

Brides

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YOUR
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every bride
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*plan a girls'
day out
near you!*

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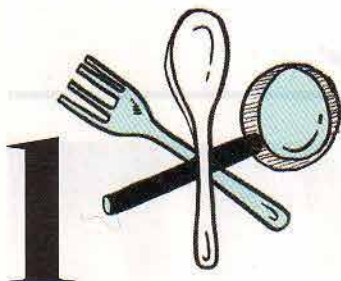
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SCORE THE RIGHT CATERER

“The way to find a good caterer is by referral and reputation,” says Nathaniel Neubauer of Contemporary Catering, in Los Angeles. “Ask people you trust, and be sure to read blogs and reviews.” Always request recent references, he says, but most important, you and your caterer need to click: “When couples come in to their tastings, I always tell them, ‘If you like the food and the service but you don’t like me, you shouldn’t use us,’” he says. “This is the most sacred day of your life, and working with your caterer should be a joyful experience from start to finish.”

2



THERE’S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO SERVE A MEAL. HERE ARE THREE OF THE MOST COMMON, PLUS THEIR PROS AND CONS. WHICHEVER ROUTE YOU TAKE, WE RECOMMEND CREATING A SEATING CHART TO KEEP THINGS ORDERLY AND MINIMIZE STRESS FOR GUESTS

WHAT IT IS	COST*	PROS	CONS
BUFFET Guests serve themselves from dishes displayed on tables at the front or sides of the room.	\$	Encourages mingling; gives guests a multitude of dishes to choose from.	Long lines; chefs can’t control the plating of the dishes, so things can get sloppy; more choices can mean higher food costs.
SEATED Waitstaff brings plated dinners—or family-style platters—to seated guests.	\$\$	Elegant and formal; since everyone eats at the same time, it’s easier to control the flow of the evening.	Restricts mingling; can require more waitstaff.
STATIONS Chef-manned stations offer different styles of cuisine—everything from dim sum to crepes.	\$\$\$	Personalizes the dining experience; guests get to interact with the chefs; there’s something for everyone.	Often the most expensive option; in the wrong hands, your reception might start feeling like a fancy food court.

*Costs vary from caterer to caterer. A buffet is not always the least expensive option. Check with your caterer for specific pricing.

3 Make It Delicious

COUPLES THESE DAYS ARE SAYING NO TO PAINT-BY-NUMBERS BANQUET MEALS AND YES TO MIXING UP THEIR MENUS WITH FUN, FOODIE-FRIENDLY OPTIONS. OUR FAVORITE TRENDS:



1

TRY BREAKFAST
 Two words: *waffle station*. If you have a morning or early-afternoon reception, you can serve an elaborate breakfast or brunch for much less than dinner.



2

FEED THEM FAMILY-STYLE
 Passing around platters of food creates a bonding moment for guests, encouraging them to interact and creating a sense of community.



3

THINK LOCAL
 Regional, farm-fresh foods are good for the earth and let you show off the area’s cuisine. Bonus: Local ingredients often taste better than the shipped-in stuff.



4

CREATE A MINI RESTAURANT
 For a price, some caterers will allow guests to order on the spot from a limited menu—or even build a kitchen on-site.



5

ORDER IN FOOD TRUCKS
 Bring street grub to the party with these food-stands-on-wheels. Check whether you need permits, or be ready to shell out for parking tickets.