

# Creating Menus

### SECTIONS

12.1 The Menu

12.2 Menu Planning and Design

12.3 Pricing Menu Items

### WRITING ACTIVITY

#### Purpose and Audience

The purpose of a piece of writing is the reason why it was written. The audience is the people the article was written for. Read several articles on the same topic, and then write a summary identifying the purpose and audience for each piece.

#### Writing Tips

- 1 Ask yourself what the author wants to happen.
- 2 Common purposes are to express ideas or to inform.
- 3 Imagine the kind of person that would use or enjoy the text.

#### EXPLORE THE PHOTO

Menu planning is an important step in defining a foodservice operation. *Why must a chef think carefully about which menu items to offer?*



# The Menu

## Reading Guide

### Before You Read

**How Can You Improve?** Before starting this section, think about the last exam you took on material you had to read. What reading strategies helped you on the test? Make a list of ways to improve your strategies to succeed on your next exam.

### Read to Learn

#### Key Concepts

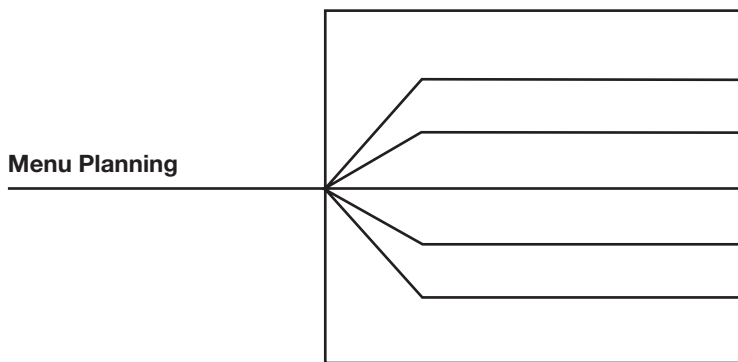
- **Categorize** the factors that influence a menu.
- **Describe** the types of menus used by foodservice establishments.


#### Main Idea

There are several factors to consider when developing a menu. In addition to considering the necessary factors, a chef must choose from among different menu types.

#### Graphic Organizer

As you read, use a line chart like the one below to list the seven factors that influence menu planning.



 **Graphic Organizer** Go to this book's Online Learning Center at [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) for a printable graphic organizer.

### Content Vocabulary

- menu
- entrée
- fixed menu
- cycle menu
- du jour menu
- à la carte menu
- semi-à la carte menu
- table d'hôte menu
- prix fixe menu
- meal-based menu
- California menu
- continental menu
- accompaniment
- ethnic menu

### Academic Vocabulary

- dictate
- complex

*What are the fundamental types of menus?*

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

#### English Language Arts

**NCTE 12** Use language to accomplish individual purposes.

#### Mathematics

**NCTM Number and Operations** Understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems.

#### Social Studies

**NCSS V B Individuals, Groups, and Institutions** Analyze group and institutional influences on people, events, and elements of culture in both historical and contemporary settings.

**NCSS V C Individuals, Groups, and Institutions** Describe the various forms institutions take, and explain how they develop and change over time.

**NCTE** National Council of Teachers of English

**NCTM** National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

**NSES** National Science Education Standards

**NCSS** National Council for the Social Studies

# The Importance of the Menu

Whether you crave shrimp or cheeseburgers, you go to a restaurant because you like the type of food it serves. You can find out what kinds of food items a restaurant serves on the restaurant's menu.

A **menu** is a listing of the food choices the restaurant offers for each meal. The menu, however, is more than just a list that you look over before you place an order with the kitchen. It has a much larger role in the running of a foodservice operation. In fact, it impacts every step of a foodservice operation.

A menu determines:

- The type of customers the establishment will attract.
- The layout and type of equipment the restaurant will need.

- The foodservice workers that are needed and the skills they must have.
- The type and number of supplies to be ordered.

## Influences on the Menu

If you were planning the menu for a restaurant, what items would you choose to include? How would you decide what types of foods to offer? What items would you choose to leave off? Menu planning is not as simple as listing items that you like to eat. There are many other factors that you must consider when you develop a menu.

## Target Customers

You must think of the needs and lifestyles of the people that your restaurant will serve. You must know what types of foods are most desired by your target customers, and what prices they will be willing to pay.

The menu is a restaurant's main marketing tool. For example, a lunch deli serves food that can be prepared quickly. A school cafeteria needs to serve inviting and nutritious meals that will appeal to students. In both cases, foods need to be served in the most efficient and profitable way possible.



**Meaningful Menus** The style and design of a menu influence how a customer views the foodservice establishment. *What can you tell about this restaurant by looking at the style of its menu?*



## Price

People expect different types of foodservice establishments to offer food that is within a certain price range. Food items that are above or below this price range will look out of place on the menu. Customers will tend to avoid menu items that look out of place. For example, a \$25 entrée would be out of place at a family-style diner where most entrées cost around \$8.95. An **entrée** ('än-trā) is any type of main dish. Entrées may include meat, poultry, or fish, casseroles, or even hot vegetarian items.

## Type of Food Served

A foodservice establishment's menu should be planned to reflect the type of food that is served in that particular establishment. For example, customers expect to find French food items on the menu at a French restaurant. They do not expect to find Spanish dishes on the same menu.

## Equipment

The type of equipment that is available in a restaurant's kitchen will **dictate**, or determine through necessity, what dishes can be listed on the restaurant's menu. For example, a specialty restaurant that has a broiler in its kitchen is able to serve steak as part of its menu, while a cafeteria that has no broiler would not.

## Skill of Workers

Consider the skill level of your kitchen staff when you select items for a menu. The skill and training of the foodservice workers at a restaurant will determine what food items can be placed on a menu. Employees at a quick-service restaurant will not be able to make the **complex**, or involved and possibly difficult, dishes that a four-star restaurant staff has been trained to prepare.

## Geography and Culture

The location of a foodservice operation also can dictate what dishes are on its menu. Some food ingredients are more readily available in certain areas. For example, most

## A TASTE OF HISTORY

1762

Catherine the Great becomes ruler of Russia

1765

Boulangier opens what is believed to be the first restaurant in Paris

### The À La Carte Menu

The earliest cafes and inns had no menus in the sense that we know them today. Most of them served dishes that were chosen by the chef or owner. Patrons were charged a flat fee, and ate whatever was presented at the table.

A French soup vendor named Boulangier is believed to have been the first restaurant owner to use a menu. The dishes available were listed on a slate, or *poste*, along with the prices. This menu allowed Boulangier's patrons to choose only the dishes they preferred to eat. Dining out became more commonplace after the French Revolution.

### Historical Application

Research French cuisine, from any time period. Create a menu from a French restaurant. Include at least one dish, with its description, cooking method, and main ingredients from each of these categories: appetizer, soup, salad, entrée, and dessert.

**NCSSV B Individuals, Groups, and Institutions** Analyze group and institutional influences on people, events, and elements of culture in both historical and contemporary settings.

coastal restaurants serve seafood. Beef and pork are common in Midwest eateries. The culture of various regions and ethnic neighborhoods can also impact the food choices available in restaurants.

## Eating Trends

One of the main food trends of today is the desire of consumers to eat more healthful foods prepared in healthful ways. Restaurant owners and managers watch trends like this carefully. This particular trend means that many restaurants now offer dishes that have more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes on their menus.

**Reading Check** **Describe** What aspects of a restaurant does the menu determine?

# Menu Types

You can find just as many different kinds of menus as there are different kinds of food-service operations. Every restaurant has a unique personality. The menu can help new customers understand the other clientele and atmosphere of a restaurant and the food it serves. (See **Figure 12.1**.) Some restaurants have the same patrons nearly every day, or a specific serving style.

A menu could be a printed card that the server or host hands to customers. It could be a hardcover booklet that lists a variety of items for all meals. It also could be a large sign behind a counter or a chalkboard menu that changes daily. The most popular types of menus include fixed and cycle menus; à la carte, semi-à la carte, and table d'hôte menus; prix fixe menus; and meal-based menus.

## Fixed and Cycle Menus

A **fixed menu** offers the same dishes every day for a long period of time. You will generally find fixed menus in dining establishments that serve different people every day, such as hotels, ethnic restaurants, and fast-food operations. Many restaurants use this type of menu.

A **cycle menu** is used for a set period of time, such as a week, a month, or even longer. At the end of this time period, the menu repeats daily dishes in the same order. For example, if a cycle menu is used weekly, it repeats the cycle, offering the same dishes again on each Monday. You will usually find cycle menus used in institutions that serve the same people day after day, such as schools, universities and colleges, hospitals, factories, and military foodservice facilities.

Many different types of restaurants use du jour menus. A **du jour menu** lists dishes that are available on that particular day. It is a useful menu for restaurants that offer many specialty items, or for listing daily specials at any type of restaurant. A du jour menu may or may not have prices listed on it.

## À la Carte, Semi-à la Carte, and Table d'Hôte Menus

In family-style and fine-dining restaurants, you will most often find foods listed three different ways on the menu:

- An **à la carte** (ä-lə-'kärt) **menu** offers each food and beverage item priced and served separately.
- On a **semi-à la carte menu**, you usually will find the appetizers and desserts priced separately. The entrée will probably include a salad or soup, potato or rice, vegetable, and possibly a beverage, at a single price.
- A **table d'hôte** (tä-bəl-'dōt) **menu** lists complete meals, from appetizers to desserts and sometimes beverages, for one set price. A set banquet menu is also an example of a table d'hôte menu. However, in a set banquet menu, everyone is served the same meal for a set price.

## Prix Fixe Menus

A **prix fixe** ('prē-'fēks) **menu** is similar to a table d'hôte menu in that it offers a complete meal for a set price. With a prix fixe menu, however, the customer chooses one selection from each course offered by the restaurant. Prix fixe menus are sometimes used at elegant restaurants. Some banquets also use prix fixe menus.

## Meal-Based Menus

Other types of menus include breakfast, lunch, dinner, and ethnic. A menu that shows dishes available for a single meal is called a **meal-based menu**. Many foodservice operations have separate menus for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

If a restaurant offers breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals all day, it will sometimes list them together on the same menu. This type of menu is called a **California menu**. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus may be listed as à la carte, semi-à la carte, table d'hôte, or as prix fixe offerings.

**FIGURE 12.1 Menu Types**

**On the Menu** This restaurant serves every meal of the day as shown by the menu. What type of menu is it?



**Breakfast**

Most breakfast menus are made up of inexpensive food items that are cooked to order. This means that the dishes are not cooked until the customer places his or her order with the server. The variety of foods available means that customers can create their own specialized breakfasts.

Breakfast menus may be à la carte or continental. À la carte menus price and serve each item separately. A **continental menu** provides mostly a selection of juices, beverages, and baked goods. Continental menus are usually used only for breakfasts.

Breakfast menus usually include juices, fruits, cereals, eggs, French toast, pancakes, waffles, baked goods, beverages, and side items. Side items listed on breakfast menus often include toast, potatoes, grits, or various breakfast meats.



## Lunch

Lunch menus usually provide a wide selection of à la carte items. They also offer table d'hôte combinations, such as a soup and salad, or a soup and a sandwich.

Lunch portions are usually smaller than dinner portions, so they are usually lower priced. Some foodservice facilities offer daily lunch specials.

Lunch menus generally include appetizers, soups, salads, entrées, sandwiches, accompaniments, and desserts. An **accompaniment** is an item that comes with an entrée. Accompaniments might include a choice of potato, rice, or pasta, vegetable, or a small salad.

## Dinner

Dinner menus usually include the same food categories as lunch menus. However, dinner menus are more complex to prepare

and generally require more equipment and better-trained staff. Dinner menus have more selections, offer larger portions, and have higher prices.

Dinner is the most unhurried meal of the day. Customers often have limited time for breakfast and lunch. They often like to eat more slowly and spend time visiting during dinner.

## Ethnic

An **ethnic menu** represents food choices from a specific country, such as China, Italy, Mexico, or France. Most people enjoy trying different ethnic foods for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

You may find that ethnic food preferences are different in various regions of the United States. Even different areas of a city or town may have different ethnic food preferences.



**Reading Check** Define What is a prix fixe menu?

## SECTION 12.1



### After You Read

#### Review Key Concepts

1. **Explain** how geography and culture can influence a menu.
2. **Describe** a cycle menu.

#### Practice Culinary Academics



#### Social Studies

3. Evaluate the types of restaurants and their menus in a neighborhood of your community. What does this tell you about the local culture? If possible, interview long-term residents of the area about how the local businesses have changed while they have lived there. What does this tell you about how the culture has changed?

**NCSS VC Individuals, Groups, and Institutions** Describe the various forms institutions take, and explain how they develop and change over time.



#### English Language Arts

4. Imagine that you are opening a restaurant and getting ready to plan the menu. The restaurant can be any type you like, and will be located in the neighborhood where you live. Create a plan that evaluates each of the factors that affect

menu choice, based on the type of restaurant you imagine you will open and your neighborhood.

**NCTE 12** Use language to accomplish individual purposes.



#### Mathematics

5. During dinner service last month, 500 customers ordered from your prix fixe menu, while 3,500 customers ordered à la carte. What is the ratio of prix fixe to à la carte customers? What fraction of all customers ordered prix fixe?

**Math Concept Ratios and Fractions** A ratio, which can be written in fractional notation, compares one number to a second number. A fraction compares a part of a whole to the whole amount. Reduce both to lowest terms.

**Starting Hint** For the ratio, write a fraction with prix fixe dinners over à la carte dinners, and reduce. The second question asks you to compare prix fixe dinners to total dinners served.

**NCTM Number and Operations** Understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems.



Check your answers at this book's Online Learning Center at [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com).

# Menu Planning and Design

## Reading Guide

### Before You Read

**Two-Column Notes** Two-column notes are a useful way to study and organize what you have read. Divide a piece of paper into two columns. In the left column, write down main ideas. In the right column, list supporting details.

### Read to Learn

#### Key Concepts

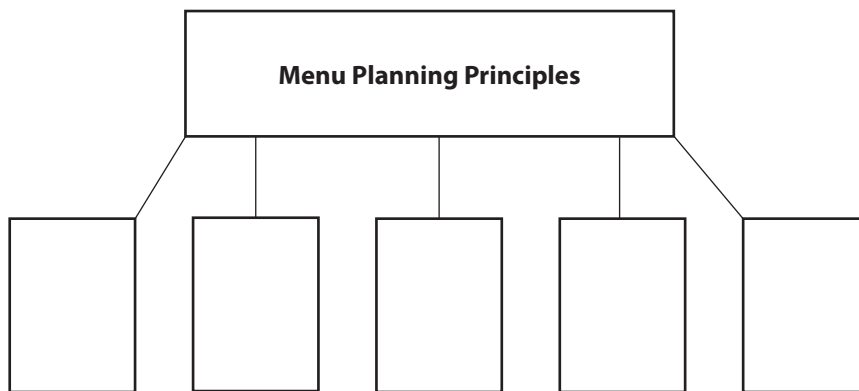
- **Evaluate** basic menu planning principles.
- **Define** menu styles and design guidelines.
- **Explain** different menu categories and how they are typically listed.


#### Main Idea

Foodservice professionals have developed several principles to plan successful menus. Once the menu is planned it needs to be organized to appeal to the customer.

#### Graphic Organizer

Fill in each of the five menu planning principles in the five rectangles of a concept map like this one, along with a brief description of each principle.



 **Graphic Organizer** Go to this book's Online Learning Center at [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) for a printable graphic organizer.

*Careful planning can make a menu a success.*

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

#### English Language Arts

**NCTE 4** Use written language to communicate effectively.

#### Mathematics

**NCTM Number and Operations** Understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems.

**NCTE** National Council of Teachers of English

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**NSES** National Science Education Standards

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# Menu Basics

Imagine that you must plan and write a menu for a foodservice operation. You will want to write a clear and accurate menu that is easy to read. Foodservice professionals have created a set of principles that will guide you in planning a unique and appealing menu. Your menu will help your operation sell its food and meet customers' expectations.

The person who is responsible for planning the menu depends on the type of facility. In many foodservice facilities, the management staff plans the menu. In a large foodservice facility, such as a hotel, the executive chef works with management to plan the menu. Registered dietitians (RDs), foodservice directors, and chefs write menus for hospitals, schools, nursing homes, and other institutions. The main office usually plans the menu for chain restaurants.

## Menu Planning Principles

You have already learned about various factors that influence menu planning. Foodservice professionals have developed some additional principles that will help you plan successful menus.

### Variety

Some foodservice operations have limited menus. For example, a restaurant might offer only gourmet pizzas, or a school cafeteria might have a cycle menu. However, most customers expect to see a variety of dishes on a menu.

You can vary the types of food that you will offer. You also can vary the way the food is prepared. For example, for appetizers, you might have deep-fried vegetables and a cold shrimp cocktail. Entrées may include chicken, beef, and pork that are available roasted, baked, or broiled.

The visual **appeal**, or attraction, of a finished meal is also important. A meal without a variety of colors, shapes, sizes, temperatures, flavors, textures, number of items, and

## Small Bites

**Life Cycle of a Dish** You must change the dishes on your menu on a regular basis. There are five stages in the life of any menu item:

- Development, when the dish and its ingredients are planned.
- Introduction, when the dish is first placed on the menu.
- Growth, when the dish begins to be popular among customers.
- Maturity, when the dish has gained its highest popularity.
- Decline, when the dish begins to lose popularity.

It is important to remove a dish from a menu either before or just as it begins to go into decline.

different arrangements lacks appeal. Imagine a plate that contains barbecued chicken, a baked potato sprinkled with chives, and crisp carrots. This meal is colorful and has many textures and shapes.

Another way to add visual interest to meals is with garnishes. A **garnish** is an edible food, such as a sprig of parsley or an orange slice, that is placed on or around food to add color or flavor. A simple lettuce leaf and tomato slice can brighten up an ordinary chicken sandwich.

### Balance

Fruits, vegetables, starches, meats and other protein foods, and dairy products are all essential parts of a healthful diet. A menu should include foods from each of these groups.

When a menu offers meal options, think about how foods will look on the plate. You will add to the visual appeal and flavor interest by varying the flavors, shapes, colors, and sizes of foods.

**Placement** Visualize how the foods will look on the plate and how the plate will be placed in front of the customer. **Plating** is the arrangement of food and garnishes on a plate.

Good plating is key to visual appeal. Attractively plated food leads to enhanced customer satisfaction.

**Serving Size** Do the portions of food look too small or too large on the plate? Will customers think they are getting their money's worth?

**Proportion** The **proportion** of a dish is the ratio of one food to another and to the plate. Is the proportion pleasing to the eye? For example, if you offer a smaller portions of food for children, the portions should be balanced in size to each other and to the size of the plate.

**Number of Foods on a Plate** As a general rule, an odd number of foods on a plate is more visually pleasing than an even number of foods on a plate.

## Truthfulness

FDA guidelines require that certain menu statements are accurate. A guideline that shows truthfulness in statements about nutrition, quantity, quality, grade, and freshness is called a **truth-in-menu guideline**. (See **Figure 12.2**.) Restaurants that do not follow these guidelines can be required to pay a penalty.

For example, “homestyle pies” must be baked in the establishment’s kitchen, not purchased already prepared. “Louisiana frog legs”

must have come from Louisiana. However, some geographic names are accepted as generic descriptions, such as French fries or New England clam chowder.

Federal law also requires that nutritional statements like “low fat” or “light” be truthful. Restaurants must be able to prove any nutritional claims that are made in advertising. Heart patients on restricted diets may order a meal based on its nutritional claim. What might happen if a dish labeled “cholesterol free” on a restaurant menu is not really cholesterol free?

## Nutrition

Regardless of the type of foodservice business, menus should offer healthful food choices. A menu planner at an institution has a special responsibility to provide nutritious, appealing, and well-prepared meals. People who eat at institutions usually cannot go somewhere else if they do not like the food. Nursing homes and hospitals must also offer a variety of foods for patients who need special diets, such as those following low-fat diets and people with diabetes or food allergies.

**Low-Fat Diets** People follow low-fat diets for many reasons, such as heart disease, cancer, weight control, or just to maintain a healthful lifestyle. These people need foods high in fiber and low in fat and cholesterol.



**Proper Balance** Color, proportion, serving size and placement are all important components of a visually appealing meal. *Do you think one of these plates of food is more visually appealing?*

## FIGURE 12.2 Truth-in-Menu Guidelines

**Accurate Menus** Federal law requires that certain statements on menus be accurate.

*Why is this important?*

Guideline	Examples
1. Brand names must be represented accurately.	Examples of brand names of products on a menu are: Hunt's Ketchup, Hellmann's Mayonnaise, Green Giant Frozen Vegetables, and Butterball Turkey.
2. Dietary and nutritional claims must be accurate.	To protect customers from potential health hazards, the dietary structure of food must be correctly stated. For example, low-sodium or fat-free foods must be correctly prepared to ensure the protection of customers. All nutritional claims must be supported with statistical data.
3. The preservation of food must be accurate.	The preservation of food is as follows: frozen; chilling; dehydration; drying, such as sun or smoking; bottled; and canned. If a menu planner wishes to use the previous terms, the terms must be used correctly on the menu. For example, fresh fish is not frozen.
4. Quantity must be accurate.	If a sirloin is 16 ounces, it must be stated on the menu that this is the weight prior to cooking.
5. Location of ingredients must be accurate.	If Dover Sole is on the menu, it must actually be from Dover, England. Pancakes with Vermont maple syrup must be served with syrup from Vermont, not New Hampshire.
6. Quality or grade must be accurate.	When listing quality or grade for meats, dairy products, poultry, and vegetables or fruits, accuracy is critical. For example, if you state that a steak is "prime sirloin," it must be exactly that. You cannot use choice-grade meats and say that they are prime on the menu.
7. Cooking techniques must be accurate.	If broiled swordfish is on your menu, it must be cooked exactly that way. You cannot serve the swordfish baked.
8. Pictures must be accurate.	For example, apple pie à la mode must be apple pie with ice cream.
9. Descriptions of food products must be accurate.	If shrimp cocktail is described on the menu as "four jumbo shrimp on a bed of crushed ice with a zesty cocktail sauce and lemon wedge," and the shrimp cocktail comes with medium-size shrimp, the description is incorrect.

Examples of low-fat, high-fiber foods include fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain breads and cereals.

**Diabetes** People with diabetes must balance food, portion sizes, exercise, and medication to stay healthy. Menu items that are appropriate for people with diabetes include fruits and vegetables; lean meats, poultry, and fish; low-fat and sugar-free products; and whole grains. It is also helpful to list information about the carbohydrate content of menu items.

**Food Allergies** You must provide detailed information to customers about common foods and ingredients that may cause allergic reactions. For example, a sauce that has peanuts should be listed on the menu. This way, customers who are allergic to peanuts can avoid the dish.

### Flexibility

Menus need to change from time to time for many reasons. The target market or the cost of various ingredients may change.



▼ **Food Allergies** Menus should include detailed descriptions of the ingredients in dishes for customers with common food allergies. *How can customers prevent allergic reactions to foods?*

Shellfish



Fish



Tree Nuts  
(such as walnuts  
and pecans)



Peanuts



Milk Products



Soy Products



Wheat



Eggs

## Write Menu Descriptions

Often, the basic menu list is a description of each item in the most appealing language possible. Because of limited space, each description should be as short as possible.

If customers do not understand what a dish is, they will not order it. Descriptions need to be clear and specific. For example, “fish” is too general. What kind of fish? How big is it? How is it cooked? How is it seasoned? “8-ounce charbroiled salmon with dill sauce” is a much better menu description.

It is also important that the actual food matches the printed menu description. The fish described above should indeed be salmon, weigh 8 ounces before cooking, be charbroiled, and come with dill sauce. **Entice**, or attract, customers with honest descriptions. If the meal they select from your menu does not meet their expectations, they will be disappointed.



**Reading Check** **Determine** Who is responsible for planning the menu at a nursing home?

## Menu Style and Design

You are given menus from two different restaurants. One is a thin piece of paper that doubles as a place mat. It features meals on the front and children’s activities on the back. The other menu has a padded cover with the restaurant’s name embossed in gold. The menu items are written in elegant letters on thick, cream-colored paper. Without even looking at the menu items, what are your impressions of these two restaurants? What kind of atmosphere would you expect at each?

The menu style and design reflect the personality of a restaurant and the customers who frequent it. Menus can also be a creative way to market a restaurant. Some menus feature the history of the building or the person who founded the eatery. Others display the daily menu in elegant calligraphy. Some display the day’s menu casually on a chalkboard.

The menu is the main way in which a food-service operation communicates with its customers. The factors that have the most impact on menu style and design are the same influences on the menu that were discussed in Section 12.1.

Once you know what types of food to include on a menu, you need to organize it in a way that is most appealing to the customer. Dishes that are grouped in categories are easier for customers to find. The look and feel of the menu will also influence what customers think about the food.

The menu's cover design, color, style of lettering, weight of the paper, and the way descriptions are worded influence how customers feel about the restaurant. There are three common formats of menus. Each sets a different tone for a meal.

## Printed Menu Format

A **printed menu** is any form of printed menu list that is handed to customers as soon as they sit down. These menus often contain a list of specials. A special list that is fastened directly to the menu is called a **clip-on**. Daily specials can also be written on folded cards that stand on the table. This is called a **table tent**. A table tent can also be inserted in a stand that sits on the table. Printed menus can be changed daily using a computer and printer. There are also computer programs that can help you design and print specialized menus.

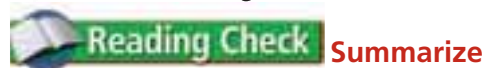
## Menu Board Format

A **menu board** contains a handwritten or printed menu on a board on a wall or easel. It can easily reflect daily menu changes. For example, a chalkboard can be erased and a board with printed inserts can be changed. Its informality and flexibility make it perfect for use in cafeterias and fast-food restaurants. The chalkboard menu also can be used in an upscale restaurant to emphasize freshness and creativity.

## Spoken Menu Format

In some restaurants, after a customer is seated, a server states what foods are available and the prices of each. This is a **spoken menu**. It is often limited to a few items. Other restaurants present only the daily specials as a spoken menu.

Some foodservice professionals believe that a spoken menu is friendly and increases conversation between customers and servers. Others think that a spoken menu does not allow the customer time to study the menu and make a decision. Many guests view spoken menus as a sign of well-trained servers.



### Summarize

Describe the menu board format.

## Menu Categories


Regardless of size and style, all printed menus are broken down into categories. The type of restaurant determines the categories and the order in which they are listed. Some restaurants use all of the menu categories but change the names to reflect a menu theme. For example, a restaurant with a sports theme might label its appetizers as "First Inning." Other restaurants add and delete categories based on the type of meal they serve. For example, a breakfast menu would not include appetizers, but it might include a section of "skillet items." Generally, categories are listed in the order in which they are consumed.

- **Appetizers** Appetizers can be hot or cold, and can range from nachos to fruit salad to crab cakes. (See Chapter 19 for more information on appetizers.)
- **Soups** On some menus, soups and appetizers appear in the same category. Cold and hot soup choices range from thin, savory broths to thick, creamy chowders. See Chapter 20 for more information on soups.
- **Salads** This category refers to salads made with fresh, crisp vegetables and

sometimes fruit or nuts. Some house salads come with a choice of dressings that are created by the restaurant.

- **Cold Entrées** These entrées include salads topped with poultry, ham, or seafood, as well as cold meat, fruit, and cheese platters.
- **Hot Entrées** The ingredients and cooking methods for hot entrées vary greatly. Hot entrées usually include meat, poultry, fish, or seafood. They also can include casserole items, or extenders. An **extender** is an item made from leftover, low-cost ingredients. Vegetarian dishes such as vegetable lasagna are also popular hot entrées.
- **Sandwiches** Sandwiches, such as hamburgers and grilled cheese, are often shown only on lunch menus. They can be served either hot or cold and can be made from many different ingredients. Sandwiches often come with various breads, condiments, and spreads. See Chapter 19 for more information on sandwiches.

- **Accompaniments** Vegetables and starches that serve as side dishes fall into this category. Vegetables provide a healthful, low-cost, colorful addition to meals. Starches include pasta, potatoes, rice, and other grains.
- **Desserts** Desserts often are displayed on separate menus or on dessert trays. Because many customers do not eat dessert at every meal, servers may need to spend extra time selling desserts. Desserts can include ice creams, puddings, and pastries.
- **Cheeses and Fruits** Cheeses such as brie (brē) and Gouda ('gü-də) are often listed with fresh fruits as an alternative to an appetizer or dessert.
- **Beverages** This category lists beverage selections and prices. This usually includes juices, milk, coffee, tea, and soft drinks.

 **Reading Check** **Identify** What food items might be found in the accompaniments category?

## SECTION 12.2 After You Read

### Review Key Concepts

1. **Summarize** the items to think about when you plan a balanced meal.
2. **Describe** the spoken menu format.
3. **Summarize** the hot entrée category of a menu.

### Practice Culinary Academics

#### English Language Arts

4. You have been asked to design a menu for a new upscale restaurant. Think of a theme for the restaurant, and describe how you would incorporate that theme into the menu design. List menu items for each category.

**NCTE 4** Use written language to communicate effectively.

### Mathematics

5. When you plan your menu, you determine that 40% of your entrées should be vegetarian. What fraction of entrées will be vegetarian? If 62½% of your appetizers are vegetarian, what fraction of appetizers are vegetarian?

#### **Math Concept** Converting Percents to

**Fractions** Change percents into fractions by writing the percent as the numerator and 100 as the denominator. If the percent has a mixed number, change it to an improper fraction, then multiply by  $\frac{1}{100}$ .

**Starting Hint** Convert 40% into  $\frac{40}{100}$ , and reduce to lowest terms. 62½% should first be converted to an improper fraction, then multiplied by  $\frac{1}{100}$ , and finally reduced to lowest terms.

**NCTM Number and Operations** Understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems.



Check your answers at this book's Online Learning Center at [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com).



# Pricing Menu Items

## Reading Guide

### Before You Read

**Look It Up** As you read this section, keep a dictionary nearby in addition to the glossary at the back of the book. If you hear or read a word that you do not know, look it up in the glossary or the dictionary. Before long, the practice will become a habit. You will be amazed at how many new words you learn.

### Read to Learn

#### Key Concepts

- **Identify** the influences that impact menu prices.
- **Compare and contrast** various menu pricing methods.

#### Main Idea

The final step in creating a menu is setting the prices. Choose the correct pricing to help make your business a success.

### Content Vocabulary

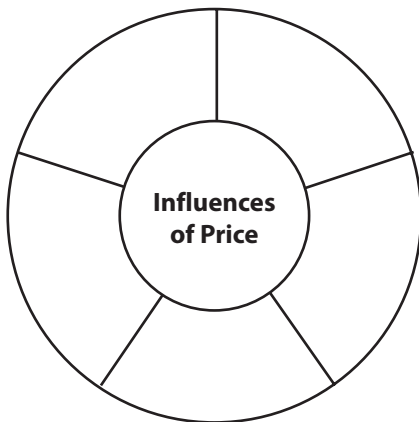
- operating cost
- disposable income
- factor method
- markup-on-cost method
- contribution markup method
- covers
- average check method
- competitors' pricing method
- psychological pricing method

### Academic Vocabulary

- guide
- upscale

### Graphic Organizer

Use a describing wheel like this one to identify the influences that impact menu prices.



**Graphic Organizer** Go to this book's Online Learning Center at [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) for a printable graphic organizer.

*Menu items must be priced correctly to make a profit.*

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

#### English Language Arts

**NCTE 4** Use written language to communicate effectively.

#### Mathematics

**NCTM Number and Operations** Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.

#### NCTM Problem Solving

Apply and adapt a variety of appropriate strategies to solve problems.

#### Social Studies

**NCSS VII B Production, Distribution, and Consumption** Analyze the role that supply and demand, prices, incentives, and profits play in determining what is produced and distributed in a competitive market system.

**NCTE** National Council of Teachers of English

**NCTM** National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

**NSES** National Science Education Standards

**NCSS** National Council for the Social Studies

# Menu Pricing

You have chosen your menu items, written enticing descriptions, and designed your menu to impress even the most experienced diner. Now you must set prices. If prices are too high, you will not attract customers and lose sales. If prices are too low, you will lose money or not meet your operating costs. An **operating cost** is anything that is a cost of doing business.

Menu prices must cover operating costs. They must also be fair to the customer. Menu prices are often influenced by labor, competition, customers, atmosphere, food and facility costs, and location.

- **Labor** Menu items that need more time, care, and skill in preparation are often set at a higher price. In general, a menu prepared by an experienced kitchen staff takes more labor. These menu items tend to be more expensive.
- **Competition** Review competitors' menus to see what they charge for similar items. Use your competition as a **guide**, or something that provides information, only, since details like portion size and ingredient quality may be different.
- **Customers** The types of customers your foodservice operation attracts will influence your menu prices. For example, you may charge less if your main customers are families rather than business professionals.
- **Atmosphere** The style of your foodservice operation helps determine prices. Customers expect fine-dining restaurants to have higher prices than casual, family-style restaurants.
- **Location** Restaurants in cities often serve people with a higher disposable income. **Disposable income** is money that people have left over for extras after paying all their bills. Because of this, restaurants in cities can have higher menu prices than restaurants in small towns.



**Describe** How does competition influence menu pricing?

# Pricing Methods

Setting and tracking the price of menu items enables the restaurant owner to stay in business and enjoy a profit. Some restaurants choose to set menu prices based on the cost of food and other costs associated with running the business. Other menus are priced according to competitor prices and the customer psychology of prices. Each pricing method has its pros and cons. Considering each method can help restaurant owners and managers understand how they can earn the highest profit for the food options and location of the restaurant.

## Factor Method

The **factor method** uses a pricing scale based on a percentage of the food costs needed to operate the restaurant successfully. To use the factor method, you must first determine what the food cost percent should be. To determine the food cost percentage, you divide the total cost of food by the total food sales. Then, take that food cost percent

LE INSALATE	
CAESAR Antipasto upon request	10.95
DE FUNGHI: Mushrooms and vegetables with grilled Shimeke mushrooms	10.50
BELLA: Arugula, parmesan, sun-dried tomatoes, goat cheese, shaved parmesan	8.95
TRE COLORI: Arugula, arbutus, red vegetables and parmesan	8.95
PASTINACA: Beets, grilled pecorino, tomatoes, mozzarella and beef	9.95
SUMMATA: Soft ricotta, red and yellow tomatoes and beef	10.50
SPINACH SALAD: Baby spinach, garbanzo beans, goat cheese, walnuts, bacon bits and green apples	10.50

GLI ANTIPASTI	
MARINATED WHITE ANCHOVIES: With olives and fresh green. Pledge olive oil and lemon juice	10.95
CERTIFIED ORGANIC SALMON CARPACCIO: Pounder fish with celery, capers, lemon and parmesan	13.50
TUNA CARPACCIO: Thin sliced with lemon and extra sauce. More green and cherry tomatoes	13.50
CALAMARI FRITTI: Rings only and served with arbutus sauce	8.95
BRESOLA: Cured beef, sliced thin with arugula and Parmesan	14.50
PROSCIUTTO E MELONE: Parma certified with melon	14.50
BEEF CARPACCIO: Served with arugula and Parmesan	14.50
PORTOBELLO UMBRICO: Grilled mushrooms with honey-orange sauce and Umbrian cheese	12.50
DREPILLE SCAMPY: Crispy scallops with shrimp and garlic sauce	12.50
MELANZANE ALLA PARMIGIANA: Eggplant topped with tomato and beef	13.95

- **Set Prices** Menu pricing must cover the cost of food, labor, and facility expenses, and a profit for the restaurant. *What other factors affect menu pricing?*

and divide it into 100%, which will result in your factor. Multiply the factor by the cost of the menu item. This will give you the menu selling price.

For example, if your food cost is \$5,000 and your total sales are \$20,000, this formula can help you determine your food cost percentage:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{\$20000.00.} \overline{) \text{\$5000.00.}} \\
 \underline{400000} \\
 100000 \\
 \underline{100000} \\
 0
 \end{array}
 \begin{array}{l}
 .25 \text{ (food cost percent)} \\
 \\
 \\
 \\
 \\
 \\
 \end{array}$$

Your food cost percentage is 25%. If a hamburger and French fries cost \$1.50 to make, you would calculate the menu price as follows:

1.  $\frac{4}{.25} = 16$  (factor)
2.  $\$1.50 \times 4 = \$6.00$  (selling price)

You would sell the hamburger and French fries for \$6.00.

## Markup-on-Cost Method

Another common way to determine prices is by using the **markup-on-cost method**. To find the selling price, take the food cost of an item and divide it by the desired food cost percentage.

For example, if you want the food cost percentage to be 25%, and a grilled cheese sandwich and cup of tomato soup cost \$1.25 to make, you would calculate the price as follows:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{\$5.00 (selling price)} \\
 .25 \overline{) \text{\$1.25 (item cost)}}
 \end{array}$$

You would price the grilled cheese sandwich and tomato soup at \$5.

## Contribution Margin Method

The **contribution margin method** is a pricing method that uses a general contribution of customers to costs besides food for running a kitchen. You would add the average contribution margin per guest to the item's standard food cost.

For example, say you want to sell a turkey sandwich. The nonfood costs plus a profit for a month for the restaurant come to \$4,000. The restaurant will serve approximately 30 **covers**, or expected meals, per day, averaging 900 a month. The base food cost for the turkey sandwich is \$3. You would calculate the price as follows:

1.  $\frac{4.44}{900} = 4.44$  (contribution margin)
2.  $\$4.44 + \$3.00 = \$7.44$  (selling price)

## Average Check Method

The **average check method** prices items near an average check that you would like each customer to spend. This amount should be based on the profits you hope to get for a particular breakfast, lunch, or dinner check. For example, if you want an average check total of \$12 per customer for lunch, your menu prices should be set so that most customers will automatically order food and beverages that come out to that total.

## Competitors' Pricing Method

The **competitors' pricing method** charges approximately what the competition charges for similar menu items. Some places charge slightly less in an attempt to attract more customers. Other places may charge slightly more in an attempt to appear more **upscale**, or for more affluent customers. This method is risky because overhead costs such as rent, labor, food costs, and profit are different at every restaurant.



### Working with Percents

People involved in foodservice use percents in daily decision making, but may not have time to perform full calculations. You can estimate a percent of a number by using compatible numbers and mental math.

For example, 28% of \$19.85 is close to 30% of \$20. Multiply 30% by \$20 to get an estimate. The estimation process is easier if you remember these equivalent percents, decimals, and fractions:

Percent	Decimal	Fraction
10%	0.10	$\frac{1}{10}$
20%	0.20	$\frac{1}{5}$
25%	0.25	$\frac{1}{4}$
33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %	0.33	$\frac{1}{3}$
40%	0.40	$\frac{2}{5}$
50%	0.50	$\frac{1}{2}$
66 $\frac{2}{3}$ %	0.66	$\frac{2}{3}$
75%	0.75	$\frac{3}{4}$
80%	0.80	$\frac{4}{5}$

If you want to make a 32% profit on a \$17.80 entree, estimate how much profit that amounts to.

**Math Concept Estimating Percents** To estimate the percent of a number, replace the percent with its closest compatible percent (or its equivalent fraction) and replace the number with its closest compatible number, then multiply.

**Starting Hint** Replace \$17.80 with its closest compatible number by rounding up to the nearest dollar. Find the percent in the table closest to 32%, and then find that percent's equivalent fraction. Multiply this fraction by the number to determine the estimated profit. You can then calculate the actual amount (by multiplying  $\$17.80 \times 0.32$ ) to see how close your estimate is.

**NCTM Number and Operations** Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.

## Psychological Pricing Method

Once the selling price is determined using other methods, the psychological pricing method can be used. The **psychological pricing method** is based on how a customer reacts to menu prices. For example, a customer may be more willing to order a \$6.00 hamburger and French fries if you lower the price to \$5.95.

Moving from one dollar category to another influences how customers view the value they get for their money. A price of \$12.95 raised to \$13.25 seems like a bigger increase than \$13.25 raised to \$13.75. However, the first increase is 30 cents, while the second increase is 50 cents.

Most restaurants start menu prices at the low end of a dollar category so that they can adjust the prices several times without entering the next dollar category. For example, an item at \$13.25 can be raised to \$13.50, and then to \$13.75 before moving into the \$14 range.

Restaurants that emphasize quality food at low prices, such as diners and quick-service restaurants, often use psychological pricing methods. Few fine-dining establishments use this type of pricing because it does not fit their image of luxury and elegance.

## Tracking Results

There are many ways to track how well menu items are selling at your restaurant:

- Review your records to see how well certain menu items sold. Point-of-sale ordering software can help you easily track specific menu items. You can also use sales tax figures to track monthly sales.
- Decide which items will stay on the menu and which will come off. You may wish to modify the price or ingredients of some menu items, depending on what is popular among your customers.

### Reading Check Pricing Methods

Which factors are taken into account when using the psychological pricing method?

## FIGURE 12.3 Risks in Menu Pricing

**Relative Risk** There is a level of risk involved with every pricing method. *Why would some restaurants choose not to use the factor method of pricing?*



## SECTION 12.3

### After You Read

#### Review Key Concepts

1. **Explain** how location influences menu prices.
2. **Describe** how to find a selling price using the markup-on-cost method.

#### Practice Culinary Academics

##### English Language Arts

3. Imagine that you are a consultant who has been hired to help a restaurant set menu prices. The restaurant will be located in the area where your school is located. Create a business report for the restaurant that analyzes the customers and location for the purpose of determining a good price range for the restaurant.

**NCTE 4** Use written language to communicate effectively.

##### Social Studies

4. Research the news for articles about factors that influence the price of different food items. Summarize the stories you find, and then explain how the situation described in the article might influence a restaurant owner who has dishes containing these foods on the menu.

**NCSS VII B Production, Distribution, and Consumption**  
Analyze the role that supply and demand, prices, incentives, and profits play in determining what is produced and distributed in a competitive market system.



#### Mathematics

5. You would like to add whole-grain pancakes to your breakfast menu. If you want the food cost percentage to be 35%, and the pancakes cost \$2.09 to make, use the markup-on-cost method to determine your selling price.

**Math Concept Markup-on-Cost Pricing** Divide the food cost of an item by the desired food cost percentage. Convert the food cost percentage to a decimal by moving the decimal point two places to the left.

**Starting Hint** Convert 35% into a decimal by removing the percent sign and shifting the decimal point two places to the left. Divide the food cost by this decimal to get the selling price.

**NCTM Problem Solving** Apply and adapt a variety of appropriate strategies to solve problems.



Check your answers at this book's Online Learning Center at [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com).

### Chapter Summary

Consider your target customers, cost, the type of food served, the type of equipment, operational skills required, geography and culture, and eating trends when you plan a menu. Menus should be varied and balanced, and descriptions of menu items should be accurate.

Menu categories include appetizers, soups, salads, cold entrées, hot entrées, sandwiches, accompaniments, desserts, cheeses and fruits,

and beverages. Menu item categories are usually listed in the order that they are consumed.

Menu prices must cover the operating costs of the establishment. Pricing methods include the factor method, the markup-on-cost method, the contribution margin method, the average check method, the competitors' pricing method, and the psychological pricing method. Choose a method carefully.

### Content and Academic Vocabulary Review

1. Arrange the vocabulary terms below into groups of related words. Explain your groupings.

#### Content Vocabulary

- menu (p. 308)
- entrée (p. 309)
- fixed menu (p. 310)
- cycle menu (p. 310)
- du jour menu (p. 310)
- à la carte menu (p. 310)
- semi-à la carte menu (p. 310)
- table d'hôte menu (p. 310)
- prix fixe menu (p. 310)
- meal-based menu (p. 310)
- California menu (p. 310)
- continental menu (p. 311)
- accompaniment (p. 312)
- ethnic menu (p. 312)
- garnish (p. 314)
- plating (p. 314)
- proportion (p. 315)
- truth-in-menu guideline (p. 315)
- printed menu (p. 318)
- clip-on (p. 318)
- table tents (p. 318)
- menu board (p. 318)
- spoken menu (p. 318)
- extender (p. 319)
- operating cost (p. 321)
- disposable income (p. 321)
- factor method (p. 321)
- markup-on-cost method (p. 322)
- contribution margin method (p. 322)
- covers (p. 322)
- average check method (p. 322)
- competitors' pricing method (p. 322)
- psychological pricing method (p. 323)

#### Academic Vocabulary

- dictate (p. 309)
- complex (p. 309)
- appeal (p. 314)
- entice (p. 317)
- guide (p. 321)
- upscale (p. 322)

### Review Key Concepts

2. **Categorize** the factors that influence a menu.
3. **Describe** the types of menus used by foodservice establishments.
4. **Evaluate** basic menu planning principles.
5. **Define** menu styles and design guidelines.
6. **Explain** different menu categories and how they are typically listed.
7. **Identify** the influences that impact menu prices.
8. **Compare and contrast** various menu pricing methods.

### Critical Thinking

9. **Imagine** that you are opening a restaurant. Which type of menu would you choose for your establishment? Give five reasons for your choice.
10. **Describe** what could happen if a foodservice establishment fails to consider food allergies in menu planning. How might this impact the customer?



## Academic Skills

**English Language Arts**

- 11. Modify a Menu** Pretend you are a menu consultant. Get three menus from local foodservice operations. Review each menu and modify them to accommodate one of the following dietary needs: vegan, lactose intolerance, and shellfish allergy. The entire menu need not be changed. Write a letter to each establishment explaining how they can modify their menus to accommodate the need.

**NCTE 5** Use different writing process elements to communicate effectively.

**Science**

- 12. Analyze Menu Prices** It is always useful to compile information for analysis in a scientific way before making a pricing decision.

**Procedure** Create three simple menus of three to five dishes each, and then price each dish using the pricing methods described in the chapter. Vary the menu design and meal descriptions. Then, show fellow students one menu each and have them explain what they would order and why.

**Analysis** Compile data on which dishes were chosen the most from each menu and why. Show your data, and in a short summary analyze how this information might help you plan a menu in the future.

**NSES A** Develop abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry.

**Mathematics**

- 13. Calculate Menu Profitability** Last month, your restaurant featured three different dinner specials. You would like to add one to the permanent menu. You sold 750 steak specials at \$26 each, 600 salmon specials at \$34 each, and 400 pasta specials at \$22.50 each. If the food and preparation costs were \$16 for the steak, \$22 for the salmon, and \$13.50 for the pasta, which item brought in the most revenue? Which generated the most profit? Which had the highest profit margin?

**Math Concept** **Revenue, Profit, and Profit Margin**

The term revenue refers to the total amount of income generated by sales, and generally equals price times quantity sold. Profit equals revenue minus costs. Calculate the profit margin percentage by dividing profit by revenue.

**Starting Hint** Determine the revenue for each item by multiplying its sales price by the quantity sold. Calculate the total profit for each item by first determining total costs for each item (the cost of each item times the quantity sold), and subtracting that from the revenue amount. Divide the total profit by the total revenue for each item and convert the answer to a percentage to find the profit margin.

**NCTM Number and Operations** Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.

## Certification Prep

**Directions** Read the questions. Then, read the answer choices and choose the best possible answer for each.

- 14.** In what type of establishment would you find a fixed menu?
- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| a. coffee shop | c. cafeteria   |
| b. hotel       | d. cruise ship |
- 15.** What course is sometimes displayed on a separate menu?
- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| a. appetizers | c. salads  |
| b. sandwiches | d. dessert |

*Sharpen your test-taking skills to improve your kitchen certification program score.*

**Test-Taking Tip**

In a multiple-choice test, read the questions carefully. Look for negative words (not, never, except, unless), which can affect how you answer the problem.

## Real-World Skills and Applications

## Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills

- 16. Plan a Truthful Menu** Follow your teacher's instructions to divide into small groups. Work together to plan a menu based on the truth-in-menu guidelines. Choose the courses you will offer and create three to five dishes for each course. Then, work together to agree on descriptions that meet the guidelines.

## Communication Skills

- 17. Revise the Cafeteria Menu** Survey fellow students and ask them to rate menu items in your school's cafeteria. Also, ask them for suggestions on how to improve the menu. Write a letter to the cafeteria manager with suggestions for revising the menu based on the information you gathered.

## Technology Applications

- 18. Design a Menu** Technology can be used to plan and organize the look of a restaurant. Use a graphic design program or word processing program to design a menu for a small café. Be sure to consider the potential customers as well as the atmosphere and type of food served when you design the menu. Share your menu with your classmates.

## Financial Literacy

- 19. Determine Selling Price** Use the factor method to determine the selling price of a slice of pepperoni pizza and an iced tea. Your food cost percentage is 50%. The item cost for the pizza is \$3, and the item cost for the iced tea is 50 cents.

## Culinary Lab



*Use the culinary skills you have learned in this chapter.*

## Create a Menu

- 20. Work in Teams** Working as a team, you will create a menu for a new foodservice operation. Consider all of the influences on menus as you plan.
- A. Decide on the menu.** Determine the type of menu and which meal of the day your menu will be for.
- B. Add menu items.** Your menu should have 10 items total. Determine the dishes that will be on the menu and create your descriptions. Be clear and concise, and think about nutrition and special dietary needs. Use the menu characteristics below to help organize the menu.

Menu influences	Target customers, cost, type of food, equipment, worker skill, culture/location, trends
Menu type	Fixed, cycle, à la carte, semi-à la carte, table d'hôte, prix fixe
Menu categories	appetizers, soups, salads, entrées sandwiches, accompaniments, desserts, cheeses/fruits, beverages

- C. Price the menu.** Determine the selling price. Use one of the pricing methods described in the chapter.
- D. Design the menu.** Develop the menu layout, and the display it for the class.

## Create Your Evaluation

Create a rating sheet with spaces for rating design, price, and taste. Rate the design both on appearance and also on organization and ease of reading. Evaluate price on how well the price matches what the dishes seem to be worth. Finally, evaluate the dishes by how they would appeal to different types of customers.