



### STYLES OF SERVICE

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When planning your wedding or special event, there are so many food options, it can be difficult to know where to begin! From plated dinners to buffets, food stations – and everything in between. To make your planning process smoother, we've created this guide describing different styles of service and what to keep in mind for each.

At Avalon Catering, our team will guide you through the process of selecting a menu that you and your guests will love. Overall, we recommend starting with the style of service you like best – whether that's a plated dinner, buffet, or something else. Each style of service can be offered at a variety of budgets, depending on the menu you select. Our team can also help you think through the pros and cons for each option!

To get started, browse this guide with easy-to-understand definitions for each style of service and tips from industry experts! When you're ready, [connect with our team](#) so we can help make your dream menu a reality!

Featured image (above) by Farrah Power.

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## Hors D'oeuvres

What are they, how do you pronounce it, and what style is best?

Hors d'oeuvres (pronounced or-DEVS) are typically handheld foods eaten either before, or separately from, a meal. In some cases, hors d'oeuvres precede a meal – but sometimes, the hors d'oeuvres are the meal! Avalon Catering offers a few different styles of hors d'oeuvres:



Photo by Emily Battles

### Heavy Hors D'oeuvres Buffet

As the name suggests, heavy hors oeuvres are meant to be more filling and are typically served in lieu of dinner. Heavy hors d'oeuvres include a variety of dishes.

With Avalon's heavy hors d'oeuvres buffet, guests move along the buffet and serve themselves. This option provides enough food for dinner, portioned and presented so that it is easy to eat with just a fork. With this option, you can choose partial or full seating. Bear in mind: a heavy hors d'oeuvres buffet can actually be more expensive than a buffet dinner, since the food preparation is more labor-intensive!

### Passed Hors D'oeuvres

Passed hors d'oeuvres are a great way to present food with elegance while also limiting the number of portions served. Most often, passed hors d'oeuvres are served during a cocktail hour that precedes a sit-down dinner.

### Stationery Hors D'oeuvres

Stationery hors d'oeuvres offer guests a themed station to nosh on. For instance, Avalon's stationery hors d'oeuvre options include a cheese display, charcuterie display, and a "luxury spreads & breads" station. Guests can mix and mingle at the stations, sparking conversation and connection.

Explore Our Menus

## Dinner Options



Photo by Photosynthesis

### Buffet Dinner

For a buffet dinner, the chef prepares the food in the kitchen; then, serving platters and bowls are placed on buffet tables for self-service.

This is the most cost-effective style of service. Opt for a more formal setup with a place setting, or go more casual by putting the plates on the buffet! With a buffet dinner, you may also consider doing a pre-set salad and bread, so guests have something to eat as soon as they are seated.

Pro tip: Avalon's team will invite guests to the buffet by table as they finish their salads, helping to avoid a line at the buffet.

### Stations

Food stations are a convenient option for large crowds, because you can avoid everyone lining up to eat from one buffet. This option is also a great choice if you want to offer several different menus. For instance, you could choose an Italian station and a Mexican station, or a meat lovers and a veggie lovers station. Avalon will place small food stations around the room(s) so guests can experience each one in any order they choose.

More fun options we offer: interactive stations (make your own taco) or chef-attended stations (choose a customized pasta dish). The overall feel can be customized based on your preferences and vision. For a formal occasion, provide full seating for everyone. Or, choose a more casual party vibe with partial seating. The cost for this style of service varies greatly depending on the menus you select. Stations tend to be more expensive than a buffet dinner, because the food is typically more labor intensive and requires more tables, linens and staff.



Photo by Rooted Pine

### Plated Dinner

During a plated dinner, guests remain seated while individual plates are brought to the table by servers.

This style of service will give your reception a more traditional, formal feel. The pricing for a plated dinner is dependent on the menu you select. This option is a little more expensive than a buffet dinner because you need more service staff – but it's a great option if you want to have assigned seating.

### Family Style Dinner

This style of service is basically the way that many families eat dinner at home: food is served in platters on each table, which guests pass around and serve themselves and others. A family style dinner is a very popular style of service, because it encourages guest interaction and has a more intimate feel. This is also the most expensive style of service. Avalon typically offers a pre-set salad with family style service.

Pro tip: this style of service is not compatible with large centerpieces, since the platters of food will require ample table space!

See Dinner Menus & More

## Keep Everyone Fueled on the Big Day



Photo by Nick Surette

### Drop-Off & Boxed Breakfast & Lunch

For quick, casual meals, Avalon offers convenient breakfast and lunch options. Choose from boxed sandwiches and entrees, grain bowls (pictured above), hot lunches, and a variety of breakfast packages.

Pro tip: treat the bridal party to pastries, fresh fruit, and parfaits while everyone is getting their makeup done. You can also order boxed lunches to keep everyone fueled up throughout the big day!

Browse Menu Options

Ready to talk details? Our team at Avalon Catering is ready to help!

Browse our [wedding services here](#). In addition to catering, we also provide full wedding planning, décor and floral design, equipment rentals, vendor recommendations, and more!

Then, reach out to our team to schedule a conversation! We can't wait to speak with you.

Let's Connect

