

# AA Food Tasting and Enhanced Food Tastings

## Guidance notes for Chefs and Managers

### Overview

Is your food up to Rosette standards, or do you want to improve your offering? Benefit from our overt assessment where you can afford to make mistakes and learn by them.

AA Food Tastings can be used for numerous reasons. They are often related to a Hotels Star and quality aspirations, or food issues where AA guidance has been sought, but often with a view towards the AA's Rosette awards.

More often Food Tasting sessions follow on from a Rosette Academy and form an accountable examination of the chef's development. The following notes detail the organisational structure for such a Rosette Food Tasting.



### Here are some points to set-up and understand the structure of the session: -

- There will normally be one AA Consultant, but occasionally there may be two of us, this will be arranged in advance.
- Timing is important. These sessions are best scheduled prior to lunch, or after service, this will need careful consideration as it will be necessary to discuss our feedback with chef and possibly management.
- The procedure is reasonably flexible. However we will need to taste a number of dishes, perhaps five starters, five mains and five deserts.
- In addition, if the meal experience at the establishment includes peripheral courses, (canapés, pre-dessert petit fours, etc) then some or all of these would also be appropriate.
- The normal bread/s should also be presented.
- Usually one plate of each dish would be adequate for tasting by the AA Consultant, the Chef and Manager. If there are greater numbers to taste the dishes perhaps more plates will be necessary (we are not looking to have a meal experience, so plates can normally be shared).
- It would be ideal if Chef is able to taste dishes along with the other taster/s. However, we understand how chef may feel the need to be at the stove. Conversely, if chef is in the kitchen he may be able to come to the table between each dish or even each course for our feed-back. He is the most important person to get the feedback, so we will need his time, even if this has to be after the 'service' of the presented dishes.
- We would like to have sight of a list of the tasting dishes prior to the day.
- We do not present a written report from the session, but simply give our comments; we will also be asking some questions, although again this is not a test, so please relax about this aspect, as the session is designed to show you exactly where your food fits in relation to Rosettes (Star rating standards, etc).
- For clients who have ordered the Enhanced Food Tasting, a small table close to a power socket will allow for the photography rig to be set up.
- The final feedback to the chef will also be recorded during the Enhanced Food Tasting and will be provided along with photography on a CD. This information will also be passed to the attending inspector at your next inspection.



## Food tasting guidance notes

Firstly, a chef should feel relaxed about this event; we are here to help and guide and not to tell you how to cook, what to cook or how to serve. We hope to make clear what our Rosette expectations are, and above all we will reflect on five key elements.



## Flavour, Freshness, Quality, Consistency and Skill.

This is not a Rosette test, nor an opportunity for us to attack chef's style or creativity, but a session designed to look at the food in relation to our expectations and Rosette policies. As such the dishes should be served as you would normally present them (we can normally see when extra embellishments are being applied). If dishes are not presented as normal, but with elaborate garnishes, or by using ingredients that are not the norm, then the wrong feedback will be forthcoming and your investment may have been wasted. Far better for a dish to 'fail' than for you to miss the appropriate comments we may have.



## CONTACT US!

Contact your local inspector or AA Hotel Services on **01256 844455** or email [HotelServicesCustomerSupport@theAA.com](mailto:HotelServicesCustomerSupport@theAA.com)

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