

BY LINDSAY OTT

Easter falls late this year on Sunday, April 24th and two weeks later? Everyone gathers together again to celebrate Mother's Day. Your restaurant is in a prime position to market Mother's Day to the Easter Sunday crowds, and in the days leading up to Mom's favorite holiday!



YOUR GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

5 Strategies for Marketing Mother's Day in your Restaurant

1 AT MEAL'S END, START SELLING!

When guests are finished with their meal, there are three opportunities to invite them back for Mother's Day. First, when the server returns the guest check, include a well-designed card that invites recipients to join you for Mother's Day – and reminds them to make reservations at the hostess stand on the way out. Second, instruct your servers to thank guests for coming and ask if they'd like to reserve a table for Mother's Day. Finally, put a poster in the entryway or on the door so that on the way out, customers will again be reminded to make reservations.

2 LET THE MENU DO THE TALKING

Mother's Day is now officially the most popular day to dine out which means your restaurant is competing with every other place in town. Get an edge on the competition by creating a special Mother's Day menu (the Maines Culinary Team can help with on-trend, spring-inspired creations). Put menu highlights on an attractive poster and print a small "Mother's Day menu preview" and insert it into your regular menu. Don't forget to create a special drink menu with fresh, gourmet cocktails that appeal to women such as a fresh raspberry, mint, and tarragon mojito; a pomegranate cosmopolitan; a mimosa with a lime twist or an organic peach bellini. Because brunch is so popular on Easter and Mother's Day, it's also a great time to launch a coffee drink menu including lattes, mochas, and other specialty coffee beverages. The profit margin on these drinks is tremendous and they're especially popular with women.

3 THE EARLY BIRD GETS THE...

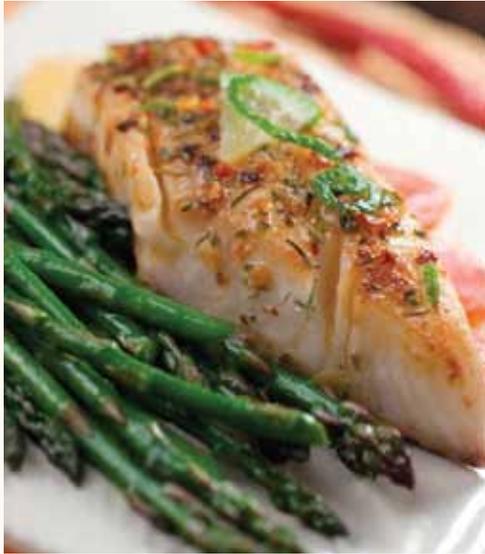
...best reservation! Incentivize guests to book their Mother's Day meal with your restaurant by suggesting that the earlier the reservation is made, the more choices are available including party size, table selection, and time. If you have a Facebook page, start mentioning how your restaurant is preparing for Mother's Day, dropping menu hints and encouraging reservations.

4 CATER TO THE OCCASION

A catering or takeout menu gives you the opportunity for even more profit because you're not limited by restaurant capacity. You could also boost profit by offering a special "breakfast in bed" takeout package that includes a house-made quiche for Mom and Dad and breakfast sandwiches for the kids. For extended family gatherings, a "brunch made easy" package could give customers a choice of entrees and sides in family-size portions.

5 EMPHASIZE THE EXPERIENCE

Perhaps the best way to market Mother's Day is to position it as an event, not just another meal out. Try to build up the sense of occasion. Consider hosting a local acoustic musical act or a string quartet to play during brunch. Or, partner with a local winery or brewery and offer a complimentary tasting. Make Mother's Day at your restaurant an event to remember!



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