

A Formal Menu

Formal doesn't have to mean boring. This is a creative take on a traditional, four-course menu. You can do away with either the first course or the salad course if you wish, although sometimes a four-course menu is part of a package deal.

For a formal dinner, you should have at least six kinds of passed hors d'oeuvres. Caterers usually allow for one serving of each per person. It seems like a lot of food, but believe me, people will remember if you run out of something.

Lobster fried in cornmeal . . . decadent and delicious!

A crunchy sliver of fried choke—heavy foods help absorb the alcohol.

It's nice to offer a healthy alternative, and a station makes a good gathering spot.

Little details make this salad stand out; or do a Caesar, a classic favorite.

Menu

PASSED APPETIZERS

Crispy Potato Pancakes
with Crème Fraîche
Smoked Salmon and Lemon Zest

Miniature Lobster Corn Dogs
with a Spicy Mustard Sauce

Polenta Squares with Burrata Cheese
and Roasted Red, Yellow,
and Green Tomatoes

Artichoke Crisp
with a Dollop of Artichoke Mousse

Prosciutto-Wrapped,
Gorgonzola-Stuffed Figs

Beef Satay Skewers

Crudité Station

FIRST COURSE

Handmade Wild Mushroom Ravioli
Porcini Cream Sauce
Shaved Parmesan Cheese

SALAD COURSE

Red and Green Belgian Endive
and Avocado Salad
Meyer Lemon Vinaigrette

ENTRÉE

Filet Mignon in
Red Wine Sauce
with Crispy Onions

Mashed Yukon Gold Potatoes
Baby Vegetable Mélange

Alaskan Halibut Fillet with
Montpelier Butter Sauce
and Fresh Tomato Coulis

Mashed Yukon Gold Potatoes
Baby Vegetable Mélange

DESSERT

Alternating Desserts

"LADIES"

Individual Flourless
Chocolate Cakes

Raspberry Puree and
Fresh Raspberries

Crème Anglaise

"GENTLEMEN"

Individual Tarte Tatin

Caramel Sauce and
Whipped Cream

Use the same sides for both dishes.

Even if you have a wedding cake, you might choose to do an additional dessert—in fact, it might be part of your package deal. This unusual service style, which alternates the two desserts by partner, is a wonderful conversation piece. (You don't have to go strictly by gender, you could just do every other plate.) Stealing bites is completely encouraged!