

3 Food Storage and Preparation

CATERING IN THEORY

Food stores and suppliers

Sourcing suppliers

The cost of food is very important, especially for small restaurants with a limited budget. Service is also essential when selecting a supplier (correct delivery times, frequency and accuracy of orders, fast replacement of goods). Here is a checklist to find reliable suppliers:

- personal recommendation;
- reputation;
- traceability of food products;
- reliability of service;
- fresh, seasonal and locally sourced products.

Different kinds of suppliers

Your choice of suppliers will depend on the location of your restaurant, the menu and the number of covers. **Wholesale markets** are generally found only in big cities and they sell a wide range of produce at good prices (they do not often deliver).

Most towns and cities have one or more **local wholesaler** that supplies the catering and retail trade.

There are also **specialist wholesale** suppliers who work regionally, nationally or internationally, they usually deliver but they are more expensive.

Farmers provide fresh, cheap, seasonal, local produce which is traceable.

Buying from **retailers** is quite expensive, but in small places it may be your only choice. Some shops offer a wholesale service as well as a retail service so you can negotiate good prices and delivery too.

Ordering and storing food

A good understanding of basic food storage and preservation techniques can help manage supplies effectively, avoiding waste and contamination and health problems.

- When a delivery arrives, new supplies should be stored in the cold and dry storage areas behind old ones, which should be consumed first and food should be labelled with delivery dates.
- Don't leave storage doors open longer than necessary. Food leftover from service should be cooled quickly, stored in the fridge and consumed within two days.
- Food should be stored in airtight containers to maintain quality and safety.
- Foods like raw meat or poultry should be stored as low as possible in the cold store room. Avoid overloading refrigeration units and clean them regularly.
- Do not use foods after the expiry of use-by dates.

Food preparation and ingredients

Pulses

Pulses are popular all over the world as they are versatile, nutritious and easy to prepare and preserve.

- **Chickpeas:** nutty and crunchy taste, are great in stews, soups or curries.
- **Haricots:** mild flavour, used in salads, soups, etc.
- **Borlotti:** sweet-flavoured, used in Italian cooking in stews, with pasta or in salads.
- **Pinto beans:** earthy flavour, floury texture, are the key ingredient of Mexican chilly.
- **Broad beans:** buttery texture, bitter flavour, can be cooked or raw in seasonal salads or soups.
- **Lentils:** peppery taste, used in salads, stews, curries, etc.
- **Peas:** can be eaten cooked or raw in salads, soups, with rice or pasta, etc.
- **Split peas:** dried peas served as soups or curries.
- **Soya beans:** mild, sweet and nutty flavour, firm and crisp texture, used in soups or salads or made into soya milk, soybean oil, tofu or soya sauce.

Cereals

- **Wheat:** used worldwide to make flour for bread and pasta.
- **Spelt:** ancient grain for gluten-intolerant people.
- **Oats:** commonly eaten for breakfast, can also be boiled and made into semolina.
- **Buckwheat:** type of cereal used in Eastern Europe and Italian cooking.
- **Maize:** the main ingredient of polenta and cornflour, also eaten as sweetcorn or as popcorn.
- **Millet:** alternative to rice, should be toasted before boiling and can also be made into pasta.
- **Barley:** used in breads, breakfast cereals, puddings, porridges, stews and soups, as well as for flavouring beer or soft drinks.
- **Quinoa:** higher in protein but much cheaper than rice.
- **Rice:** over 100 varieties which come in three main colours: white, brown and red. Categorised in three main types: long, medium or short grain.

Fats

We use fats to cook and season food.

- **Milk-derived fats:** butter, margarine and “non-dairy spreads”.
- **Vegetable-derived butter:** cocoa butter, peanut butter, coconut and almond butter.
- **Animal fats:** lard, poultry fat, beef dripping, suet.
- **Olive-derived fats:** extra virgin oil, olive oil.
- **Seed oils:** sunflower oil, grape seed oil, peanut oil, soy oil, sesame oil, corn oil.

Fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables require proper handling, preparation and storage to benefit from their many nutrients.

- Wash hands and nails
- Prepare the work station and tools
- Wash to remove bacteria, pesticides or insects
- Cover with a clean and damp cloth
- Store in the fridge
- Cut produce

Meat

We generally divide meat into two groups: red meat, which is red before and dark after you cook it and white meat, which keeps its light colour after you cook it.

• Lamb (young sheep, tender meat)	• pork (tasty and versatile meat)
• kid (young goat, pinkish red, lean meat)	• beef (versatile meat derived from cows)
• mutton (sheep’s and goat’s meat, less tender but tasty meat)	• veal (tender and sweet meat derived from calves)
• horse and donkey meat (tender and sweet meat)	• venison (game meat from deer)
• rabbit (dark, tasty game meat)	• wild boar (game meat)

Poultry

Poultry is birds such as chickens used for meat or eggs.

• Chicken (firm, tasty, delicate meat)	• turkey (versatile meat)
• goose (tasty and tender meat)	• pheasant (quite dry meat)
• duck (quite fatty meat)	• guinea fowl (lean and healthy meat)

Eggs

The most popular choice for egg consumption is chicken. You should store eggs refrigerated at 4°C or below. Keep eggs in their cartons to stop them absorbing smells and liquids. You can also store leftover egg **whites** and **yolks** for one year in a freezer.

Fish

There are three types of fish we can buy and consume:

- **white fish:** has white, flaky flesh, whose main concentration of oils is in the liver. Naturally low in fat, very healthy, species include cod, red snapper, grey mullet, sea bass, sea bream and red mullet
- **oily fish:** has oil distributed through its body, essential part of a healthy diet because of the Omega-3 oils. Oil-rich species include mackerel, tuna, anchovies, sardines, salmon and trout
- **shellfish:** has a skeleton which forms a protective covering or shell. Divided into crustaceans like crab or prawns and molluscs, like mussels and oysters. They contain cholesterol, but are low in saturated fat and calories, high in protein, Omega-3 fatty acids and minerals.

Herbs, spices and condiments

Herbs are used to season dishes and come from the oil-rich leaves of plants.

Spices come from plants' bark, fruit, roots or seeds and add colour and flavour.

Herbs	Spices	Condiments
parsley, thyme, chives, coriander, basil, tarragon, mint, rosemary, sage, lemongrass, oregano	chillies, paprika, mustard seed, turmeric, fenugreek, saffron, ginger, cumin, caraway, fennel, star anise, vanilla, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg, cloves	salt, pepper

Sweeteners and other kitchen agents

Sweeteners	Rising agents	Cocoa	Thickeners
<ul style="list-style-type: none">white sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">yeast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">cocoa powder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">arrowroot
<ul style="list-style-type: none">icing sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">baking powder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">cocoa butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">agar-agar
<ul style="list-style-type: none">maple sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">bicarbonate of soda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">chocolate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">pectin
<ul style="list-style-type: none">molasses			<ul style="list-style-type: none">gum Arabica
<ul style="list-style-type: none">honey			

Different types of pastry

- **shortcrust pastry** (pasta brisé)
- **sweet shortcrust pastry or pâte sucrée** (pasta frolla)
- **puff pastry** (pasta sfoglia)
- **flaky pastry and "rough puff"** (pasta sfoglia ruvida)
- **choux pastry** (pasta bigné)
- **filo pastry** (pasta fillo)

The art of ice making

Ice cream is a semi-frozen dessert made from cream, sugar and aromas whose concept was probably introduced to Europe by Marco Polo who returned from China with recipes for fruit ices. These were transformed into Italian milk-based "gelato", which became popular all over Europe. Ice cream making combines liquids, solids and air.

CASE STUDY

Preparing a turkey

Turkey is eaten both in Britain and the United States of America. In Britain, it is traditional to eat turkey on Christmas Day and in the USA on Thanksgiving Day.