customer service delivery.



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If you have quick thinking, and are very smart and fast on your feet and can perform several tasks at a time, this may be your ideal job.

Catering is mostly sold on an individual basis; so this means that there is a fixed price for each additional person that might be included.

Like many others in the food service industry, caterers and catering servers work long hours. It is very common for them to work 7 days a week during holidays or during a whole holiday event seasons.

## *Different types of Catering*

Some catering services are provided for special types of events, while others are offer a wider range of services in order to ensure that every requirement is served accordingly. These concerns provide a larger area of business opportunities to caterers and a bigger challenge as well. The following are some of the most common catering services provided in the industry.

**Mobile Catering** – Mobile catering services refer to catering that uses a mobile van in order to render services to specific locations carrying with them the necessary food and equipment. This catering can be used at fairs, meals-to-go, festivals and others functions as well. Mobile catering usually requires low set-up costs due to its being small scale in nature.

**Take Home Orders** – This type of catering service involves delivery of the food to the customer. Ideally, you can stock the ready-made food meals in the freezer and reheat them when an order is received. This catering may also provide party



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platters for any food choice combinations such as meals, finger food and other small menus. Customers may be given an option regarding the portion sizes of their orders. The market for take home orders is to cater to groups of people during holidays, parties or gatherings in which the food can be readily available for them.

**Door-to-Door** – Door to door catering services supply outstanding combinations of food according to the menu choices along with personal service delivered at your door for you and your guests to enjoy. The customer may also opt just to have a drop-off service where the caterer will supply the food, but the customers will do their own serving. The heating equipment can be rented.

**Special Events Catering** – This type of catering includes all the services required for the events. This means the caterer will take care of the food presentation that highlights a spectacular food menu. Special event catering may also involve doing the essential aspects of the event such as planning, venue decorations and other related event arrangements.

**Business Catering** – Business-catering service deals with the offering of food menus for business meetings, training sessions and other business functions. This type of catering has high demand and consistent catering opportunities. It is important for caterers serving this type of event to prepare popular dishes that the guests and attendees will enjoy.

**Industrial Catering** – Industrial catering service generally involves serving food to larger group of people such as in airlines, schools, hospitals and other institutions. Most industrial caterers enter into agreement for semi-annual or annual



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contracts. These agreements provide a long-term and stable catering business. Actual serving of food may not be required to industrial caterers because serving is usually done locally.

The various types of catering services are essentially helpful to serve the requirements of different events and make them successful and truly special. Professional caterers take full responsibility for serving excellent foods that are safe for consumption by their customers.

## *Eco-sustainable catering*

For those who make the environment a priority when planning events, there's no better option than getting a caterer who uses eco-friendly practices. This can be applied to any catered event, large or small, whether it's a wedding, a family reunion, a charity event or a corporate meeting.

### **Sustainability**

When we talk about sustainable food sourcing and service, we are promoting the following general guidelines:

- **Locally grown:** Lower food miles travelled typically means a smaller carbon footprint. Furthermore, supporting local farmers helps maintain regional agricultural production that connects urban areas to nearby farming communities.



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- **Organic:** Chemical inputs used in conventional farming are a major source of pollutants in our waterways and can diminish soil quality over time. Organic farmers do not use chemical inputs and are considered better stewards of the land.
- **Fresh:** Fresh food is healthier, containing nutrients in forms much more readily accessible to our bodies than nutrients in processed foods. Furthermore, a lack of processing reduces the environmental impact of fresh foods.
- **Healthy:** Food providers should ensure that healthy options are available, whether the customer is looking for a snack or a full meal. Unhealthy food is readily available; it may take a bit more planning and effort to provide healthier food, but it can be done.
- **Reusable, compostable or recyclable dinnerware:** The optimal choice for dinner service is china (or other reusable dinnerware), as this has the lowest environmental impact and is the most pleasant for diners. Recognizing that reusable dinnerware is not always available and appropriate, other options include compostable dinnerware (if composting facilities are available) and recyclable dinnerware.
- **Vegetarian:** Events should offer attractive and nutritious vegetarian options to serve the needs of this constituency. Additionally, reduced fish and meat consumption is linked to a reduced carbon footprint.
- **Ethically produced:** Others should not be taking unreasonable risks and making unreasonable salaries to produce and serve the food we consume. Vendors



operating on campus should be paying a living wage, and working to ensure that suppliers down the chain are doing the same by, for example, only serving Fair Trade coffee, chocolate and bananas.

- **Quality:** Besides serving food that is better for the planet and its producers, food should taste great, too. People take their food more seriously if they enjoy it.







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## *Reduce Energy & Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

### **In Food Preparation:**

- ✓ Place refrigeration equipment in the coolest part of the kitchen;
- ✓ Keep cool room doors closed where possible to keep heat out;
- ✓ Ensure extraction system filters are cleaned regularly to increase efficiency;
- ✓ Choose the smallest appliance suited to the task;
- ✓ Use the appropriate element for the pots or pans—having a flame protrude beyond the edge of the pot is inefficient and dangerous;
- ✓ Ensure staffs are aware of the time required to bring equipment to the required temperature to avoid it being left on unnecessarily;
- ✓ Boil only the amount of water you need;
- ✓ Keep lids on boiling food to reduce energy and keep steam trapped to help keep the heat in the kitchen down;
- ✓ Switch gas hobs off between uses, even if only for a few minutes;
- ✓ Keep storage of hot food to a minimum, both to reduce energy use and to retain the quality of the food;

### **In Purchasing Equipment**

- ✓ When purchasing new equipment, prioritise high energy efficient appliances and maintain in good working order

### **In Food Selection and Storage**



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- ✓ Plan meals that require minimal processing with machinery or appliances;
- ✓ Reduce high-energy processes, such as deep-frying;
- ✓ Prioritise fresh produce over the use of highly processed foods;
- ✓ Consider the energy input for food packaging—wherever possible choose foods with little packaging and/or bulk-buy to reduce packaging;
- ✓ Consider the seasonality of food when menu planning;
- ✓ Source produce where possible from sustainable local producers;
- ✓ Prioritise plant-based products over animal-based products;
- ✓ Consider the impacts of food miles while considering the embodied energy within foodstuffs

## *Conserve Water*

### **In Food Preparation:**

- ✓ Review food preparation procedures for water saving opportunities, e.g. dry peel potatoes instead of wet peeling
- ✓ Wash produce in a bowl rather than under running water
- ✓ Ensure taps are switched off after use
- ✓ Ensure food and utensils are not washed under running water
- ✓ At the end of service, scrape plates before placing in the dishwasher so a shorter cycle at a lower temperature and less detergents are required
- ✓ Only use the dishwasher when fully loaded
- ✓ Use the economy setting on the dishwasher
- ✓ Consider the use of low temperature sanitising liquids



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- ✓ Sweep or wipe up floor/benches rather than using a hose tap
- ✓ Keep equipment well maintained—ensure heating elements, jets, sprays, thermostats and drains are clean and unclogged

### **In Purchasing Equipment**

- ✓ When purchasing new equipment, prioritise high water efficient appliances and maintain in good working order

### **In Food Selection**

- ✓ When selecting menus reduce the use of foodstuffs which are highly water intensive in their production
- ✓ Prioritise fruit and vegetables, grains and pulses over animal-based products
- ✓ Promote the use of tap water for drinking instead of bottled water by providing glasses/jugs
- ✓ Enable the consumption of juices and soft drinks by the jug or glass

## *Reduce Waste*

### **In Menu Planning:**

- ✓ Review the quantity of food left on plates, buffets and whether they are side dishes, mains, desserts etc...
- ✓ Review the quantity of garnishes/serviettes used to present dishes and drinks
- ✓ Provide customers with options of serving sizes to allow for differing appetites



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- ✓ Develop side order dishes offering customers a choice with regard to how much they wish to eat
- ✓ Identify ways in which the offcuts from one dish can be used for another (e.g. celery leaves)
- ✓ Identify ways to use one food type over a number of dishes (e.g. meat offcuts)

### **In Food Preparation and Service:**

- ✓ Review the quantity of food left on plates, buffets and whether they are side dishes, mains, desserts etc....
- ✓ Portion control - pre-portion dishes such as cakes to reduce variation in sizes served and ensure all is used
- ✓ Use recycled content paper and vegetable based inks when printing menus
- ✓ Avoid laminating menus where possible as this cannot be recycled
- ✓ Use reusable cutlery rather than single use disposable cutlery
- ✓ Review single portion items (e.g. butter and jams) - avoid individually packaged items if possible and avoid public health & safety concerns about communal pots by serving butter and sauces in reusable containers
- ✓ Serve sugar in refillable spoon-proof dispensers or paper sachets
- ✓ Review and remove unnecessary straws, decorations and napkins served with drinks
- ✓ Choose recycled content napkins
- ✓ Ensure appropriate quantities of cleaning products are used particularly if concentrated products are purchased



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## *Eco-Friendly Catering Materials and Practices*

There is a lot of waste produced at many catering events, especially when plastic products are used to serve the guests. If you want to keep your event eco-friendly, be sure that your caterer uses actual dishes, silverware, tablecloths and napkins rather than disposable plastic to serve your guests. This reduces the waste because actual dishware and linens can be used over and over again. If that's not an option, see if the catering company can use biodegradable products made from recycled materials whenever possible.

### **Eco-Friendly Practices**

Since a significant portion of their business requires travel with a lot of supplies and food, this practice can make a huge difference in the long run.

- Using organic, free-range or traditionally reared produce from sustainable farming methods
- Using wild, organic, sustainable fish and seafood
- Using local products to avoid food miles
- Considering the re-use and/or recycling of the items we use for each event
- Not using GM food items
- Not using intensively farmed products



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# *How to start an Eco-Catering Business from Home*

## **1. Acquire the necessary skills**

You do not need a degree to enter the role of catering manager, but it can help you to start at a higher level and may aid career progression later on. Relevant degree and specific subjects are available, including:

- Culinary arts or culinary management;
- Hospitality management;
- Food science and technology;
- Business or management studies.

As for Skills you will need to show:

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills;
- The ability to think on your feet and take initiative;
- Tact and diplomacy;
- Team working skills;
- The ability to lead and motivate staff;
- Administrative ability and IT literacy;
- Numeracy and financial skills in order to manage a budget;



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- An appreciation of customer expectations and commercial demands;
- Flexibility and the ability to solve problems in a pressurised environment.

## **2. Choose a Business Name for your Catering Business**

## **3. Decide the type of food you will cook**

This is another important factor you must decide on before even writing a business plan. Also, the decision you arrive at here will determine the eventual type or course you will take at the catering school and the type of clients you will serve.

## **4. Create a Menu**

A food menu is a very important component of your catering career. In fact, it is one of the first things a client would like to see before engaging you in a negotiation. So try having many items to suit different tastes and demand, even if you specialize in one type of meal.

Also, you should consider offering vegetarian and vegan meals for clients who don't eat meat or other animal products. Keep your menu to a manageable size, with foods you are comfortable cooking and can be prepared with ingredients you know you can source locally.

## **5. Test your dishes**



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Once you are done creating your menu, organize small-scale parties with family and friends and have them to taste your dishes. Ask them for honest feedback concerning their experience on both the food and service. Keep on adjusting your dishes until you are told that they are delicious and crowd friendly. Once you get a positive feedback, then you can proceed to prepare a business plan.

## **6. Write a catering business plan**

To successfully launch a catering company, you need a business plan that will serve as a blueprint for the business and its team. If you start a catering business without a business plan, then you might end up just like every other self employed caterer.

Having a business plan will help you to forge a mission, vision, goals and objectives; and also help keep you on track. Even if you are starting a catering business from home, write a business plan because it can become an important tool tomorrow as you try to expand and source for funding.

## **7. Look for a good location to rent**

If it is going to be your full time business, you will need a more permanent storage and cooking equipment. Look for an adequate place so that you will be able to set up your cooking and catering equipment.

## **8. Get your catering business permits and operating license**





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There are a lot of legal requirement needed to run a catering business. As a new catering service business owner, certification is not enough to run a catering business; you will need to find out what license is required and acquire it immediately. Before you apply for a catering business license, you must meet the criteria that will qualify your permit.

You must be the owner of the food business and the business must already be registered as a legal entity. Each country has its own rules and regulations in this so it is important to get very well informed before launching your catering business.

## **9. Set up your kitchen and purchase the necessary equipment**

The equipment you will use in your catering business is different from the one you will use at your home kitchen. This is because catering entails cooking on a large scale so it requires industrial equipment that is quite expensive. If you plan to bake also, you will need baking equipment.

The equipment you will use depends on the type of service you will offer and the size of your catering outfit but at minimum, you will need serving platters and serving utensils.

You must also make sure you have the proper equipment to keep the food hot or cold. Buy linens, napkins, table decorations and centrepieces. Some catering businesses also offer tent canopies for outdoor events. You may also need to buy a



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van and other equipment for transporting food. You should also make sure the van has enough space for storage of foods, linens, tableware and other things.

However, if you are starting from home, you can rent or lease the catering equipment you need; though this may decrease your profit margin but it is a good way to go especially when you are trying to keep cost down.

### **11. Set up a website**

Whether or not you're selling items online, you'll need a website for marketing. If you're catering to a national clientele, make sure that the site is search engine optimized to turn up when people search for cookies online. Include contact information, ordering information and some fun stuff for your customers to enjoy on your site.

### **12. Spread the word.**

People need to know that you have a food business. Direct marketing through email and cold calling, getting and passing out business cards and attending networking events are all common ways of spreading the word. You may also want to begin networking with local grocery stores and specialty food stores to see if you can get your cookies - or at least your new brochures - placed at their location. Most importantly, however, you will need to do online marketing.



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## *Start-up Investment for an Eco-Catering Business*

- **Low** – €1,000  
(Working from your own kitchen using client's down payment as start-up)
- **High** – €75,000  
(Outfitting a professional kitchen)

## *Good Practices & Examples in Spain*

1.	<b>LAS TARTAS DE ZARINA</b>
Sector	Eco-Catering in Madrid
Description	<p>Las tartas de Zarina is a company created by the woman entrepreneur Maria Parejo, dedicated to catering and everything related to the pastry shop, and sweet desserts. The homemade cakes are her main assets. You can order desserts, breakfasts and snacks. They also have their salty space, with different types of sandwiches and quiches.</p> <p>The aim is to give exclusive and high-end desserts, breakfasts and snacks with a quality service in traditional products.</p>
Innovation	"Las tartas de Zarina" is an online catering service
Webside	<a href="http://www.lastartasdezarina.com/">http://www.lastartasdezarina.com/</a>
Contact	+34 659616452
Financiation	Self-Financing
Final User	Any Client



2.	<b>CATERING Y COCTELES</b>
Sector	Eco-Catering in Madrid
Description	<p>Catering and Cocktails serves their business needs, they are responsible for any corporate event from the beginning to the end. They give a complete service and high quality with added discretion and confidentiality are your differentiators with other catering companies and cocktails in Madrid factors.</p> <p>Its goal is to provide comprehensive logistics services for catering events with sustainability, responsibility, commitment and excellence.</p>
Innovation	They have a staff of chefs of modern and traditional cuisine. All dishes are made with the finest and freshest ingredients. They have a great variety of fresh and organic products with an elaborate selection at all times caring environment. The chefs with extensive international experience enrich and expand their vision of culinary art, which include the specialty Mediterranean cuisine and fusion.
Website	<a href="http://cateringcocteles.com/">http://cateringcocteles.com/</a>
Contact	+ 34 695158039 <a href="mailto:info@cateringcocteles.com">info@cateringcocteles.com</a>
Financiación	Self-Financing
Final User	Any Client

3.	<b>LA SOLERA</b>
Sector	Family and Ethical Catering
Description	<p>Catering familiar with more than 15 years and a solid career, from his beginnings they were growing to the point of being today one of the most prestigious catering companies</p> <p>Its cuisine is traditional and international, from a sober raw material and quality. They work with a kitchen concept based on pure flavours, without artifice, but always trying to bring that creative spirit within.</p>
Innovation	Catering adapted to any type of customer, what percentage of profits allocated to a social fund.
Website	<a href="http://www.cateringlasolera.com/">http://www.cateringlasolera.com/</a>
Contact	La Solera. Sanchez Pacheco 84, 28002 Madrid 91 413 21 39 - 617440669 <a href="mailto:info@cateringlasolera.com">info@cateringlasolera.com</a>
Financiación	Self - Financing
Final User	Any Client



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4.	<b>MENUDA VIDA ORGANIC FOOD</b>
Sector	Eco-Catering in Madrid
Description	<p>Menúdavida Organic Food Culture is an ecological restoration project, a cultural platform and an experimental creative model that proposes the necessity and urgency of a new consciousness and ecological culture around the food system, health, consumption and nutrition, from a perspective holistic and involved in global sociological changes, sustainability, creativity, eco-design and environmental balance.</p> <p>We develop our objectives in various areas of work and creation, experimentation and innovation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the field of restoration we opened the first catering 100% ecological and sustainable of Madrid linked to companies, brands and institutions that stand out for their environmental commitment and a high level of design. We also offer a professional service of expert assessment in catering companies, catering, music festivals and fairs, etc. to facilitate transition and integration of organic products and environmental awareness, by applying criteria "triple bottom line" and the protocol Green Restaurant International.</li> </ul>
Innovation	<p>From their area of education and training they have launched the Hall of <i>Biococina</i> of Madrid, where they give cooking courses, specialized workshops, conferences and showcooking.</p> <p>In the area of health and nutritional therapy offer personalized training program food "Food Coaching" unique in Spain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EcoDesign product and business: collaborate on design projects and implementation of green business and <i>ecoemprendimientos</i>, advising and accompany brands proposing experiences of inspiration and innovation to product development and specialized in the area of food and consumer services.</li> </ul>
website	<a href="http://menudavida.simpleto.es/wp/?page_id=139">http://menudavida.simpleto.es/wp/?page_id=139</a>
Contact	<a href="mailto:info@menudavida.info">info@menudavida.info</a> Telf.: +34 680748037/620 788 763
Financiation	Self-Financing
Final-User	Any Client

5.	<b>MARISA FERNÁNDEZ</b>
Sector	Ecologic Catering in Madrid
Description	This small catering, created by an entrepreneur woman, is distinguished



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	because it specializes in the preparation of the best organic dishes, for any kind of event, both for individuals, businesses and schools. They have unique and original menus adapted to the needs of its customers. They prepare custom menus and special diets for all types of intolerances (lactose, egg, gluten, sugar, etc.). They also perform consulting work, advising and disseminating everything related to organic food.
Innovation	The ingredients used by this company are from 100% organic farming. Only use products that bear the stamp certifying this origin. Also, they remove eggs, flour and refined sugars of their dishes, using natural sweeteners, milk plants and algae.
Website	<a href="http://marisafernandez.com/">http://marisafernandez.com/</a>
Contact	+34 912136645 +34 651600488
Financiacion	Self- Financing
Final User	Any Client