

# ***Essential Questions for Every Bride-to-Be: Caterer Edition***

## **Availability and Booking:**

1. Are you available on [insert date(s)] at [insert time(s)]? How soon do I have to reserve this date?
2. Do you have any other commitments to cater that weekend?
3. How far in advance do we need to book you for the wedding?
4. What is required to book you for my wedding date? Do you require just the security deposit or the full amount to reserve this date?

## **Background and Experience:**

1. How long have you been in business?
2. Have you catered many South Asian weddings? How many in total/per year? Of those, how many were similar to my event in terms of style and size?
3. Has your company catered events at my venue? Are you familiar with any of the vendors we are working with? If not, will you need to see the kitchen of the venue prior to the event?
4. Do you need any special kitchen arrangements from our venue?
5. Do you provide an on-site coordinator or banquet manager to oversee the dinner service? If not, who is responsible for our catering on the day of the wedding?
6. Are you licensed by the state of \_\_\_\_\_? (If applicable) Are you licensed to serve alcohol?
7. Will I require any permits for the event? If so, how will you handle obtaining them?
8. May I have a list of references and/or see some of your customer testimonials?

## **Menu & Presentation Questions:**

1. Based on our budget, head count, and style, what dishes do you recommend? Is there a particular package you recommend? How much does it cost per person?
2. What are your most popular/specialty appetizer and entrée items?
3. In terms of packages, are we restricted to a preset menu or can you customize the menu based on our needs?
4. If we have special dietary requirements (halal, kosher, or vegetarian etc), would you be to accommodate that into our package?
5. What is included in your package? What package upgrades or extras do you offer?
6. Who are your suppliers for your produce, meat, fish, etc.? Do they use quality cuts (for the meat)? Are the vegetables organic or grown locally?
7. Do you provide any décor for the appetizer stations or buffet tables? Can you show us any pictures of your food from recently catered weddings?
8. What is the price differential between passed appetizers and appetizer stations? How much is the price difference between a buffet and a sit-down meal?
9. Do you charge a different rate for children's meals?
10. Does your company do wedding cakes? Do any of the packages cover the cost of the cake or this is a flat-price add-on?
11. If we choose a different cake vendor, then is the cake-cutting service still included?
12. Can you do a food tasting for our menu?



13. Does the cost cover just the food, or does it include linens, utensils, dishes and glassware rental, too?  
What types of linens, glassware, plates and flatware are provided?
14. What is your policy regarding cleanup and leftovers?
15. Does your food need to be prepared on-site or will it be brought in already prepared?
16. How do you handle any last-minute changes or requests to the menu? When should we have our menu finalized? When should we submit a final guest count?

**Package Questions:**

1. Can you please send me a contract/written agreement as confirmation of what is included in our catering package?
2. Once we book, when will we receive this written contract?
3. If we change the menu selections in the interim, will you send us an updated estimate and contract?
4. Are there any discounted packages available if we require catering for multiple pre-wedding events?

**Logistics**

1. Do you have any specific set-up or equipment requirements at the venue?
2. When will your team arrive at the event? How long will it take them to set-up before the event and clean up after the event?
3. What is the approximate ratio of servers to guests?
4. What is the dress code for your servers?

**Payment:**

1. Can you give us the final pricing break down for the food, alcohol (if applicable), cake cutting, taxes, and gratuity? Are there any additional day of service charges we should be aware of?
2. If our event extends beyond the times we have provided, do you charge any overtime fees?
3. What is your payment policy? What is your preferred form of payment? Do you accept credit cards?
4. How much of a deposit do you need to reserve our date? When is the final balance due?
5. What is your refund or cancellation policy?
6. Do you have liability insurance? Can we see a copy of your contract?

