

# CORPORATE CATERING CHECKLIST FOR THE BAY AREA

Created for Executive Assistants, Operations Managers,  
HR Managers, and Employee Experience Leads



## EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO ENSURE A FLAWLESS CORPORATE EVENT EXPERIENCE

Crafted from over 30 years of expertise in  
Bay Area and Silicon Valley catering excellence.



Book a free tasting today at  
[chefkulbir@indiapalacecatering.com](mailto:chefkulbir@indiapalacecatering.com)



# The Bay Area Office Manager's Corporate Catering Checklist

## India Palace Catering EXECUTIVE CATERING

Everything you need to plan, vet, and execute a flawless catered event from a caterer who's done it 1,000 times.

After 30 years of catering for Bay Area companies, I've seen every catering mistake there is, from late food, missing dietary labels, wrong headcount, cold food and surprise invoices. This checklist exists so you never have to experience any of them. Use it with any caterer. The only thing I ask is that when you're ready to experience catering that handles all of this automatically, you know where to find us.

— Chef Kulbir Singh, Owner, India Palace Catering | Serving the Bay Area Since 1992

### Before the Event

#### COLLECT DIETARY RESTRICTIONS IN WRITING

Send a form with specific options: vegan, vegetarian, GF, halal, kosher, dairy-free, nut allergy. Do this at least 2 weeks before your event. Don't rely on Slack messages.

#### SET HEADCOUNT DEADLINE AT 48 HOURS BEFORE DELIVERY

After 48 hours, most caterers can't adjust without extra charges. Tell your team: "RSVP closes [date]. Late submissions won't be accommodated." Then stick to it.

#### SEND DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS TO YOUR CATERER IN WRITING

Include: building address, floor, room name, parking/loading dock access, elevator access, security check-in, and a mobile contact number. Don't assume they've been there.

#### CONFIRM SETUP AND CLEANUP ARE INCLUDED IN YOUR QUOTE

Ask explicitly: "Does your team set up the buffet, label every dish, and clean up after?" If the answer is no or "that's extra," factor it into your decision.

#### REQUEST A FULL ITEMIZED QUOTE IN WRITING

Line items must include: food cost per person, delivery fee, setup, equipment rental, service staff, and gratuity. No surprises on the invoice means you confirmed every line item upfront.

#### CONFIRM DIETARY LABELS ON EVERY DISH

Every dish should be labeled: name, primary ingredients, and dietary tags (V = Vegan, VG = Vegetarian, GF = Gluten-Free, H = Halal, DF = Dairy-Free). No label = red flag.

### Is Your Caterer a Real Partner? Rate 1–5.

1. Handles all dietary needs (vegan, halal, GF, vegetarian) from one menu without special orders?

1 2 3 4 5

2. Delivers on time, every time, with real-time updates?

1 2 3 4 5

3. Handles setup, dietary labeling, and cleanup included in the price?

1 2 3 4 5

4. Responds quickly and makes it right when something goes wrong?

1 2 3 4 5

5. Accommodates last-minute and emergency orders at the same quality?

1 2 3 4 5

Your Score:

20–25 Great catering partner. Hold onto them.

12–19 Room to improve. Consider a reliable backup.

Below 12 You're spending too much time managing this. Time to switch.

### Day of the Event

#### CONFIRM DELIVERY TIME THE MORNING OF BY TEXT OR CALL

Don't assume the caterer remembers. A quick "confirming delivery at 11:30am to [address], contact is [name] at [number]" takes 30 seconds and prevents disasters.

#### HAVE A POINT OF CONTACT PHYSICALLY PRESENT AT DELIVERY

Not available on Slack. Physically present at the delivery entrance. Someone who knows the layout, can direct the setup team, and can spot issues immediately.

#### WALK THE BUFFET BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE

Check: Is every dish labeled? Are chafing dishes at temperature? Are serving utensils in every dish? Are allergen cards present? Is there enough space for traffic flow?

#### IDENTIFY DIETARY DISHES TO YOUR GUESTS PROACTIVELY

Don't make the vegan employee hunt. Say: "The chana masala and dal are both vegan and GF. The paneer is vegetarian. The chicken is halal." Takes 30 seconds. Prevents awkward questions.

#### TAKE A PHOTO OF THE FULL SETUP BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE

This is your proof of delivery and your content for next time. One good photo of a full buffet spread is worth more than any marketing copy you'll ever write.

### How Much Food Do You Actually Need?

Working lunch (desk or meeting room)

Plan for 85% of headcount + 10% buffer.

100 people confirmed → order for 95–100 portions

Cultural celebration or team event

Plan for 95%+ attendance + 15% buffer.

100 people confirmed → order for 110–115 portions

All-hands or mandatory meeting

Order for 100% of headcount.

This is the one time you don't gamble on attendance.

No exceptions.

*Golden Rule: Leftovers are not waste — they're tomorrow's lunch and tonight's BART snack. A well-portioned Indian buffet holds temperature beautifully in containers. Order a little more than you think you need. Nobody complains about extra naan.*

*If your catering partner already does everything on this checklist automatically — you've found a good one. Keep them. If they score below 12 on the scorecard above, you're spending too much time managing the relationship instead of just receiving great food.*

### India Palace Catering

chefkulbir@indiapalacecatering.com

(310)345-3033

Serving the Bay Area Since 1992

Alameda, CA

Book a free tasting. No commitment. Just great food, every dietary need covered, handled from start to finish. We score 25 out of 25.