



## **Culinary Inspirations Study Guide**

This exam covers 7 areas of knowledge: Sales, Marketing, Teaching Techniques, Organization, In-Home Cooking Classes & Demos, Interactive Dinner Parties & Logistics.

### Sales & Marketing

There are a lot of different groups that you will market your services to. You'll need to evaluate who your target audience will be for which type event. Decide how to best position yourself for visibility with the right information for these potential clients to understand what you offer, and peek their interest enough to contact you for additional information. If your service is unique and inviting, you should encounter few obstacles once a person has received a good overview. Understand business image and know how to be polished and professional from day one. Create business policies that protect you and make sense to a client (deposits, final payments, who does what, timetables, cancellation policy, etc.) Understand up-selling and how this gets applied. Will you offer free teaser classes to entice potential hosts or clients to spring for a full evening?

### Teaching Techniques

Understand how to control and effectively reach an audience. Know the corrective actions to bring a disruptive participant back into line without being the bad guy. Be polished, know your material and remain in charge. You are the expert. Getting started or "breaking the ice" is key to launching a successful event and setting ground rules lets everyone maximize their enjoyment without crossing boundaries that could slow or derail the others. Don't assume participants know more than they do. They have come for education and enjoyment. Talking above their skill level is a turn-off and you'll lose participant interest quickly. Know when to inject humor, and what is appropriate. Involve all the senses through your instructional period. Just hearing someone talk is boring. Dress appropriately and speak clearly with authority and confidence. Make certain safety is followed at every step. Do not allow mishaps to completely derail your event.

## Organization

Don't reinvent the wheel for every event. Streamline your events so that you can fill in the particulars and move ahead promptly. Become good at estimating event costs for ballpark answers, and know how to apply proven formulas to arrive at fair yet profitable final quotes. Many factors go into figuring the ultimate event fee, and there are different approaches that will yield the same bottom line figure. Set minimums and maximums. Don't over extend yourself, and don't perform your event for an audience too small to be enjoyable. Will you offer discounts? Why & to whom? Gift certificates can have downfalls. Your policies should help avoid any pitfalls. Keeping your client/host informed will minimize problems down the line. Everyone needs to know the expectations and responsibilities assigned to them. No need for last second panic and finger-pointing. Create and use planners. You cannot afford to drop the ball. Know how much time is required pre-event, for the event and post-event. Don't get caught underestimating your time and effort required to properly conduct the event.

## In-Home Cooking Classes & Demos

Know what you'll teach and how you'll get that message across effectively. Calculate the prep time so that your audience receives maximum bang for their buck. A well oiled machine will keep everyone energized and eager for more. Waiting around for the instructor to catch up is an event killer. Trivia about your recipe or techniques can really add enjoyment as you educate. Know your audience. What are they really expecting to gain from this experience? Do they have allergies or issues with a product that will effectively turn them off from the event?

## Interactive Dinner Parties

This evening is a fine blend of food and education. Know that while most will be interested in how the food gets to the plate, ALL are interested in a quality meal at the end. Know your objectives and prioritize so that your objectives can be met successfully. Do you have a solid understanding of the environment you'll be expected to work in?

## Logistics

How will you handle changes and cancellations. Countdown planners can help you stay on track of your time and obligations to an event. Evaluate each event upon completion to make certain you are remaining within a profit zone, and know what that zone represents. A pre-event site visit and evaluation is key. Know what you're dealing with well in advance. No surprises means every chance for great success. Printed materials need to be sharp, accurate and allow the participant to reuse with success later on. A lack of detail or a cheap unprofessional product will be quickly discarded and the likelihood of business from that collateral material becomes nil.