



## What's A Caterer To Do?

### What's a Caterer to Do...Part 19

I'll begin with my favorite word, UNBELIEVABLE! This pandemic has now spanned all the seasons! It began toward the end of Winter, continued through Spring, Summer and now it continues to run its' course through Fall. The problem is no one really knows what to do or not do. Nobody is an authority on this crazy virus. Short of staying home, living in a bubble and halting life as we know it, what's a person to do? We can follow the guidance, we can mask, we can distance, we can wash, we can sanitize, we can wash more...but we need to survive amongst the craziness of it all. Sure, we're careful, we're on high alert, we don't want to get the virus and we certainly don't want anyone else to contract it but, c'mon, we have to live a little! We have stuff to do!

Here's a riddle....What works 12 hours and walks 15,000 steps 2 days in a row?

Answer...A tired, cranky caterer running ragged with minimal staff, trying to accommodate a potpourri of catering requests on an October weekend in 2020.

Keto, vegan, gluten free, vegetarian, lactose intolerant all in one weekend. I remember the days when a vegetarian request seemed like an imposition. Now we've become experts in so many dietary limitations. October was always one of the most robust months of the year. Between university alumni weekends and events, weddings, corporate entertaining, fall foliage events, non-profit gatherings and more, October took care of itself. But no, not this year. This year we cram beautiful food into non-recyclable plastic containers for safe service, we sport masks of every shape, color and style, we holler at our guests so they can hear us through the masks, we get nervous and twitchy if anyone without a mask invades our "territory", and we just hang in there doing what we do. I must say, we drove around the county a lot this weekend delivering and even offering full service to a couple small events. Not more than 50 people, don't you know? Some restaurant parking lots were dotted with just a few cars. Bummer! They're barely doing enough business to keep their lights on. Other restaurant parking lots were surprisingly full, almost bustling with people out for a meal where they didn't have to buy the groceries, drag the food home, find room in the already full fridge to put it, get it prepped, cook it, serve it, and finally clean it up. Hey, I don't blame them. Caterers get tired of cooking too! Although it was good to see full parking lots, what if someone wasn't masked or socially distanced? What if some staff person tested positive? What if some "anonymous" person "anonymously" reported someone doing something? It's a big risk these businesses take! And all in the name of hospitality! Be kind to your server. Be kind to your host/hostess. Appreciate the people in the kitchen that purchased the food for your meal. The people that prepped it. The people that cooked it. The people that cleaned up after

you. The people that did the dishes. These are the people working from dawn till dusk, or pulling an evening shift after working a “regular” job all day long. These are the people that sacrifice their weekends and holidays for you! So that you can go out and enjoy a great served meal without having to do the work! Sorry, I’m climbing down off my soapbox now. Everytime someone says “thank God it’s Friday” I think and occasionally say, “not if you’re a caterer...not if you’re in the hospitality industry”. The weekend is the beginning of lots of hard work. Everytime someone says “have a good weekend” I think and occasionally say, “not if you’re a caterer...not if you’re in the hospitality industry.” I know what you’re thinking. We picked this career. We picked this line of work. We had choices and we picked it. All TRUE! A lot of us are serial workaholics. We can’t help it. We get some strange pleasure from being able to work in this demanding industry and do it well. We get bragging rights when we work too many days straight, too many hours per day, and walk marathon-like footsteps in a day. We’re an odd breed, loveable but odd!

Forgive my ramblings...my wine glass is empty so it must be time to say “farewell.” So we carry on, doing the best we can for now, grateful for our regular clients, blessed to have fabulous staff, appreciative for the orders that do come in, and honored to be able to brighten someone’s day with an expected or unexpected delivery. So for now, take good care, live life and remember to be kind.

Xoxo Sandra

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*True hospitality consists of giving the best of yourself to your guests*  
~ Eleanor Roosevelt

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