Unit 8

Menu

Reading

A **menu** or a **bill of fare** is a list of prepared dishes of food which are available to a customer. Restaurants may offer two kinds of menu. **A la carte** menu lists all the dishes that are available in a restaurant. The guest chooses a dish and the dish is prepared to order. **Table d’hˆote** menu lists the dishes of food that are served in a restaurant as a complete meal at a fixed price but with little or limited choice of dishes.

The compiling of a menu is one of the most important jobs of a caterer and there are a number of factors that must be considered before any menu is written. These factors are:

1. The kind of menu 7. Type of customers
2. The season of year 8. Supplies
3. The capabilities of kitchen staff 9. Balance
4. Size and equipment of kitchen 10. Colour
5. Capabilities of serving staff 11. Wording of menus.
6. Price of the menu

The menu offers the customer food and dishes that he wants to eat. In general it is better to offer fewer dishes of good quality than a wide choice of dishes of mediocre quality.

Menus are usually based on traditional cookery methods and recipes. How- ever, fashions in food change over the years and some customers look for new dishes, different combinations of food and fresh ideas on menus. The so-called Cuisine Nouvelle represents new thinking, new food combinations and a lighter style of cooking with the accent on creativity, presentation and simplicity. Cater- ers should be aware of changes in contemporary cooking and create new and original recipes.

The menu gives not only the name of a dish, but its description. The descrip- tion of dishes on the menu should give the customer an idea of the **quality, size, preparation and composition of the dish.**

Menu terms should describe the dishes accurately so that the customer re- ceives exactly what is stated on the menu.

For example, **Pat´e maison** must really be home-made pat´e, not factory- made. If **Fried ftllets of sole** are offered on the menu, then more than one must be offered and the fish must be sole, and if an **8-oz rump steak** is stated on the menu as the portion size, then it must be 8 oz raw weight.

If the sole is advertised as ‘fried’ and the steak as ‘grilled’ then these processes of cooking should be applied; if the soles are stated to be Dover soles and the

steak as rump steak then the named food must be served. Also if the sole is stated to be served with a sauce tartare and the steak with a b´earnaise sauce then the sauce should be correct and accurate.

From ‘‘The Theory of Catering’’

Comprehension Check

1. **In what order do the following ideas appear in the text? a** Menu terms should describe dishes accurately.
2. A bill of fare is a list of prepared dishes of food.
3. Menus are based on traditional cookery methods and recipes.
4. A lot of factors are considered before a menu is written.
5. **Which of the following is not true? a** The menu should attract customers.
6. The menu should offer the customer food and dishes that he wants to eat.
7. The menu should describe the size, preparation and composition of the dish.
8. The dishes on the menu should be based on new and original recipes.

##### It follows from the text that

* 1. menus should only be based on traditional cookery methods and recipes
  2. customers do not enjoy unusual combinations of food
  3. restaurants should not use a lighter style of cooking
  4. menus may include dishes based on new and original recipes

##### The text suggests that traditional cookery methods should be

1. given up
2. changed completely
3. used in all restaurants
4. completed by new recipes