

BRIDES

WEDDING IDEAS & ADVICE • FOOD & DRINK

How to Pick Your Caterer—When You Can't Sample the Food First

These pro tips are *chef's kiss.*



It doesn't matter if you live to eat or eat to live, when it comes to your wedding day, good food is a non-negotiable. (Simply put, nobody wants to deal with hangry guests.) Choosing the right caterer is one of the most crucial tasks on your to-do list; however, it can be a particularly nerve-wracking decision if you can't taste a sample menu before signing on the dotted line. Not to sound too dramatic, but there's always the risk that a plated meal will not be up to the hype. The good news is that it is possible to cast doubt aside and choose a caterer with confidence—yes, even without lifting a fork or finger.

So, we turned to both wedding planners and catering companies to figure out how exactly to separate the sizzle from the steak. With any luck, the smart tips below will have your guests satiated and begging for seconds. *Bon appétit!*



MEET THE EXPERT

- Meg Walker is the CEO and executive chef of [Made by Meg Catering](#), which is based in Redondo Beach, California.

If you can't taste the food for yourself, you might as well see what everyone else has to say about the menu. "Catering is going to be a large part of your event [team](#), so be sure that you enjoy your conversations and the booking process, and also that you see good reviews online," Meg Walker, CEO and executive chef of [Made by Meg Catering](#) in Redondo Beach, California.

While reviews should always be taken with a grain of salt—especially since everyone's taste buds are different—you might start to notice some [common](#) themes. Do previous clients rave about the service? Is everyone saying the pork tenderloin was bland? Well, you should expect a similar outcome.

But, if you're not willing to put the fate of your wedding menu in the hands of the world wide web, look into a catering company's experience. "Choose [catering](#) companies that show a long list of venues that they work at," Walker shares. "This type of list means that large event establishments and [venues](#) have already vetted their service, and that other couples liked them enough to keep them on the venue list." While everyone's food tastes vary, a long list of happy clients is a good sign a catering candidate knows what they're doing.

