

Catrin E. Morris

FLASH on English

for COOKING, CATERING
& RECEPTION



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Contents

Unit	Topic	Vocabulary	Skills
1 pp. 4-7	An Introduction to the Catering Industry	Categories of catering Venues Services Types of catering outlets	Reading: about the catering industry and different types of restaurants Speaking and listening: ordering and serving in different types of catering outlets Writing: completing a catering survey and an entry for an online guide
2 pp. 8-11	The Restaurant: Meet the Staff	Kitchen staff Front-of-house staff	Reading: about roles and responsibilities of kitchen and front-of-house staff Speaking and listening: exchanging information at a restaurant Writing: job profiles
3 pp. 12-15	Clothes and Personal Hygiene	Clothes Hygiene	Reading: about kitchen staff uniforms and identifying items of clothing; doing a kitchen hygiene quiz Speaking and listening: asking and responding to information about uniforms Writing: kitchen rules; designing a personal hygiene poster
4 pp. 16-19	In the Kitchen	Kitchen areas Kitchen machinery and equipment Materials	Reading: about kitchen design and equipment Speaking and listening: discussing kitchen organisation and listening for technical data Writing: comparing different cooking appliances and technical data of cookware products
5 pp. 20-23	Different Foods, Different Cooking Methods	Food Nutrients Cooking techniques	Reading: about food and classifying it according to its nutrients; about cooking techniques Speaking and listening: exchanging information about eating habits and nutrition; following recipes Writing: a recipe
6 pp. 24-27	Preparing the Menu	Dishes Courses Types of menus	Reading: about what makes a good menu; labelling the different parts of a menu; identifying different types of menu and finding food information Speaking and listening: ordering/taking an order from a menu; comparing different menus Writing: a menu
7 pp. 28-31	Serving Techniques	Different service techniques Types of crockery, cutlery and serving plates/dishes	Reading: about the advantages and disadvantages of different service techniques; doing a quiz about service rules Speaking and listening: prioritising a server's duties; presenting customers with the bill Writing: about which type of service the student prefers; a list of a server's duties

Unit	Topic	Vocabulary	Skills
8 pp. 32-35	International Cooking	Ingredients Cooking techniques Customs and traditions	Reading: completing factfiles about different nationality cuisines; scanning recipes for information Speaking and listening: role playing a TV chef show, discussing ingredients and cooking techniques and creating a menu Writing: about foreign cuisine for a food website
9 pp. 36-39	At the Bar	Types of bar Drinks Equipment	Reading: different types of bars; identifying essential bar equipment Speaking and listening: giving and taking orders at a bar; doing a bar inventory Writing: an email ordering new stock for the bar
10 pp. 40-43	At the Reception	A receptionist's duties and responsibilities Hotel services and amenities	Reading: the role of a receptionist; hotel services and amenities brochure Speaking and listening: asking for and giving directions; checking out Writing: completing an online hotel booking form; writing an email to confirm a reservation
11 pp. 44-47	Problems and Complaints	Making complaints Explaining problems Apologising Offering solutions	Reading: about good customer service; rules for dealing with customer complaints Speaking and listening: dealing with customer complaints Writing: completing a customer feedback form; writing an email of complaint

 1 MP3 audio files downloadable from www.elionline.com

1

An Introduction to the Catering Industry

1 Decide if these sentences about catering are true (T) or false (F).

- Catering is providing people with food and drink.
- The term 'catering' is only used for social situations like parties.
- You find catering services only in hotels, restaurants or cafés.

2 Read the text about catering and check your answers.

Catering is the provision of food and drink and it is divided into two basic sectors: **commercial businesses**, where the main aim is to make a profit, and **non-commercial businesses** (welfare), where the main aim is to provide a non-profit-making social service.

Commercial catering is usually found in hotels, restaurants, pubs, bars, cafés or fast food outlets, where you can eat in or take away the food and beverages you buy. But commercial catering can also be found in the transport industry in places such as railway stations, airports or motorway service stations and on ships and trains, where the place you eat is called a buffet car and offers self-service, or on aeroplanes, where on the other hand there is waiter service provided by the cabin crew. In other words, whenever people travel any distance for work or pleasure, they are able to eat and drink thanks to the catering service provided. Catering at private events, such as social events or gatherings and wedding receptions, or public events including rock concerts or football matches is also considered commercial.

Welfare catering ranges from providing food for workers at a subsidised price in factory or office block canteens, to catering in hospitals, schools or prisons, where people pay nothing or very little for the service.

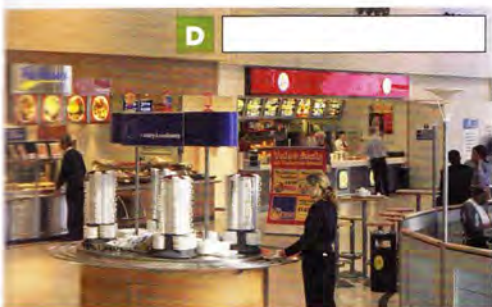
3 Read the text again and match these words with the pictures.

canteen fast food outlet buffet car
service station self-service waiter service



4 Complete the table with information from the text.

Type of catering	Types of venues	Type of service
commercial catering	(3) _____	takeaway (11) _____
	(4) _____	
	(5) _____	
	(6) _____	
	(7) _____	
	(8) _____	
(1) _____	factory or office block canteens hospitals (9) _____ (10) _____	self-service (12) _____
(2) _____	buffet car service station	



5 Complete the sentences with the correct form of these words from the text.

bar beverages café eat in profit
provision reception takeaway subsidised

- It's really expensive to eat in at our local restaurant because you have to pay a service charge.
- The wedding _____ was held in a beautiful setting by the sea.
- We're meeting in the _____ tonight for cocktails at 7 p.m.
- I love meeting my friends in a _____ and chatting over a cup of coffee.
- 'We would like to inform passengers that we will shortly be passing through the first class cabins of this train serving hot and cold snacks and _____'.
- 'Let's get a _____ tonight, I don't feel like cooking'.
- Companies that run to help others and not to make money are non-_____ -making.
- Nowadays a lot of children in the UK have free or _____ school meals because their families can't pay for them.
- When there are wars or natural disasters, organisations like the Red Cross are responsible for the _____ of emergency aid.

6 **1** Listen to the following conversations. Decide where the people are and what the relationship between the people is (friends, colleagues, customer and waiter/waitress, customer and server, cabin staff and passenger, etc.).

	Venue	Relationship
Conversation 1	<i>restaurant</i>	
Conversation 2		<i>customer and server</i>
Conversation 3		
Conversation 4		

7 **2** Read the conversation in a café between a waiter and a customer and complete it with the expressions from the box. Then listen and check your answers.

can you tell me could I have I'd like I'll have
just ready to order would you like still or sparkling
we have two options yes, of course

Waiter: Are you (1) *ready to order*?

Customer: Yes. (2) _____
what today's specials are,
please?

Waiter: (3) _____, a
vegetarian pasta bake and
a warm bacon and tomato
salad.

Customer: Mmm! (4) _____
the warm bacon and
tomato salad, please.

Waiter: (5) _____ some
bread with that?

Customer: (6) _____ some
garlic bread, please?

Waiter: (7) _____! What would you
like to drink with your meal?

Customer: (8) _____ water, please.

Waiter: (9) _____?

Customer: (10) _____ sparkling water,
please.



8 Work in pairs. Role play similar conversations in a fast food outlet and on an aeroplane. Use the conversations in exercises 6 and 7 to help you.

Conversation 1

Student A: you are a fast food outlet server.

Student B: you are a customer.

Conversation 2

Student B: you are cabin staff on an aeroplane.

Student A: you are a passenger.

9 Read the text and answer the questions.

Businesses focusing on providing catering services are varied and multiple. Restaurants offer customers a range of food, drink and service options. At the high end of the market there are **à la carte restaurants**, so-called because of the type of menu which lists and prices all items individually and prepares dishes to order. Service is generally of a very high standard with waiters/waitresses as well as specialist bar staff and wine waiters and the atmosphere is formal. Within this category, **gourmet restaurants** are the most expensive, reflecting the high quality of food and beverages and the fact they often have recommendations from important food critics and organisations, which are highly prized.



Table d'hôte menu restaurants with fixed-priced menus, a set number of courses with choices within each course, are a cheaper alternative. Items on the menu are ready at the same time, rather than made to order. This kind of restaurant is often family-run with a more informal atmosphere.

Examples of **specialist restaurants** are steakhouses, seafood or vegetarian restaurants. There are also **ethnic restaurants** providing food and drink from a particular country. The most widespread of these are Italian, Indian and Chinese restaurants. Both ethnic and speciality restaurants can have either an à la carte, table d'hôte or a combination of both kinds of menus. Nowadays, many restaurants are part of a **regional, national or international chain**, so menus, service, ambiance and cost are unified and you know exactly what to expect. This is particularly true of fast food outlets, many of which specialise in a particular type or region of cuisine and prepare food which is served and eaten quickly. These can either be eat-in restaurants, which are mostly self-service, or takeaway restaurants where you buy cooked food to eat somewhere else, or sometimes both. Examples include pizzerias, kebab or fish and chip shops. In addition to restaurants, **cafés, coffee bars, bars and pubs** also provide catering although the focus may be more on drinking than eating. Cafés and coffee bars serve reasonably priced hot and cold drinks and light meals or snacks and are usually only open during the day. Bars and pubs are always open at night but increasingly they are serving food and drinks during the day too. In pubs the food is usually home-made and traditional, whereas bars tend to offer a European-style menu of salads and sandwiches.



- 1 What do restaurants offer customers?
A range of food, drink and service options.
- 2 What is highly prized by gourmet restaurants?
- 3 What are the main differences between table d'hôte and à la carte menus?
- 4 What kind of food can you eat at a specialist restaurant?
- 5 Which are the most popular ethnic restaurants?

- 6 Why do you know what to expect in chain restaurants?
- 7 What is the main characteristic of fast food restaurants?
- 8 When are cafés and coffee shops usually open?
- 9 How does pub and bar food differ?

10 Complete this catering survey about the area you live in.

CATERING SURVEY

(Please tick your answers)

- What kind of restaurants are available in your area? ☐ à la carte ☐ gourmet ☐ table d'hôte
☐ specialist (please specify) _____ ☐ ethnic (please specify) _____
☐ fast food outlets (please specify) _____ ☐ other (please specify) _____
- Is the service good? ☐ Yes, usually. ☐ Not always. ☐ Sometimes. ☐ Not usually.
- How much does an average meal cost? _____
- Are they easy to reach using public transport? ☐ Yes, they are. ☐ Yes, some are. ☐ No, they aren't.
- Are there many cafés, bars and pubs available in your area? ☐ Yes, there are. ☐ No, there aren't.
- What is good about them?
☐ cost ☐ atmosphere ☐ service ☐ food and drink ☐ other (please specify) _____
- What could be improved in them?
☐ cost ☐ atmosphere ☐ service ☐ food and drink ☐ other (please specify) _____
- Where would you recommend having an eat-in meal in your area and why? _____
- Where would you recommend purchasing a takeaway meal in your area and why? _____
- What catering services do you think are missing in your area? _____

11 Use the information in exercise 10 to write a short entry for an online guide about the catering services available in your area. Include a general introduction and some specific recommendations. You could give marks for cost, atmosphere, service and food and drink and suggest the best dishes to try.

Catering in my area is very varied...

MY GLOSSARY

à la carte /ælə'kɑ:t/ _____
 ambiance /'æmbiəns/ _____
 bar staff /bɑ: stɑ:f/ _____
 beverage /'bevərɪdʒ/ _____
 buffet car /bu'feɪ kɑ:/ _____
 cabin crew /kæbɪn kru:/ _____
 café (UK), coffee bar (US) /kæfeɪ /'kɒfi bɑ:/ _____
 canteen /kæn'ti:n/ _____
 catering /'keɪtərɪŋ/ _____
 chain /tʃeɪn/ _____
 course /kɔ:s/ _____
 cuisine /kwɪ'zi:n/ _____
 to eat in /tu ɪt ɪn/ _____
 family-run /fæmɪli rʌn/ _____
 fast food outlet /fɑ:st fu:d 'aʊtlet/ _____
 food critic /fu:d 'krɪtɪk/ _____
 garlic bread /gɑ:lɪk bred/ _____
 gourmet restaurant /gʊəmeɪ 'restɒrɑnt/ _____
 made to order /meɪd tu 'ɔ:də/ _____

motorway service station /məʊtəweɪ 'sɜ:vɪs 'steɪʃn/ _____
 prized /praɪzd/ _____
 reasonably priced /ri:zənəbli praɪst/ _____
 recommendation /ˌrekəmen'deɪʃn/ _____
 service charge /sɜ:vɪs tʃɑ:dʒ/ _____
 set number /set 'nʌmbə/ _____
 snack /snæk/ _____
 social gathering /səʊʃəl 'gæðərɪŋ/ _____
 sparkling water /spɑ:klɪŋ 'wɔ:tə/ _____
 special /speʃl/ _____
 starter /stɑ:tə/ _____
 steakhouse /steɪkhaʊs/ _____
 still water /stɪl 'wɔ:tə/ _____
 table d'hôte /tɑ:blədəʊt/ _____
 takeaway /teɪkəweɪ/ _____
 venue /venju:/ _____
 waiter service /weɪtə 'sɜ:vɪs/ _____
 wedding reception /wedɪŋ rɪ'sepʃn/ _____
 wine waiter /waɪn 'weɪtə/ _____