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# FUSS-PROOF Fêtes

By Brandy Woods Snow

**A**s the weather warms up, so do the inclinations to entertain. An outdoor barbecue, a wedding, a charity event or an evening with friends sounds exciting in theory but can quickly turn into a logistical nightmare for hosts trying to carry all the burden themselves.

“So many people forget that they can enjoy their own party. From planning to implementing to clean-up, the obligatory tasks of pulling together a perfect event can become all-consuming and detract from the ultimate goal—to have fun,” says Leslie Schlernitzauer, owner of Porcupine Provisions. “Hiring a seasoned catering company to manage the details will not only ensure the event runs smoothly but will also maximize guest satisfaction.”

Here are a few reasons why hiring a caterer can make your life (and your party) easier:

## Efficiency

Hiring a caterer is both time and cost efficient. They have access to the best deals on premium ingredients and are experienced in calculating the correct amounts needed, alleviating the problem of running out of food or having too many leftovers. Additionally, they have the equipment and resources necessary to execute a meal with ease.

And set-up, prep and clean up? It’s all included! Caterers organize the space for optimum flow and presentation, serve food that appeals to guests’ eyes and taste buds, and then clear away the mess at the party’s finale.

## Menu

It’s a daunting task for any host to create menus that not only fit the scope of the event but also offer delicious food and drink pairings that perfectly complement each other. Caterers have a





keen knowledge of what works best for each event type and can provide suitable recommendations.

“We do not have set menus so we start by asking what kind of party it is, who is coming, is there an agenda, is there a celebration or milestone happening, what are your likes and dislikes, and then we craft a menu together,” says Schlernitzauer.

She adds, “Shrimp and tenderloin both continue to be popular entrees, but there is an emerging trend toward including more vegetables, as well as a more adventurous spirit in pushing the envelope with diverse flavor profiles. Being able to construct and serve unique menus for our clients’ events are as much fun for us as it is for them.”

Schlernitzauer has also noticed clients embracing the local movement, which has allowed Porcupine Provisions to utilize area farms to incorporate the freshest seasonal ingredients.

### Quality

Above all else, caterers are professionals and their services go far beyond the menu. They also focus on setting the event’s tone and mood by fine-tuning all the details from providing linens and china to handling guests’ requests. It is this attention to detail combined with the selected menu that creates a comprehensive experience guests will appreciate.

“Hiring an experienced caterer who inherently understands your needs will help to create a seamless and stress-free event you can actually enjoy along with your guests,” says Schlernitzauer. “And you won’t have to wake up to a kitchen full of dirty dishes! ♦

To fuss-proof your event, contact Leslie Schlernitzauer at Porcupine Provisions, 1520 E Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28203, (704) 376-4010, or visit their website at [www.porcupineprovisions.com](http://www.porcupineprovisions.com).