



Event Catering Trends

(2025 Edition – UK)



Whether you're planning a wedding, corporate event, or private celebration, catering has evolved far beyond simply serving food—it's now central to the guest experience. In 2025, UK event catering is more creative, conscious, and curated than ever before. From zero-waste menus and hyper-local sourcing to interactive food stations and theatrical presentation, today's catering reflects a shift in how we celebrate: with intention, style, and unforgettable flavour.

This year's trends speak to changing tastes, sustainability goals, and a growing appetite for immersive dining moments. Whether you're hosting a riverside wedding, a rooftop product launch, or a countryside retreat, the right catering can elevate your event from memorable to extraordinary.

Here's a look at the top catering trends that defined UK events in 2025—and are set to grow even stronger in the years ahead.

1. Interactive Food Stations



Static buffets are out—interactive food stations are in. These dynamic setups invite guests to engage with chefs, customise their meals, and enjoy food as part of the entertainment. It's a brilliant way to add energy, creativity, and conversation to your event.

Popular station ideas include:

- Build-your-own bao buns or tacos with a variety of fillings and toppings
- Fresh pasta rolled and cooked to order, served with seasonal sauces
- Live sushi rolling or oyster shucking for a touch of culinary theatre
- Carving stations paired with artisan breads, chutneys, and gourmet sides

These stations are especially popular at weddings and corporate events, where they help break the ice and spark interaction. Whether it's a chef flambéing in front of guests or a DIY taco bar with vibrant ingredients, interactive dining adds a memorable layer to the experience.

2. Sustainable, Local & Seasonal Menus

Sustainability remains a driving force in UK event catering, with clients increasingly prioritising menus that are local, seasonal, and low-waste. These choices not only reduce environmental impact—they also result in fresher, more flavourful food that reflects the best of British produce.

Key elements of sustainable catering include:

- Locally sourced ingredients from nearby farms, fisheries, and artisan producers
- Nose-to-tail and root-to-stem cooking, minimising waste and celebrating every part of the ingredient
- Compostable or reusable serve ware, reducing single-use plastics and landfill waste



- Vegetarian-forward and plant-based menus, which naturally carry a lower carbon footprint

Riverside venues, in particular, lend themselves beautifully to this approach—often featuring menus that highlight local river fish, farmhouse cheeses, and seasonal garden harvests. It's a way to honour the landscape, support local suppliers, and serve food that's as thoughtful as it is delicious.

3. Global Flavours with a Local Twist



UK event catering is celebrating the world—one plate at a time. Guests are embracing global flavours with open arms, but what's truly trending is the British spin on international cuisine. It's not just about authenticity; it's about storytelling through food.

Picture this:

- Sri Lankan curries made with UK-grown vegetables and fragrant local herbs
- Middle Eastern flatbreads baked in wood-fired ovens and topped with seasonal British produce
- Cornish crab tacos with lime aioli and pickled garden radish
- Japanese-inspired canapés using Scottish salmon and wasabi crème fraîche

Fusion menus are thriving, especially when they reflect the couple's or company's heritage, travels, or shared passions. These menus offer a deeply personal touch—turning the meal into a cultural journey that's as meaningful as it is delicious.

Whether it's a nod to a family recipe, a favourite holiday destination, or a blend of two culinary traditions, fusion catering adds richness, relevance, and originality to any event.

4. Grazing Tables & Luxe Sharing Boards

Grazing tables and sharing boards continue to reign as one of the most loved catering features—perfect for laid-back receptions, cocktail hours, or as eye-catching centrepieces that invite guests to mingle and indulge.

These beautifully styled spreads go beyond just food—they're part of the décor. Think British charcuterie, artisan cheeses, Mediterranean antipasti, or brunch-inspired boards, all artfully arranged to spark conversation and look stunning in photos.

Trending now:

- Brunch-themed grazing with mini pastries, smoked salmon, soft-boiled eggs, and fresh fruit
- Dessert grazing tables featuring handmade chocolates, macarons, tarts, and edible florals
- Late-night snack boards stacked with sliders, seasoned chips, dips, and bite-sized comfort food

Whether styled with rustic wooden boards or sleek marble slabs, these setups offer flexibility, flavour, and flair—making them ideal for weddings, private parties, and corporate events alike.



5. Signature Drinks & Bespoke Bars



Drinks are no longer just a side note—they're a centrepiece. From signature cocktails to mobile gin and whisky bars, beverage service is becoming a key storytelling element at events. Whether alcoholic or not, mixology is being used to reflect personality, brand identity, and event themes in creative, memorable ways.

Popular features include:

- Seasonal spritzes and botanical cocktails with fresh herbs and edible flowers
- Infused iced teas and craft sodas for vibrant non-alcoholic options
- His & hers cocktails or themed pairings tailored to weddings and private parties
- Espresso martini and negroni bars for stylish evening receptions

Event hosts are collaborating with mixologists to design drinks that surprise and delight—whether it’s a smoky whisky pour at a riverside retreat or a citrusy spritz served from a vintage van at a garden wedding. These curated beverage experiences add flair, flavour, and a personal touch that guests remember long after the last toast.

6. The Rise of Plant-Based Menus



With more guests embracing vegan and flexitarian lifestyles, plant-based catering has stepped into the spotlight. No longer a side note or dietary accommodation, these menus are often the centrepiece—celebrated for their creativity, colour, and bold flavours.

Expect dishes that are anything but boring:

- Roasted cauliflower steaks with chimichurri and toasted seeds
- Heritage beetroot tartlets with cashew cream and microgreens
- Wild mushroom arancini served with truffle aioli
- Vegan chocolate ganache tarts topped with edible flowers and citrus zest

These options not only cater to diverse dietary needs—they also elevate the visual and sensory experience of your event. Whether served as part of a tasting menu or a vibrant buffet, plant-based dishes are proving that sustainability and indulgence can go hand in hand.

7. Tasting Menus & Small Plates

The classic three-course meal is no longer the default. In its place, tasting menus, family-style spreads, and curated small plates are redefining how guests experience food—bringing variety, creativity, and a more social, relaxed atmosphere to the table.

Couples and event hosts are increasingly opting for 5- to 8-course tasting menus, where each dish plays a role in a larger culinary narrative. These menus are perfectly portioned, artfully presented, and often highlight seasonal ingredients and chef-led storytelling—turning dinner into a journey.

Bonus: Smaller plates make it easier to accommodate dietary preferences and restrictions, ensuring every guest feels considered and included.



8. Late-Night Food Moments

Don't forget the end of the night! As events stretch into the evening, late-night food stations have become a must-have feature—offering comfort, surprise, and a second wind for guests as the party winds down.



Trending ideas include:

- Gourmet toasties or nostalgic crumpet bars
- Street food vans serving pizza, burgers, or classic fish & chips
- Mini breakfast bites like bacon rolls, hash browns, and vegan muffins
- Sweet treats such as doughnut walls, soft-serve stands, or cookie carts

These late-night moments often become unexpected highlights—delighting guests just when energy dips and keeping the celebration going strong.

9. Catering as Theatre

Today's catering isn't just about taste—it's a performance. More and more clients are embracing experiences that blend flavour with flair, turning meals into moments guests won't forget.

Popular experiential touches include:

- Tableside finishing like torched meringue, poured sauces, or garnishes added with precision
- Live chef demonstrations that showcase technique and tell the story behind each dish
- Interactive plating done in front of guests for a dramatic, Instagram-worthy reveal

These immersive elements work especially well at luxury weddings, private dinners, and intimate events where every detail is curated to impress. It's not just about what's on the plate—it's how it arrives, how it's shared, and how it makes people feel.



Final Thoughts

In 2025, UK event catering has become a true art form—bold in flavour, beautiful in presentation, and full of personality. It's no longer just about feeding guests; it's about crafting a culinary experience that lingers in memory long after the last plate is cleared.

This year, we've seen catering evolve into a central storytelling element of events, reflecting personal tastes, cultural influences, and sustainability values. And the momentum is only growing—trends are pushing boundaries and redefining what's possible.

Whether you're planning a countryside wedding, a riverside reception, or a sleek corporate event in the city, there's never been a better time to explore catering options that are as unique and meaningful as your celebration.

Planning an Event with Food at the Heart?

At Riverside Marquee, we work with one of the UK's most talented chefs to offer menus that are as memorable as the setting. From elegant tasting menus to street food under the stars, we'll help you create a dining experience your guests won't forget.

Get in touch to learn more about our catering options.