

Entrées for All

Offering a single entrée to guests has several benefits: It eliminates the hassle of tracking everyone's entrée choices, cuts serving time (great for maximizing dance-floor time), and may save you up to 15 percent off your bill, since your caterer will likely need less prep time and staff. To be sure the entrée will please traditionalists and foodies alike, try these suggestions. **EDITOR: LAUREN MATTHEWS**

PAULA LE DUC FINE CATERING *Emeryville*

The dish: Short-rib-stuffed filet mignon, served with sauté of artichoke, oven-roasted tomatoes, wild mushrooms, and an oregano salsa verde
Why: "People consider beef the classic wedding entrée, and feel that it's more upscale than serving chicken," says company owner Paula. "This dish falls into the beef category, but the short ribs distinguish it from the standard filet."

Cost: Price on request

WENTE VINEYARDS *Livermore*

The dish: Duet plate of grilled beef filet and pan-seared salmon with aioli, served with potato-butternut squash gratin and roasted vegetables
Why: "This twist on 'surf and turf' answers the 'Should we serve meat or fish?' question by presenting them both on one plate," says president Carolyn Wente. "Guests will like at least one, if not both. The hearty side dishes work best in the winter—in the summer I'd substitute something lighter, like citrus-scented risotto."

Cost: \$45 (entrée only)

BROADWAY CATERING AND EVENTS *Sonoma*

The dish: Catalán-style braised chicken thigh with dried fruit and almonds, served with roasted fingerling potatoes and haricots verts with a topping of lemon-parsley gremolata
Why: "Chicken is a low-cost and universally enjoyed dish," says chef Tom Romano. "Braising ensures that the chicken stays moist and flavorful, and this rich braise would be perfect in the winter. The potatoes complement the richness of the sauce, while the lemon and parsley add a bit of a satisfying tang."

Cost: \$14 (entrée only)

COMPONERE FINE CATERING *Emeryville*

The dish: Braised beef short ribs, served with four-hour polenta with Parmesan and white corn, broccoli rabe, and slow-roasted tomato-red wine braising jus
Why: "Braised meat is cooked through, so there's no need to worry about cooking individual meals to varying degrees of doneness. It's 'one size fits all,'" says chef Ethan Mantle. "The slight bitterness of the broccoli rabe contrasts nicely with the richness of the meat and polenta."

Cost: \$30 (entrée only)

Cheesecake (Literally)

If your love of savory foods means that cake isn't your thing, consider cutting and serving a "cake" made of stacked cheese wheels. That's what **Mary Keehn**, founder of Cypress Grove Chevre, an artisanal cheese company in Arcata, did at her own wedding last year, and it's only a matter of time before foodie couples turn this idea into a full-on trend. While traditional wedding cakes clearly win the beauty contest, a cheese "dessert" can be surprisingly attractive. "You can decorate it with fresh flowers, fruits, or nuts," says Mary, who adds that chevre, or goat cheese, works especially well in "wedding cake" form because the white rind looks like frosting. It's also soft, and therefore easy to cut into "cake slices." (Avoid hard cheeses like Parmesan, Morbier, and Colby.)
Cost: About \$250 for a four-layer chevre cake of Humboldt Fog grande, Truffle Tremor, Humboldt Fog mini, and Fog lights. cypressgrovechevre.com —LM



Keep on Truckin'

As part of a casual rehearsal dinner or for a late-night treat, hire one of the Bay Area's trendy gourmet food trucks to serve mouthwatering goodies to your guests. —LM

CUPKATES

cupkatesbakery.com

Fare: Cupcakes in flavors like s'mores and lemon-raspberry
Cost: From \$300 flat fee for truck and staff; 100 minimum order (from \$2.50 each)

ROLI ROTI GOURMET ROTISSERIE roliroti.com

Fare: Local, sustainably farmed meats like roasted Sonoma Country lamb, plus sides like rosemary potatoes
Cost: Entrées from \$6 each; sides from \$4 each



LIBA FALAFEL TRUCK

libasf.com

Fare: Organic wheat-free falafel, tahini, chimichurri herb paste, feta, dill, and cardamom pickle in a soft pita
Cost: Price on request

SEOUL ON WHEELS

seoulonwheels.com

Fare: Korean barbecue, kimchi fried rice, chap chae noodles
Cost: From \$1,000 for three hours (includes truck, staff, and food), with a 100-guest maximum

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