



VOL. 05

The Cost-of-Goods Checklist

Know Your Numbers

The questions worth answering before you price a plate or open the doors, from your true food cost to paying yourself. A companion to Cg·04 The Planner.

START HERE

How to use this

This is a thinking tool, not a form to file. Print it, keep it next to your notebook, and work down it while you plan, not after. Every box is a decision that protects your time and your money. Nothing here needs an account or a spreadsheet, though the free Cg-04 Planner will do the math for you if you want it.

THE WORKFLOW • A DINNER PARTY FOR 10, START TO FINISH

- 1 Set the table in your head**
Pick the menu and the guest count. Decide the feel of the night and the ticket price you have in mind.
- 2 Cost what you cook**
Price each ingredient by the unit you actually use, minus waste and trim. That is your true food cost.
- 3 Cost the whole plate**
Add packaging, your prep time, and any drinks. Now you know the real cost per guest, not just groceries.
- 4 Add everything else**
Rentals, a helper, the space, and your own hourly time. These are the easy ones to forget, and they add up.
- 5 Set a price that pays you**
Work back from a food-cost target and a margin, then check how many seats cover your costs.
- 6 Shop once**
Turn the menu into a single list, minus what is already in your pantry. Buy whole packs, and note the leftovers.
- 7 Host it well**
Confirm dietary needs, welcome your guests, and fire the courses on your timeline.
- 8 Learn from it**
Compare what you planned to what you spent, and note one thing to change for next time.

Next page: the checklist is this same arc, broken into every box worth ticking. Print it, and check your way through the night.



FREE CHECKLIST

pairs with Cg-04 The Planner

Know Your Numbers

The questions worth answering before you price a plate or open the doors, from your true food cost to paying yourself. No spreadsheet required. Work straight down the list.

01 YOUR REAL COST PER INGREDIENT

- ☐ Price every ingredient by the unit you cook with, not the pack you buy
- ☐ Work out the cost of a single gram, ml, or piece
- ☐ Take out waste and trim: a whole case is never all usable
- ☐ Note what you already have before it goes on the list

02 THE WHOLE PLATE, NOT JUST FOOD

- ☐ Add packaging, disposables, and to-go containers
- ☐ Add your prep time, not just time at the stove
- ☐ Cost a sub-recipe once (stock, sauce, dough), then reuse it
- ☐ Land on a cost per serving you can trust

03 PRICE THE DRINKS TOO

- ☐ Batch by drinks per guest and pour size
- ☐ Account for dilution and ice
- ☐ Cost the garnish, and expect a little glassware loss

04 SIZE THE NIGHT HONESTLY

- ☐ Separate capacity, seats you expect to sell, and seats you cook for
- ☐ Choose how much to overproduce on purpose
- ☐ Set your ticket types and what each one includes

05 COUNT THE COSTS BEYOND FOOD

- ☐ Tableware, linens, rentals: own it, rent it, or buy it once
- ☐ Ask "rent or own?" by how often you will really use it
- ☒ Pay your helpers, and **pay yourself an hourly rate**
- ☐ Add venue or kitchen hours, and any minimums
- ☐ Keep refundable deposits separate from real costs

06 SET A PRICE THAT PAYS YOU

- ☐ Pick a food-cost target you can live with (25 to 35% is common)
- ☐ Add a margin, then read back the ticket price it needs
- ☐ Know how many seats you must sell to break even
- ☐ Fold in platform fees, card fees, and tax the right way

07 BUY WHAT YOU NEED, WASTE LESS

- ☐ Shop for what is missing, not what you already have
- ☐ Round up to whole packs, and watch the gap between bought and used

08 FEED EVERYONE SAFELY, THEN LEARN

- ☐ Tag allergens on every dish, and collect guests' dietary needs
- ☐ Treat anything untagged as a question, not a safe bet
- ☐ Compare what you planned to what you really spent
- ☐ Update your prices from the receipts, and note what to change

Built by Tenseats. Take it wherever you cook.

Free to use and share. Pairs with the Cg-04 Planner.