# HOW TO PREPARE YOUR RESTAURANT FOR **A SUCCESSFUL** SUM E R





Summertime in New York City represents more than just a change of season for your restaurant - it's also a time of new opportunities for your business.

After months of cold, unpredictable weather, New Yorkers and tourists alike will flock to the streets to soak up the sunshine and experience the summer.

With just a few months before the seasons change, the time to prepare your restaurant for an influx of warm-weather customers is now. That's why we've created this summer in the city guide to help you navigate the upcoming busy months! Inside you'll find everything you need to know — from staffing to decorating to marketing — in order to prepare your venue for its best summer season yet!



## **GIVE YOUR RESTAURANT A DEEP CLEANING**

Your restaurant's interior is the first impression customers have of your venue as a whole. If it's dirty or unkempt, customers may feel uncomfortable eating there, meaning you risk losing business or getting a negative review online.

Seasonal changes create an array of messiness for your venue due to the snowfall, rain, mud and wind — not to mention whatever else is trekked in and out of your restaurant daily from New York's dirty sidewalks. Before summer arrives, give your restaurant a deep cleaning to remove any lingering debris and unsanitary remnants.



Use this deep-cleaning checklist to make sure your venue is sparkling for the summer:

$\bigcirc$	Disinfact all bard to woodb average (think company stains complete
$\bigcirc$	Disinfect all hard-to-reach areas (think corners, stairs, service
	areas etc.) in the venue. This includes cleaning around, behind and
	underneath all kitchen and bar equipment
$\bigcirc$	Empty the ice machine and clean it out
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$\bigtriangledown$	Clean the refrigeration coils
Ŭ	
$\bigcirc$	Wash the walls and ceiling to remove dust, dirt and grease build up
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$\checkmark$	Dust and wipe down the light fixtures
$\langle \checkmark \rangle$	Wine devue all frank of house descriptions
$\bigcirc$	Wipe down all front of house decorations
$\bigcirc$	Wash all of the glass windows from the inside and outside
$\bigcirc$	
$\bigcirc$	Steam clean any fabric furniture
$\bigcirc$	Disinfect all other furniture
$\bigcirc$	Print new menus
	Clean all of the menu booklets
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## **GIVE YOUR MENU A PICK-ME-UP**

Not everyone can take a vacation in the summer, but by revamping your menu a bit, you can offer your customers a temporary escape.

Use <u>in-season</u> fruits and vegetables and classic summer favorites to inspire your new menu items. Think of drinking freshly squeezed lemonade, sitting under the shade of a tree on a hot July afternoon. It's a refreshing thought right? Now, use an idea like that to create something unique for your customers to invoke the same kind of reaction and nostalgia. For example, you could create a freshly muddled strawberry and lemon vodka-based drink and top it with club soda. It's a simple, in-season (adult) variation of a summertime favorite, one that can also be made without alcohol.

For your main menu, you can give your most popular dishers a summertime pick-me-up by swapping out any winter or spring sides for in-season options instead. For example, if you feature a grilled chicken entree with a side of brussel sprouts, update the side to feature zucchini fries or a mint-cucumber-watermelon salad instead.

Summertime is all about vibrancy, new beginnings and sunshine, so appeal to your customers emotions and their taste buds by giving them a seasonal experience to remember!

# SEASONAL HELP WANTED

#### **HIRE ACCORDINGLY**

Summer is a time of relaxation and vacations for a lot of people — your staff included. So two to four weeks before the season begins, send out a notice to all of your staff members asking them to notify you as soon as possible in regards to any upcoming trips and planned vacations.

Use your previous year's sales reports to determine if you need to bring on additional or seasonal staff members, and how many. Since New York is such a transient city, it's always easy to find and recruit seasonal and last-minute restaurant workers, but the sooner you start looking the better because you'll want to make sure your new recruits are well-trained and prepared to handle an influx of hungry and thirsty customers.

By hiring enough staff, you'll ensure your customers are receiving proper customer service, even during the busiest of times. Plus, your staff will have more time to spend with each customer meaning more opportunities to upsell, which is great for your employees tips and even better for your restaurant's bottom line!



## ADD SOME SUMMERTIME GREENERY TO YOUR DECOR

New York City is sometimes known as the "concrete jungle" because it's filled with people, giant buildings and lots of concrete sidewalks. Even in the summer when flowers are in bloom, the sun is shining and the park grass is green, it's not uncommon for locals and tourists to miss out on summertime nature and beauty because the majority of the city is lacking in greenery.

Lure customers into your venue by flashing the green-goods. You can appeal to your customers sights and senses by featuring freshly picked flowers on each table and potted plants in the corners, on shelves or in the bathrooms. The sweet, subtle, earthy scents will penetrate the air inside of your restaurant, transforming your restaurant into the perfect garden retreat!





## **MAKE A SPLASH WITH SUMMER MARKETING**

Once you've updated your menu with an array of summer-inspired goodies, deepcleaned your restaurant, added a bit of summer flair to your decor and prepared your staff for the season change, it's time to market to potential consumers.

Here are some ideas:



Update your website and social media pages with your summer menu and specials



Post photos and descriptions of all of your summer-inspired items on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter



Incentivize your social media following to share your new menu items with their network by offering the first 15 followers to share a discount or free drink



Create a seasonal hashtag to get your venue trending on social media, and use it alongside a few other popular hashtags every time you post on your restaurant's social pages



Host an "official first day of summer" party and promote it online and in-house



Invite local popular New York foodies and influencers to your restaurant for a tasting in exchange for some cross-promotion



Have an "NYC Summer Fridays" happy hour special for the after-work corporate crowd who usually end up leaving the office an hour or two earlier on Fridays in the summer

These are just a handful of marketing tactics you can use to promote your venue and entice customers to dine in your restaurant.





By using the five suggestions laid out in this guide, Central Park won't be the only thing in bloom this summer — your restaurant will too!



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