

# CURRY CLUB

## INFORMATION MANUAL

To assist with the task of running 'Curry night' fundraising events for the benefit of clubs, community groups or individuals in support of an important cause.

### Starting a Curry Club

Establishing a Curry Club is an exciting way of raising money and awareness for your cause as well as providing an inexpensive and enjoyable way for members of your own community to come together in a festive spirit. A Curry Club event is run out of a community venue, clubhouse or even your own home and involves inviting friends and guests to attend a festive and exotic occasion. For a reasonable cover charge guests enjoy a delicious meal and learn about the initiative that you are supporting. Guests can also have the opportunity to participate in activities such as trivia contests.

#### Setting up your Curry Club?

- You can run your CC from your own home, a church, community centre or any facility that is appropriate for storing, preparing and serving food. You can run your curry club as a whole group event that utilises the skills of a suitably chosen MC to co-ordinate the nights activities-these can include entertainment, lucky door prizes, competitions, trivia and guessing games [facts about the initiative you are supporting are a good subject] and auctions.

Alternatively your guests may prefer the novelty of having a real 'dining out' experience where you provide everything from background music to full 'café style' table service. If you decide to run your Curry Club 'café style', here are some tips for making your it a more authentic dining experience,

- Drape some exotic materials around the room
- Lighting should not be too bright. A lamp pointed in to the corner of the room provides a good effect.
- Separate the Kitchen from the Dining room if possible.
- Have some background exotic music.
- Display information about what you are doing and why you are doing it.
- Write the menu on a chalkboard or whiteboard.
- Table set-up can be a mixture of sizes to cater for a variety of guests wishes.

## Equipment

If your curry club is a long term initiative then anything you purchase is an investment. It cost us about \$500 to purchase cutlery, crockery, cooking equipment, salt and pepper shakers, candles and the list goes on. But people who visit our 'restaurant' remark that they can't believe they are in the living room of a house. If your curry club is a long term investment it may be necessary to draw a little more heavily on the profits from your first few events to make up your costs. Retaining a modest percentage of your takings to 'invest' in your Curry Club can also be an effective way to grow it over time.

You will be surprised at how much of the necessary equipment can be gathered from your friends and associates. Much of the equipment you require may be sitting on the shelves of your local Op shop. Equipment you'll need to source includes,

- Microwave oven.
- 2 Rice Cookers.
- Plates and cutlery [op shops are great for this or you may opt for disposable ]
- Glasses/cups.
- Tables and chairs [or have guests bring their own]
- Cooking equipment [wok/ fry pan etc]
- Storage containers
- Serviettes
- Water bottles or jugs
- Menu board [optional]
- Salt and pepper shakers
- Small sauce dishes
- 2 blenders [if you are running a 'lassi bar']
- Eskies

## Suppliers and Ingredients

You can make your own curries from scratch by using your favourite recipe or the recipe options at [curryclub.net.au](http://curryclub.net.au) , or alternatively use the pre-prepared Curry Club spice blends to prepare sufficient curry for your guests.

Other primary ingredients will be **meat** and **rice** so get to know your local butcher. You will be surprised at how generous many small businesses can be when they learn about the reason for your event. If you return any gesture such as this with regular and loyal patronage then you may develop a community partner for the life of your Curry Club.

The general rule with regard to **quantities** is to order 150 to 200 grams of raw meat per head. Therefore if you are expecting about 40 people at your event then this would mean ordering approximately  $40 \times 0.2 = 8$ kg of meat. Add a little for unexpected arrivals and to feed the team and you're looking at about 10 kg of meat. The best type of

beef to use is a chuck or blade steak- you should pay around \$8-\$10 per kg . When purchasing chicken ask for thigh fillets as these are more suited to the 'stewing' process.

Having a **chest freezer** can be handy as it allows you to purchase meat in bulk.

Shopping around for **specials** can also be an effective way of keeping costs down as can opening an account with a bulk goods supplier such as Campbells Cash and Carry.

The **drinks** you offer can be sourced from a variety of outlets and re-sold at a profit. Having some of your young people running a 'lassi bar' selling mango and banana lassi's can be a good money spinner as well. The re-sale of alcohol is legally not permitted so having a BYO option for your guests can be an option.

## Food Preparation

You can take a lot of stress off yourself on the day by pre-preparing your curries. Starters and deserts may have to be freshly prepared but curries actually improve if left to sit for a day or two. I usually serve one chicken, one beef and one veg dish but you may have other ideas.

Rice can also be pre-prepared, frozen and then reheated on the night. If you don't have access to commercial rice makers and other equipment this technique can be a useful substitute.

Another way of lightening the load on the evening is to have entrées and deserts plated together for each table. By placing a plate full of 'finger food' on a table for an entree instead of serving individual plates for all guests the amount of cartage is significantly reduced. The same system can work for deserts as many Indian deserts in particular are eaten with the fingers. You can even pre-plate the deserts and put them in the fridge so all your wait team has to do is pull them out when prompted.

## Food Handling Regulations

- A great site to visit for this sort of thing is [www.foodsmart.vic.gov.au](http://www.foodsmart.vic.gov.au) . You are actually able to generate your own Food handling safety plan through the website. [curryclub.net.au](http://curryclub.net.au) also has some important information regarding food handling.

## Menu

Make your menu as simple as possible. A sample menu may consist of,

- 2 different starters, if required [1xmeat, 1xveg]
- 3 different mains [1xbeef/lamb, 1xchicken, 1xveg]
- 2 different deserts [Indian sweets or other desert]

## Frequency

How often you run your Curry Club depends on a variety of factors including your own time availability, the expectations of your guests and the size of the event. You can run your Curry Club at monthly or quarterly intervals or even on an annual basis.

## Cover Charges

The cost for the provision of a 3 course meal comes in at around \$7 per head so anything over \$20 per head should result in a reasonable profit. You can also do deals for family's and couples to encourage your guests to bring their family and friends.

## Number of Guests

This depends on your venue and the size of your team. Curry Clubs can be run from your local sport club, community centre or even your own home. If you are running your Curry Club 'café style' then you can improve your turnover by having more than one sitting and even offering a take away service.

## Roles and Staffing

The number of volunteers that you require and their assigned roles will depend largely on the style and format of your event- whether it is a '**café style**' format with table service or a '**buffet style**' whole group event.

Below is an example of role allocations for a Curry Club that served around 50 guests with '**café style**' table service.

- **Food Prep**- prepares entrees and desserts, ensures there is sufficient food for mains.
- **Assistant Food Prep [optional]**- works in conjunction with Food Prep
- **Maitrade**- Greets and seats guests, liaises between guests and Meal Scheduler. Informs guests of payment protocol [pay at tables] and instructs r/e menu forms
- **Meal Scheduler**- Instructs kitchen on order of meals to be produced. Works with Maitrade to determine when entrees etc are clear so the next course can be served.
- **Waiter 1**- focus on food orders and meal delivery for restaurant
- **Waiter 2 [optional]** - Focuses on drinks in the restaurant and walk in take-aways. Moves to serving meals once drinks 'rush' has subsided.
- **Server**- serves and heats main meals for restaurant as well as take-away meals.
- **Wash-up**- washes dishes
- **General kitchen hand [optional]** - dries dishes and general duties.

One process that can assist this 'café style' structure is to allocate a section to each waiter and have the order slip of each section on different coloured paper. When serving – up, the kitchen then only has to call for example [David/ yellow] for the floor team to know where the plate is going.

A whole group 'buffet style' arrangement will require a different mix of roles. The obvious benefits of this system is that less staff will be required to serve your guests. The drawbacks however can be- running out of food as people's 'eyes are often bigger than their stomachs' and the inconvenience of having people line up for their meal [but most don't mind at all].

One way of overcoming this is to setup the food station as a smorgasbord style and have the waiter ask each person what they will be having and then proceeding to get it for them. A couple of members of the kitchen team can be stationed at the food and serve up each waiters request right in front of the guests. As the waiter delivers the dish back to the guest he/she proceeds to ask the next guest at their table what they will be having and so on. This system has the added advantage of being user friendly for volunteers who don't have a lot of waiting experience- each waiter only has to remember one meal at a time.

## Menu

It is worth trying out a few dishes well before your event. If you hold any preliminary planning meetings with your team these can be a good opportunity to prepare some of the planned dishes to sample. Contact us at [curryclub.net.au](http://curryclub.net.au) and we will organise to send you some samples.

## Venu

Once you have determined what your Curry Club will look like you need to find a venue. Around 20 to 30 people can usually be accommodated in the average family home but beyond that you may need to consider a larger venue such as a community hall or club.

## Your Message

What is the **motivation** behind the evening? Is there a message that you wish to impart to your guests? Photo's, slide shows and information panels can also be used to inform your guests.

## Promotion and Merchandise

Having a flyer to distribute is beneficial. Include address, date, cost, rsvp information, as well as a brief reference to the motivation behind the event.

You may be able to source products that fit with the theme of your evening that you can display for sale or even auction off. For example a Curry Club that is supporting an initiative in an impoverished country could sell products produced in that country. Local businesses may be prepared to donate some goods and services if your initiative benefits the local community. In addition we can provide you with Curry Club spice blends at discount prices to distribute at your events. A generous retail margin on our products make this an effective way to enhance your fundraising efforts. Contact us to register your interest.