



YOUR WEDDING FEAST: BUFFET, PLATED, OR MOBILE?

By Janet Yoo • Photography by Youkeun Oh

In the days of yore, the phrase “food trucks” would evoke images of construction site lunch trucks (or in a less elegantly phrased manner- “roach coach”) that would pull up around noontime, windows tinted a bluish hue. Construction workers would stride to the window and grab a quick lunch of a sandwich, or a few tacos to satiate their appetites.



FROM LEFT: Ice Cream Sandwich from Coolhaus, Ice Cream Bicycle from Coolhaus, Red Velvet Cookie Stack from Sweet Trucks, Tacos from Don Chow



That perception has changed considerably since then, and gourmet food trucks are renowned throughout Southern California as the newest and most entertaining mobile way to dine. Food trucks serve fusion foods, desserts, even ice cream (!), and are featured on TV shows, across magazine spreads, and used as wedding vendors. Wedding vendors, you say?

I do. For as little as \$500, a bride and groom can opt to have their food freshly prepared and made to order by a gourmet food truck that will come directly to their reception venue. Their guests can go straight up to the window of a food truck, survey a customized menu (most trucks are very flexible, and open to customizing something to the desire of the bride and groom), and order whatever they desire. The food is then cooked to order, pushed out through another window, *et voila!* Your meal, mademoiselle, has been served.

Although some may balk at the idea of such casual presentation of their meal, gourmet food trucks are a fun and whimsical way to incorporate the bride and groom's personalities into their special day. Take Don Chow Tacos, for instance. Being passionate about the merits of both Mexican and Chinese foods, the owners decided to fuse the best of both worlds. Owners Dominic Lau and Lawrence Lie invented dishes like the *chimale* (a Chinese tamale), which is masa stuffed with different meats like Chinese BBQ Pork, steamed to perfection, then topped off with a side of pico de gallo and sour cream. Their inventiveness and creativity paved the way for a spot on the Food Network show, *Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives*, which aired in June 2010.

Though the concept of Don Chow is *Chino meets Latino* fusion, this is a great way for Asian brides to integrate their cultural elements into the food on their special day. The menu offerings can also be customized to the wishes of the bride and groom.

The food truck craze originally commenced with mostly savory,

entrée foods, but dessert food trucks are rapidly coming up on the radar. Trucks like Coolhaus have received wide acclaim for its product offerings, and with good reason. Coolhaus is the grown-up, savvy version of an "ice cream truck", with a menu consisting of flavors like, browned butter with candied bacon, Tea-dao Ando (green tea), Hitoshi Ube (a taro flavor), mascarpone balsamic fig, pistachio with black truffles, or foie gras. Being LA based, and being that LA is not very trash friendly, owners Natasha Case and Freya Estrelle took it upon themselves to distribute their product on an edible wrapper. Made of rice paper and printed on with soy based ink, the bride and groom can customize the wrapper to read their initials, or whatever their hearts desire. The couple can opt to have the truck (a charmingly revamped old US Postal Mail Truck) come directly to the wedding venue, or a marble slab is available as well, on which the different ice creams would be assembled and served.

Another wedding friendly truck is The Sweets Truck, a beautifully and elegantly designed truck that retains brand neutrality by not only representing one bakery, but several. Owner Molly Taylor loved the idea of "taking a bake shop to the streets", and did just that! She goes from place to place, and hand picks her favorite sweets from big names like Auntie Em's Kitchen and The Farm of Beverly Hills. She works closely with the owners and/or bakers of each contributor to custom design some goodies as well. Because the truck is so versatile in its selection, Molly is also open to considering stocking some cultural options on your special day as well, such as Korean rice cake (dduk), or Chinese lotus sweet buns. To accompany the desserts is the quintessential pairing of espresso drinks made to order.

In today's wedding culture of customizing the nuptials specifically to the bride and groom's tastes, food trucks are an excellent and affordable option that every couple should consider! ●