

Top tips on how to make your summer menu stand out



It's that time of year when pub customers head out to the beer garden and restaurant diners yearn for an alfresco experience.

And the challenge is on to offer a summer menu which keeps them coming back for more.

Here are some pointers to help keep your establishment one step ahead of your competitors.

Use local produce

We've become a nation of foodies and that includes a curiosity about where the ingredients in our meal originate from.

It's a great idea to strike a deal with a local farmer or butcher to use meat reared on your doorstep.

People love to support local businesses and they also like to know the food they are eating is fresh and not imported from hundreds of miles away.



Put something unusual on the menu

There's nothing better to raise the profile of your business than offering squirrel pie in your list of main dishes or perhaps a Heston Blumenthal-style dessert mash-up teaming chocolate with broccoli.

It might not be to everyone's taste but it will get them talking on social media and help put the local focus on your summer menu.



Freshen it up regularly

A recent study revealed that nearly nine out of 10 diners want to see more frequent changes in the menu at regular places where they eat out.

The findings, from a HospitalityGEM survey, also indicated that, at the very least, a quarterly seasonal menu change was wanted in pubs and restaurants.

Of course, many like to order the same course every visit but there are plenty of people who like to experiment with different dishes so give them a thrill now and then.

Offer special family deals

The kids are off school for a long time when that last term bell sounds in July. And the chances are they will spend some of that time dining out with their families.

If you can offer a special menu for children it's a motivating factor for mum and dad to bring them to your restaurant or pub for lunch or an early evening meal.

And special deals where one child eats free, or the children get a free dessert work well.

Treat vegetarian diners

Summer is a particularly good time to be a vegetarian – with an abundance of fresh vegetables and salad foods being supplied. But only if the place they dine out at has a varied menu giving them real choice.

Too many places offer just one or two options for non-meat eaters so why not give them real choice and make yours a destination eatery for vegetarians.

If your kitchen staff need assistance in freshening up your summer menu then get in touch with abv Training as we offer training courses and resources for chefs and anyone who handles food in a hospitality kitchen.

