

Food & Beverage - What Would You Like To Drink? - By Joe Dunbar

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As margins keep shrinking due to higher energy and corn prices, operators are carefully analyzing their menus. My clients often are taken aback when they first calculate the recipe cost% of popular entrees and appetizers. It's very common for a popular entree's cost to creep up to 40%.

With competitors dropping prices, you may want to look for dollars elsewhere. A fountain soft drink or a cup of coffee is a great place to start. Both of these selections are very profitable. Use these key beverage sales to improve your total food cost results.

Typically, these beverages require very little preparation time. Make sure you deliver top quality beverages to the customer. Put the right amount of ice in soda, iced tea and other cold drinks. Brew a fresh pot of coffee frequently. Give the tea lovers a choice of flavors and make the experience special.

If the customer asks for tap water, bring a freshly poured glass as soon as possible. As credit tightens, I've noticed customers going for tap water instead of a bottle. Don't make the mistake of ignoring the table. Treat these customers well and refresh their water glasses frequently.

It's great to have clients who really love bottled water. Growing up in Saratoga Springs, I remember the State Drink Hall on Broadway. Tourists lined up to taste a variety of mineral waters from the local springs. Each source had a unique taste. Today's bottled water lovers may appreciate a selection. Personally, I prefer water in a glass bottle.

Most dinners begin and end with a beverage. Make a great first and last impression. Hopefully, you'll get repeat business and see improvement in your food cost%.

Thanks!!!

Joe

Joe Dunbar

Dunbar Associates

P.O. Box 579

Fairfax, VA 22038-0579

800-949-3295

<http://www.joedunbar.com>

jdunbar401@aol.com

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