

Faith Card for Caterers

If you or your caterers are preparing a meal or buffet for a group of people from diverse faiths, you need to be aware of their dietary requirements. Foods for specific faith groups should not be intermixed with other foods. Likewise, vegetarian and vegan foods need to be presented on separate salvers. All buffet food should be clearly labelled.

| Faith or Culture | Likely languages in UK | Diet | Physical contact |
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| Baha'i | Mainly English, also Arabic and Farsi. | Baha'is do not normally drink alcohol, but may take it within medicine if prescribed by doctors. | Baha'is are unlikely to object to being touched or treated by members of the opposite sex |
| Buddhist | English, Cantonese, Hakka, Japanese, Thai, Tibetan, Sinhalese | Often vegetarian or vegan. Salads, rice, vegetables and fruit are usually acceptable | A Buddhist may be touched by a person of either sex for comfort, treatment and medical examinations. |
| Chinese (Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, Taoist.) | Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka, Hokkien, English | Cow's milk is avoided. Rice is the staple diet with lots of freshly cooked vegetables, fish and very little meat. | Women usually prefer to be treated by women. |
| Christian | English, and many other languages | Generally, all foods are permissible. Some follow Jewish customs. Some are vegetarian. Some are forbidden to use alcohol and other stimulants. | Most Christians would have no objection to being treated or comforted by members of the opposite sex. |
| Hindu | English, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil | Hindus do not eat beef. Some Hindus are strictly vegetarian and also avoid fish, eggs and animal fat. Salads, rice, vegetables, yoghurt, milk products and fruit are acceptable. | Some Hindus would prefer to be comforted or treated by someone of the same sex. |
| Humanist | English or any other language. | No particular requirements. Some Humanists are vegetarian or vegan | No specific restrictions on physical contact |
| Jain | English, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi Rajasthani, Tamil. | No alcohol, meat, fish, poultry or eggs. Salads, fruits, grain, vegetables, bread or biscuits made without eggs or dairy products are acceptable. Some do not eat root vegetables or honey. | Jains may prefer to be treated by people of the same sex. |

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| Japanese (Buddhist, Shinto, Christian) | Japanese, English | Preference for rice | Japanese people may prefer to be treated by people of the same sex. |
| Jewish | English, Hebrew, Yiddish | Pork is forbidden; so is shell-fish. Fish must have fins and scales. Red meat and poultry must comply with kosher standards of slaughter. Milk and meat are usually kept separate. Vegetarian food is acceptable. Alcohol is usually acceptable. | For some Jewish men and women it is not usually acceptable to be touched by someone who is not a member of their close family. However, the need to save life always takes precedence within Judaism. |
| Muslim | English, Arabic, Bengali, Dari, Farsi, Gujarati, Kurdish, Punjabi, Pushto, Turkish, Urdu and many others. | All food, including meat and poultry must be <u>Halal</u> . Kosher food is <u>usually</u> acceptable. Vegetarian meals and fresh fruit are acceptable. Forbidden food is <u>Haram</u> – Pork and shellfish is forbidden. Alcohol is also forbidden. * During Ramadan (the Muslim month of fasting the dates of which follow the lunar calendar) children MAY or MAY NOT eat or drink between sunrise and sunset | Treatment by medical staff of any religion is permissible but both men and women usually prefer to be treated by members of the same sex |
| Pagan | Mainly English | Most Pagans eat meat and drink alcohol. Many Pagans are vegetarian and some may be vegan | No specific restraints |
| Rastafarian | English. The vocabulary may include Jamaican patois. | Pork, pork products and shellfish are banned. Most Rastafarians are vegetarian and avoid all stimulants such as alcohol, tea and coffee. | No specific restraints |
| Sikh | English, Hindi, Punjabi, Swahili, Urdu. | Many Sikhs are vegetarian or vegan and do not eat eggs. Those who do eat meat will generally avoid beef. Salads, rice, dahl, vegetables and fruit are acceptable. The use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs is forbidden. | Treatment by medical staff of any religion is permissible but men and women prefer to be treated by members of the same sex. |
| Zoroastrian (Parsee) | English, Farsi, Gujarati, Persian. | Some avoid pork and beef; some are vegetarian. | No specific restraints |

This card has been prepared by Suffolk County Catering with assistance from Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource (SIFRE). For more information, consult SIFRE 'Handbook of Faiths' or visit their web site www.sifre.org.uk or contact the SIFRE Centre by phone 01473 233447 or email aa@sifre.org.uk.