



What's A Caterer To Do?

What's a Caterer to do Part 16

Where have the last 13 days gone? It's been that long since we last spoke. Time flies! Not sure if we're having fun, but we're doing our best to keep it alive! I have a new favorite word to describe this bizarre season of our life. Unfathomable! That has a little more pizzazz than unbelievable, don't you agree? I'll not try not to overuse it as I have my previous favorite word, unbelievable.

So, we're pushing the end of August pretty hard. Usually that would mean that kids go back to school, colleges and universities would be hosting orientation events, and churches would be beginning their post-summer calendar. Corporations, companies, and non-profits would be getting back to business with staff vacations and PTO a distant memory. Our catering biz would normally be shifting gears, changing hats and preparing for the busiest 4 months of the year including the holiday season, where we do more catering most weeks than we do in a full month during January through April. But, alas, who knows what the future holds? We feel unsettled, not fully grounded, as we continue to face the uncertainty of the future.

I have to admit, that the last few weeks have been fun. There I said it. FUN! We have enjoyed catering for many very special events in the lives of some very special clients. We've actually catered a few small weddings. Yes, people do get married even during COVID! We have helped celebrate the graduations, both high school and college, of many young people with cautious, usually outdoor, limited guest numbers of catered parties and picnics. There have been showers, baptisms, anniversaries, and yes, sadly, celebrations of life. We are there for the best of times and the worst of times. That's what caterers do. We shift gears, we make recommendations, we "feel" our client's needs and we move forward accordingly. We just want to make their life easier as we provide hospitality and sustenance.

Part of the reason that we've been having FUN is that everyone is so nice! The kindness and gratitude that we have received during this crazy time from the host of the parties and their guests has been amazing. People are grateful that we show up on time, masked, careful, conscientious and usually good-natured. I have to say, there's nothing like serving a hot buffet, on a hot day, in a hot space, wearing a hot mask, and having to holler to be heard through the mask and the hum of the guests and the music. But, this is what we do. And we're having FUN!

It does seem like we are living in an austere world right now. The fluff and frills are minimal. Keeping distance, no hugs, little eye contact, hiding behind the dreaded masks. We are paying more for less. We work harder for less. The general attitude seems to be that inadequacy can be explained away because of COVID. I don't buy it. COVID can't possibly be the excuse for every mistake and sub-

standard performance by businesses, vendors, deliveries, etc. I'm not sure, but I don't think we've blamed COVID for anything other than the decline of business, due to restrictions placed on entertaining and gathering in groups. We all need to be better than using COVID to "mask" our flaws and shortcomings.

We've been doing a lot of cooking, lots of food prep, a bit of baking and everything else that goes with being a caterer. We are grateful that there are finally people out there that are gathering to celebrate and enjoy good food. We cook at home too. Not a lot, and not especially well. I tend to cook everything on high at home. Get it done, get out of the kitchen...you know the drill. Occasionally, the smoke detector might go off. With a few waves of a towel and a few open doors and windows, the issue is short-lived. Well, my husband just purchased a fire extinguisher for our kitchen. Not sure if he knows something I don't know, but truly he does like to prepare for the worst. At first I might have been a tad offended. I even pondered using medium, or even low temperatures when I cook and bake. But, now that we are well-prepared for the worst, I guess I'll keep up my old habits. Get it done, get out of the kitchen!

Hope you're hanging in there. Enjoy the rest of summer. The weather in Rochester has been incredible. Lots of sunshine and warmth. I'm going to make a point of enjoying the next many weeks of good weather, before "you know what" is bound to happen. Stay well, take care and try to smile behind that crazy mask!

Xoxo Sandra



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