
Planning a Culturally Diverse Wedding Menu

By Jean DeRosa-Pizutelli, Caterer

While many different religions and nationalities have their own well established traditions, it is becoming increasingly common for couples of mixed ancestry and faiths to marry. Jewish-Catholic, Muslim-Christian, Vegan-Hindu, Christian-Hindu; with this trend comes the need for weddings that have a multi-cultural feel. With so many wonderful traditions that hold a great deal of importance to many families it is important to plan a wedding that will celebrate the cultural diversity of both parties rather than spotlight just one. Even if the couple themselves do not feel strongly about having their heritage represented, it is important to consider the feelings of family members.

One way to plan a multi-cultural wedding is to allow one culture to dominate the wedding ceremony while the other culture dominates the wedding reception. While the preceding solution of having one culture control the ceremony and another culture control the reception is the easiest way to achieve this, many couples choose to blend or meld both components of the wedding instead. While this can be more difficult, it may be a better solution because neither family feels left out of the wedding party.

One of the easiest ways to reflect this is in the menu decided upon for the celebration and the food served that represent both cuisines. This strive for balance can best be achieved by enlisting the help and expertise of an experienced caterer that is familiar with this diversification. There are many ways this balance of blending the respective cultures may be achieved. I will mention a few of them here to serve as a guideline.

Go for an International Flavor

Vary your menu to create your entire feast according to your cultures. Serving a buffet style dinner that serves cultural favorites of both heritages is one way to go. If you are more interested in continental cuisine, choose just one or two courses to represent both cultures. For example, serve a delicious wedding soup that is customary in many cultures. This is an unusual and well received menu twist.

Keep in mind that things are likely to be easier if you pick a menu that is a bit neutral. Foodstuffs like Foie Gras or oysters would be typical on a French wedding menu, but you may find your British guests unwilling to eat them. Similarly, vegetarianism maybe unknown in the host country, but your veggie friends should not be expected to tuck into raw steak either. Therefore, a variety is what you should look for here. Generally the buffet would be simpler than a full set menu in this regard. But then again, too much choice can be difficult for the company doing the food to handle unless, again, a knowledgeable, experienced caterer is enlisted for help with planning when deciding upon your intercultural menu.

Equal Representation

Your wedding is your chance to give the most creative party of your life. Please keep in mind that careful considerations should be made so that both cultures are prominently displayed and celebrated.