



Chapter 6

Setting up Various Buffets

Objectives : After completing this unit learners would be able :

1. To set up different types of buffet (Food display on a large table) in a space.
2. To understand the layout and movement flow of guests and staff in the different types of buffet.
3. To appreciate the advantages and suitability of the various buffet set ups.

Equipment Required :

1. A banquet hall or a large restaurant.
2. Different types of tables with foldable legs so as to facilitate movement, stack ability, storage.
3. Stack able chairs with a chair trolley to facilitate movement of seating and buffet layouts.
4. Chaffing dishes, entrée dishes, platters, salad mirrors, blocks to raise the level of the counter display items, frills and buffet cloth for the buffet counter, tent cards, service equipments for the buffet counter.

Teaching Aids :

- *Demonstration
- *Mock practical involving setting up of different types of buffet
- *Theme lunches to be organized by students as an assessment practical with invitees wherein various buffet counters may be set up and manned by students.
- *Videos on food and beverage service
- *LCD projector

Activity : Remember the following rules:

1. Buffets are used to serve a large gathering of guests and are set up for a minimum of 15 guests.





2. Finger buffets are informal; require only platters set on counters with snacks served. The guests are expected to eat with their fingers; hence food has to be bite sized.
3. Fork buffets are commonly used in conference lunch/dinners, involve meals where guests eat standing using a fork only. Hence, food on offer is in small pieces, mostly boneless, so that the guest can hold the plate in one hand and eat with the other.
4. Sit down buffets have a seating arrangement, and counters from where guests can pick up the food and dine on tables. Starters and beverages are usually served by waiters on the table.
5. Display buffets are counters which display the food being served in a restaurant from where the guest may decide whether he wishes to dine in that particular restaurant.
6. Cold buffets are set up to promote dishes served cold like salads, forcemeats, cold soups, entremets, and some main course dishes served cold.
7. Cover the buffet with a satin frill and lay a buffet cloth on top of the counter. Use blocks to raise the level of food presented so as to increase eye appeal.
8. Have a centre piece of a vegetable, ice, butter carving to enhance the attractiveness of the buffet display.
9. Ensure food is served at the right temperature by presenting hot dishes in chafing dishes with fuel pots to keep the food warm. Cold dishes are presented on a bed of ice or in refrigerated counters.
10. Tent cards with the name of dishes should be placed in front of each dish to help guests appreciate the food on offer.

Buffet Procedure :

Buffets are laid and kept ready at least 20 minutes prior to opening the restaurant.

During night and for outdoor buffets spot lighting and canopy are used to highlight the buffet counter.

Buffets are well spread with separate counters for the main course, starters, and salads, desserts so as to spread the guests and ensure easy flow of guests.

Spare fuel pots are kept ready to ensure fuel does not run out at any point of time during the service period.

Enough mise en place has to be kept ready as during peak hour food pick up and clearance take up most of the time.





Allot staff duties before the buffet is opened so that each function like counter duty, food pick up, clearance, setting up of tables, starter and beverage service, are all allotted according to experience and importance.

During parties the snacks and beverages may be served by waiters on platters and salvers.

Buffets are usually charged per person and there is no restriction on portions.

Food presentation, garnish, carvings, adequate refilling etc are very important.

Points to be Noted :

Buffets are the fastest form of food service.

Buffets are more informal as compared to fine dining restaurants.

Buffets have become very popular with modern conferences.

Buffets have lesser food costs when served in large numbers.

Food on buffets tends to lose quality and hence has to be picked up in limited quantity.

Buffets are priced as a whole.

Buffets offer a large choice to the customer and are fast, hence are preferred for breakfast and lunch, though for dinners even today, table service is preferred.



A Buffet Set - Up



