

The FreeFrom Customer @Christmas!

Christmas, parties, functions and weddings can be a bit of a nightmare experience for the Food HyperSensitive [FHS] Customer. Its normally a time where someone else has made the booking, spoken with venue but not really considered the limitations of the FHS colleague. They might be allergic to one of the #14 major allergens or a common food which is not one of the #14 but for them is still an allergen. How can **YOU**, as the food business, make it easier for them?

When Gluten free (GF) is mentioned, please do not be blasé and say, 'it's okay we cater for this all the time!' If they are dairy free (DF) ensure you take note and that provisions are made for a positive experience! Consider what GF bread you are offering, sliced bread or chilled rolls which are brick hard are not acceptable or rolls warmed and served in a sealed bag are fine but consider how they can be opened.

Sample the bread if you would not eat it why would the FHS customer?

Planning FHS Diet Menus - Be inventive when creating the menu, the FHS customer prefers to have dishes like everyone else where possible. If they are paying a substantial amount for their meal, they also want to feel special and not left out. **Starters:** many starters can be created nut, gluten, and milk free. If you must have an alternative produce, it should be of comparable quality. **Main dishes** can be simple to create gluten free and dairy free. Remember to create suitable sauces or gravy, they need to have a good flavour and consistency. This can be done by using meat juices, stock, cornflour, and gravy browning. **Christmas dinner** without the trimmings is a roast dinner and should be charged as such! There are products available such as pigs in blankets, stuffing and Yorkshire puddings that are GF, DF and Nut Free. You will earn a loyal customer if you can be imaginative!

Specifically, Desserts! Firstly **#FruitSaladisNotaPudding!** Even if has tropical fruit and served in an unusual way! Ice Cream is also a copout unless it's made into a sundae with Meringue, chocolate sauce and toppings! There are many options from Christmas Pudding, cheesecakes, crumbles or pies that can be adapted for the FHS.

Back of House

- Create place cards for the table for the FHS customer
- Use different shape plates to differentiate the meals
- Prepare first away from other dishes as necessary
- Make sure all staff are aware of the allergen requirements
- Double check the ingredients in the appropriate FHS dishes
- Labels or flags on the plates can help to differentiate meals too

Front of House

- Ensure the order form has a contact for those with complicated request
- Follow up to reassure prior & during the event
- Ensure they are served what is promised
- Take plates out first before handling other foods
- If there is a query check with the kitchen to clarify - double check, if necessary, the ingredients on packaging

Processes

To enhance the FHS customers experience we recommend you have a process in place, with a dedicated member(s) of staff whose main role is to prepare for and manage the FHS customer.

Communication is Key!

Further fact sheets and additional information to keep your Free From customer safe can be found at - <https://foodallergyaware.co.uk/resources/> - Do you need the help of an 'Allergy Expert' Call s today to see how we can enhance your business offering to the FHS customer!