

A restaurant menu is more than just a list of food with prices. It is a reflection of your restaurant style and concept. A restaurant menu is not something to be hastily written up, but rather an important marketing tool that should be carefully considered. There are three main parts of designing a restaurant menu: Description, Layout and Pricing.

Restaurant Menu Description

A good rule of thumb when writing the descriptions of your menu items is to keep it short and simple. But the description should be vivid and enticing- enough to make a guest's mouth water. Always explain what are the major ingredients are in a particular dish, and use ethnic names if they fit, to add a bit of authentic flair to the menu description.

Restaurant Menu Design

A restaurant menu design is a reflection of the restaurant itself. Restaurant menu layouts and colors, whether formal, casual or playful, should match your restaurant concept, location or theme. Your menu font and color scheme should reflect your restaurant theme. For example, if you are opening a Mexican themed restaurant, vibrant colors such as red, turquoise, purple and green would be good choices for a menu. These same colors would look out of place on the menu of a French bistro or Italian restaurant. Ditto for the font. A French bistro may have a classic script font or simple plain font, while a sports bar or other casual restaurant might have a less formal or playful font. Beware of choosing a font that is hard to read or too small.

Restaurant Menu Pricing

Food cost and portion control are two ways to help price your menu correctly, so you make a profit but be careful not to price yourself out of the local market. Another way to ensure a profit is to create a balance of expensive and inexpensive items and limiting the use of market price items, which have the greatest fluctuation in prices.

Specialty Restaurant Menus

Certain occasions such as holidays or local festivals, is a good time to put together a specialty menu. Mother's Day is prime example of when to use a specialty menu instead of or in addition to your regular restaurant menu.

Specialty menus and prix fixe menus allow you to expand your regular dining selection while still maintaining control over cost and inventory.