Unit 304: Contribute to the guest experience

# Handout 9: Considerations when planning menus

**Kitchen size and the menu**

* Generally, the size of the restaurant will dictate how large the menu is.
* The bigger the kitchen, the more menu items you can offer. If you try to offer a large and complex menu out of a tiny commercial kitchen (which can be done, though it isn’t easy) you may run into serious problems during busy times.
* A kitchen should be between 15-25% of the total space in the restaurant. Any smaller and you run the risk of severely limiting what you can serve during a lunch or dinner rush. Any larger and you are wasting precious space that could be used for tables and chairs.
* Creating a kitchen layout with a good flow will also make it more efficient and easier to work in.

**Preparation time and the menu**

* Cooking is only about half of what  
   goes on in a restaurant kitchen.
* Preparation time is an integral part of

getting ready for breakfast, lunch or

dinner in a restaurant.

* When drafting the restaurant menu,

consider how much prep time is

needed for each menu item.

* Preparation will also dictate the types of kitchen stations you need.

**Kitchen stations and the menu**

* The stations in the commercial kitchen will also dictate what is on the regular menu.
* If you forgo the deep fat fryer, then French fries, onion rings, chicken fingers etc should not be a mainstay of the menu.
* If you have a huge 12-burner gas range, then you can offer plenty of sautéed dishes.
* If you want salads to play a prominent role on the menu, be sure you have enough room for a salad station. Ditto for pizzas, grilled items and desserts.
* Stations are particularly important as a way to prevent cross-contamination between foods.