

- TASK NAME** : Suggesting menu items to the guest
- WHY DONE** :
- 1) As a basis to increase the check
 - 2) To provide better service
 - 3) Guests (especially travelers) like to experiment with new dishes
 - 4) To provide additional information to a guest who is familiar with the establishment, has difficulty in interpreting the menu, has not appetite, or a limited budget.
- BY WHOM** : Restaurant Manager/Asst. Restaurant Manager/Head Waiter/Captains/Stewards

EVALUATE YOUR GUEST:

- Try to determine the types of guests you will be serving.
This can be accomplished while guests are having their cocktails or while they are reading their menus and you are waiting to take their orders.
- Look for clues in guest behaviour (things said or done) which may suggest certain requirements the guest expects in food and service

WHAT TO SELL – Maintain communication with the kitchen regarding priority items for sale.

- Identify menu items on a scale of profitability, for example: the food cost on turtle soup is higher than double beef broth.
- Your first contact with a guest will give you a fair idea of his ‘type’. Naturally the guest may display several characteristics, try, however, to determine his most dominant characteristics and take advantage of the appropriate sales opportunity.

‘Types’ of guests

- Celebrating guest
- Guest on expense account
- Guest entertaining others
- Guest with ‘sense of adventure’ about food and drinks
- Budget-minded guest

SALES OPPORTUNITIES

- Suggest champagne
- Suggest wine; after dinner drink
- Suggest cocktails; Hors d’Oeuvres and all of the beverages mentioned above
- Suggest exotic foods and drinks
- Suggest low-priced items

- **CONSERVATIVE EATER:** This is a guest usually content to eat food he is familiar with. Such a guest seldom 'experiments' with new dishes

Suggest simple dishes. Avoid elaborate, highly-seasoned or exotic foods.

'Exotic' foods are those food which are not native or familiar to a foreign guest. The implication here is that an exotic dish might 'disagree' with the conservative eater, either because of its seasoning, ingredients, preparation or the very appearance.

- Really hungry guest
- Not-so-hungry guest
- Where a guest desires help in making a menu selection, inquire so forth. The choice of the main course (entrée) will determine the complementary foods you suggest.

The guest may indicate a preference for fish, meat, salad and so forth. The choice of the main course (entrée) will determine the complementary foods you suggest.

- If the guest mentions a food preference, make suggestions as follows:
 - a) Direct the guest's attention to the section of the menu listing his food preference
For example: If the guest prefers fish, direct his attention to the seafood section of the menu
 - b) Suggest two menu items at different prices.
Never try to convince a guest with something he normally does not like to eat.
 - c) Offer some variety in choice of dish and style of preparation
Always be honest and enthusiastic in describing and selling a particular dish.

PRACTICE GOOD MERCHANDISING: 'BUILD' THE GUEST CHECK

- When taking an order, listen carefully to your guest for any signs of difficulty in ordering. Also listen for positive of his openness to your menu suggestions.

Your guest may ask for your help if he is unfamiliar with the menu or is undecided about a food Choice

- Give a change, you must be prepared to sell the menu.
For example: After each ordering exchange between you and your guest, ask, 'Will there be anything else, Sir?.'

SUGGEST COCKTAILS

- After guests have been seated and menus presented, suggest cocktails. (See “Suggesting Alcoholic Beverages”)
- If a guest has decided what he will have to drink, take his order. (See “Taking orders for Food and Beverages”)
- If your guest seems undecided about what he will have to drink, suggest one of the following:
 - a) A cocktail
 - b) Sherry
 - c) An aperitif
(Aperitifs are bitter, sweet and aromatic in varying degrees, and come in a variety of flavours. They are strongly alcoholic and are drunk either undiluted or diluted with water)
- The house specialty has to be suggested. When you explain the ingredients used, create a mental image about the drink that appeals to the guest’s senses.

For example:

‘Perhaps you’d like our refreshing house specialty. Its called and is made with and served in a fresh

OR : ‘Would you like to try some of our very fine Sherry. It comes from Spain and is very good’.

SUGGEST HORS D’OEUVRES

- If guests have ordered cocktails, this is an ideal time to suggest, the Hors D’oeuvres.

SUGGEST MAIN COURSE

- Always suggest the main course first before the complementary foods
Main courses require easier decisions by guests. Once main courses are decided on, it will be easier to suggest complementary soups, appetizers, salads and side dishes.

If guests appear to be celebrating or are in a festive humor, suggest more elaborate dishes and more food items.

If a guest orders an item which requires extended preparation time, inform him of the required time. If he is in a hurry, suggest a light dish which is prepared quickly or one which is pre-prepared and can be served immediately.

- If it is apparent your guest would like to relax with a leisurely meal, suggest some of the more elaborate dishes requiring longer preparation times

- If a guest is particularly hungry, suggest a more substantial meal, such as soup and fish
- If a guest is not feeling well, suggest foods which are bland and simple, not 'rich' and highly seasoned
- Suggest a particularly popular or attractive menu item to the guest having difficulty making a selection.

SUGGEST DESSERT/CHEESE

- Generally, a guest will not order dessert when he places his initial food order because he is usually uncertain whether he will want anything else after his meal. Therefore, after the table has been cleared and crumbed, present the menu again opened to the dessert section.

It is never good merchandising procedure to suggest a dessert without a menu.

Present the daily fresh cake to the guest's table just prior to handing out dessert menu

- Now is also the appropriate time to suggest desserts, wines or after dinner liqueurs.
- Always try to use the most descriptive adjectives in describing a dessert item, whether it is a good food or drink. Good word selections should arouse a mental image regarding the item in the guest's mind or appeal to his senses.

Some descriptive adjectives are for example:

Creamy, fresh, light, fluffy, refreshing

But never over-use adjectives to the point of making your merchandising effort seem contrived or artificial.

- If no dessert is ordered, suggest a coffee specialty or a liqueur as an alternative.