

# **Craft Service 101**

## **Helpful Hints & Safe Food Handling**

Provided By:  
Kit & Kaboodle Craft Services

### **General Information & Etiquette**

***The #1 Rule of ANY Food Handling: WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!***

**NEVER** serve spoiled food to your cast and crew! Besides the obvious health risk, a disabled production team member can cost the production company thousands of dollars in down time. It's NEVER worth the risk. (Besides, a cranky teamster can make your life extremely miserable)

- If you must leave the set to make a food run be sure you think ahead. Leave plenty of food on the table, make sure there is an ample supply of coffee and drinks, and clean up the area before leaving. Be sure to let the AD know your plans
- Your craft service equipment should be designed to break down for transport. It is a general rule that you will be responsible for setting up and breaking down your own equipment and not relying on other departments to help you (they have their own jobs to do). If there is a particular item that you can not set up or break down, ask for help – but think about utilizing equipment that you can handle safely by yourself
- Be sure you have approval from the AD **before** you set up your table. If your set-up is in any of the shots-du-jour, you'll have to do it all over again
- You can generally begin breaking down your equipment just before the martini shot (the last shot before they call wrap) but be sure to leave waters, sodas and a few snacks out to the very last minute to accommodate crew members who take a while to wrap
- Sweet-Salty-Sweet-Hearty: That's the basic order of the daily craft service table. Morning calls for things like pastries, doughnuts and cereal. By mid morning your cast & crew will be looking for something salty like chips, pretzels and trail mix. After lunch is back to sweets with a good selection of candies and cookies and by mid afternoon they're looking for heartier fare like platters and hot appetizers. Of course, along the way, a variety of selection is the key. Add healthy choices like fresh fruits and veggies, dried fruits and nutrition bars
- If the call sheet lists a 2<sup>nd</sup> Unit (a small team that will split off to get some b-roll, exterior shots or footage that does not require the A-Team), then be prepared to provide a small 'picnic' to take with them. Pack a cooler of drinks, bottles of water and an assortment of snacks that aren't messy, won't melt and don't require utensils or bowls. Throw in a trash bag and some paper towels
- What should you do if a member of the cast/crew is demanding a special order? If it's easy to fulfill, then just do it. The craft service position is to supply items necessary to keep everyone happy. However, if this person is overly demanding, inappropriate or is requesting an item that is clearly out of our budget, see the Production Manager for instructions on how to handle your demanding diva
- The craft service area often serves as a communal watering hole for cast & crew. You will sometimes overhear privileged information. It is your responsibility as a professional to keep things discreet and confidential
- Teamsters eat doughnuts! Although this urban legend may be true, more and more of us are aware of foods that are high in calories and carbs. Try to furnish low cal and carb food items on your table in addition to the sugary standards
- Two words: Trader Joe's! Good, healthy, economical food

- Set carts are great to use when the main craft service table is located far from the set. Place coffee carafe, water dispenser, small ice chest filled with soft drinks and a limited variety of easy-to-replace snacks on the cart. Don't forget cups, coffee condiments and a trash can
- The camera department rarely has an opportunity to visit craft service because they are breaking down and setting up between shots  
**Do's:** They'll love you if you can find the time to bring them some goodies  
**Don'ts:** Don't interrupt them in the middle of a shot and don't serve them food that is messy or awkward to handle

## **Health & Safety**

Don't forget the #1 rule: WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

- Save your back! Bend at the knees, avoid excessive lifting in difficult, awkward positions. Use a dolly or cart whenever possible
- ICE MELTS! Yeah, it melts, so avoid the mistake of leaving unattended ice bags around your table. It can become a slippery risk and wandering streams of water may damage nearby electrical cords and equipment
- Wash your hands often when handling food. Use quick evaporating sanitizing lotion to quickly remove bacteria when you are on the go
- Keep it **hot**, keep it **cold**, keep it **clean** and keep it **moving!**
- The industry term for an industrial extension cord is a *stinger*. Never use frayed or damaged cords, plugs or stingers
- Do not store food directly on the ground – make sure it is properly sealed and stored at all times
- Use covers or netting to protect food items left on the table for extended periods
- Furnish scoops and tongs for all dried snack items or finger foods to avoid germs from dirty hands
- If possible, provide anti-bacterial wipes or sanitizing lotion at your table to minimize the spread of germs
- Use food prep gloves when handling food
- Remove trash around table as often as possible
- Be sure to line your trashcans with a plastic liner immediately after emptying. People WILL throw food into your un-lined can and in case you didn't know it – food gets stinky when it starts to spoil!
- Do not over use cleaning towels. Replace them often to avoid contamination or use disposable industrial strength paper towels for cleaning

## **Table Display & Menu Tips**

- Always keep your table looking clean, fresh and appealing
- Downsize bowls and containers as food is consumed. This technique makes food look more appealing
- Change out bowls and containers between table settings to keep table looking fresh
- Be creative! Decorate your table with seasonal or holiday colors. Spring Colors – Fall Colors – 4<sup>th</sup> of July Colors! This keeps the table looking fresh and aesthetically pleasing. Stay away from religious holidays, though. Don't forget you have an eclectic group of denominations and ethnicity to serve
- Keep bar towels and natural orange spray cleaner handy to periodically wipe away crumbs and debris
- It's a good idea to have white & wheat bread along with peanut butter & jelly and lunch meat on hand for those that need something substantial between meals or those that have to make 'runs' and will miss lunch (like the transportation or art departments). Don't forget you will also need mayo, mustard, lettuce & tomato (if possible) and knives for spreading

- **HOT WEATHER TIP:** If the weather is unbearably hot, cool your crew down by adding about 6 **mint tea** bags to your iced tea cooler. Put up a sign that reads “Southern Plantation Mint Tea”. Very refreshing!
- Save non-perishable, uneaten, **WRAPPED** items (such as wrapped candy, sports or granola bars, etc.) in an airtight container to combine together for use on another day. No need to throw away unused, wrapped items just because there are only a few left.
- If it's cold outside serve up a crock-pot of spiced apple cider. Throw some whole cinnamon sticks in the pot. Trader Joe's sells great spiced cider in bottles. Be sure you have a ladle and hot drink cups for serving
- Night shoots can be extremely demanding on the cast & crew. Your body clock is off and fatigue will set in, kicking up the ‘irritability’ factor a notch or two! While caffeine will be a staple to keep energy up, try offering alternative, healthy energy snacks like fresh fruit and veggies and protein bars and drinks. Add some special items on a night table to alleviate boredom and increase mood levels. These extras don't necessarily have to impact your budget – peanut butter on fresh celery sticks or cottage cheese with pineapple provides a healthy, natural energy boost.  
**NIGHT SHOOT TIP:** Serve a big crock of chicken AND vegetarian chili. Don't forget the condiments (grated cheese, diced onion, sour crème) and bread or crackers. Try Smart & Final and Trader Joe's for tasty canned chili. **YUMMY!**

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Meal Tips**

- Long days will usually require a 2<sup>nd</sup> meal and oftentimes that requires YOUR services to handle it. If you will be in a particular area over a period of time, you may want to scout it out for possible meal choices. Get menus, prices, and large order instructions ahead of time
- 2<sup>nd</sup> meal takes place exactly 6 hours after the 1<sup>st</sup> meal. Allow yourself enough time to research, order and pick up the meal to avoid costly union meal penalty charges
- If you are ordering individual request items, have them mark the outside of the wrapper. This will avoid a lot of confusion and double handing of food. Also, don't forget to request plates, napkins and utensils – a common 2<sup>nd</sup> meal mistake!
- It's all in the FLOW! – If your 2<sup>nd</sup> meal consists of a buffet line arrange the serving pans in the correct order (meat choices together, starch choices together, etc). Be sure to place the **PLATES** at the start of the line and the **UTENSILS & NAPKINS** at the end. Also, don't forget you will need serving spoons so ask for disposable ones when ordering your food.