Lancaster's Restaurant

User Needs

Introduction

We need a new system for the restaurant, it will need to provide for a number of different facilities for the various staff within the restaurant. Our needs broadly divide into the following main three areas:

- Menu, recipes and food prep relating to the kitchen
- Reservations, diners, orders and billing relating to the front of house team
- Planning, costing and accounting relating to the management of the business

These areas are not exclusive and all areas work together to ensure the business runs smoothly and upholds the values and principles of the owners.

The follow sections provide explanations from team members in the different areas about what they need for the new system.

Tasks and Needs

Kitchen

The chefs in the kitchen are responsible for a number of tasks. These include creating and manage recipes, compiling approved recipes into a week's menu as well as the chefs tracking in development and new recipe ideas. Within the kitchen there are a number of roles, that of the Head Chef, the Sous Chef and the line chefs. All chefs can create new recipe ideas but all must be reviewed by the Sous and then approved by the Head Chef.

Recipe ideas

We keep our menu fresh and seasonal by supporting all our chefs in proposing and developing new or variations on recipes. These must always be based on the ingredients that will be available from our supplier (our admin team provide us with this list for the coming month). A chef can create and refine a recipe which could be a whole dish or just an element, such as a sauce, bread or accompaniment. We track changes and comments on these ideas and when the creator is satisfied it is ready they review it with Sous and if they are satisfied they make Chef aware of it for her review.

The recipe consisted of the list of ingredients required with nominal quantities, along with a description of the preparation and presentation of the dish.

Dish construction

The approved recipes are combined to create individual dishes that could go onto a menu. This takes into account the availability of the ingredients from the supplier in the coming months. The Sous and Chef both work to construct these. We often attach photos of the plate for reference.

Menu compilation

A menu is required for each week and this is formed from the dishes that have been developed. Each menu has to be prepared three weeks in advance so that it can be reviewed and updated by the manager(s). All dishes on the menu must be made from ingredients that the supplier has confirmed will be available at that time. Final menu compilation is done by the Head Chef.

Reuse of ingredients and elements is a key part of an efficient menu and as part of the compilation process this is reviewed and ideally dishes that have common components with currently select menu items should be highlighted.

Upcoming menus are also posted by the Head/Sous chef to an online review site and they use this to gauge interest in the menus for planning. They regularly check the site to look for new feedback and note this on the menu/dish.

Meal preparation

When the restaurant is open the serving team bring their table orders to the Pass and the chef communicates these to the kitchen. Once all dishes for a course are ready for a table the Pass will call the waiter to serve the dishes.

Stock and waste tracking

The kitchen also keeps track of the current stock (from the deliveries and order provided by the admin team) and any waste within the kitchen. This waste can be from over-ordering or from damage etc. We also keep track of the usage of key ingredients used for the dishes. This information is used to ensure that if a dish cannot be made this is communicated to the front of house team.

Front of House

The Front of House team is responsible for managing bookings, the table setup of the dinning area and from serving diners. Service includes taking orders, serving dishes/clearing and proving bills and taking payment. The team consists of a Maître d' and waiters, our Sommelier also works along side the team.

Tables and bookings

Our dinning area can be configured to seat tables in combinations of two, four and six people. We can combine tables to seat a group of twelve, but this is a special request. We setup the basic layout of the tables and seats based on experience of what the usual need is for this time of the week/year. The admin team also keep a chart that shows at a glance the number of tables and covers booked last year and the average for this day of the week. We take booking over the phone, in person and as walk-ins if we have space. We limit the number of diners arriving each half hour to six (this does change from time to time and the admin team inform us via email), this is to ensure that we can provide the best service possible. For a booking we take a name and telephone number.

In addition to our own booking, we make a some of our tables/seats available via an online booking tool. Each week we upload the number of tables and their size to the site and we check this system to update our diary and ensure we don't over book.

We are happy to book fewer people on a table, for example one person on a two seat and three on a four etc. If we are at our pre-booking capacity, we remove any remaining tables from the online system. We always keep a couple of tables for walk-ins.

Menu and Serving

We get the menu from our admin team and print copies as needed. The menu has the pricing of all dishes along with allergen information. We hand copies of these to our diners as we seat them. We also check with the Pass to confirm if any dishes are unavailable before we present the menu, thus we can ensure diners are aware of this limit.

Our host will greet the diners and shown them to their table and introduce them to their waiter for the meal. Once the dines has had some time to consider the menu and ask questions, we take the

order and pass this to the kitchen. When the dishes for that course are all read, the pass calls us to take them to table.

Billing and Payment

At the end of the meal, when the diner asks for it, we present the meal bill and take payment (cash or card). We will also split the bill for the diners if they request it. We keep a record of all sales so we know which dishes sold well and the monies taken. This is passed to the admin team for processing and review.

Management

The restaurant management team is responsible for ordering produce and ensuring our chefs and front of house team have everything they need. We also keep track of the sales and booking and review all the menus.

Our admin/management team consists of Julie our Restaurant Manager who works with the owners (Chef Ana and Sommelier Robert Lancaster) to oversee the running of the restraint along with two admin staff.

Tracking

In the admin team we keep track of all the sales from the restaurant. We get the sales from the front of house team and use them to track the restaurant popular dishes and takings. We can then use this to predict future bookings and thus how much stock to order for the kitchen. We update our sales graph so the owners can see the pattern of bookings easily. This is also used to plan the table layout for each day.

We also keep track of the staffing for the restaurant and who is on holiday at any given time. This lets us plan the number of covers per half hour and maximum dinning capacity to ensure we have enough staff for the kitchen, FOH etc. We use a separate system for payroll and HR.

Menu review and costing

Once Chef has produced a new menu we review it and add descriptions for the diners along with the price of the dish. We base the price of the ingredients for the dish multiplied by a percentage, say 500% which changes periodically. We also ensure that all allergens in the dishes are clearly labelled.

Our Sommelier will then review the menu and add suggested wines to each dish from our cellar. They also keep track of the wines in the cellar so we know when and what to order.

Ordering

We order from a single produce supplier for all and food etc. Wines are a separate matter and are bough in person by the Sommelier. We use the menu for the upcoming week with the plan chart and a conversation with Chef to determine how much of each item to order. We then place the order on the supplier's website. The details of the order are sent to the kitchen so when it arrives they can check the order and keep track of what they have.