

# Catering

## Special Report



## As tastes change, caterers offer more adventurous menus

by Kirby J. Harrison

Few things can make or break a flight as thoroughly as catering. Caterers know it, and passengers know it. So do the schedulers and dispatchers who order it and the flight attendants who serve it. That considered, said Brad Thomas, catering director and executive chef at Lindy's in San Diego, "the goal of everyone is to make the passengers happy."

Over the past decade, a worldwide cadre of caterers devoted exclusively or primarily to serving business aviation has come into existence to accomplish exactly that.

Ten years ago it was rare to see a business aviation caterer exhibiting at the NBAA Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference or making an appearance at the association's annual Flight Attendant Conference. Now a catering working group is heavily involved in the organization and presentation of both events. At the Schedulers & Dispatchers Conference in January, 14 exhibitors were caterers, and at the Flight Attendants Conference in June, 16 major business aviation caterers presented four extensive training sessions.

By most industry estimates, there are approximately 150 caterers serving business aviation in North America, where about 75 percent of the world's operators are based and where approximately 19,200 business aircraft are in service. Roughly another 150

or so are scattered around the remainder of the globe, providing catering to some 4,100 operators flying nearly 7,000 aircraft.

Aware of the interdependent relationship, caterers and their front-line customers—typically flight attendants and schedulers and dispatchers—are working together more closely than ever. Most caterers encourage flight attendants to visit their kitchens. Not only is it good business, say caterers, but the feedback helps them do their job more efficiently.

Customers (including pilots) learn the complexities of taking orders, preparing catered meals and handling food safely. Some patient caterers will also provide instruction on reheating, replating and serving the meals they deliver.

"I tell flight attendants that they are the primary catalysts for change in this industry," said Paula Kraft of Tastefully Yours Catering, Chamblee, Ga. "If they're willing to settle for less, then less is what they're going to get."

A number of caterers have gone so far as to create culinary courses designed specifically for flight attendants. Mike Linder, the owner of Silver Lining Inflight Catering, Pompano Beach, Fla., hosts a monthly culinary training class open to anyone in the business



*Silver Lining Inflight Catering recently received the "2007 Service Excellence Award" from fractional operator NetJets.*

aviation industry. The one-day class runs from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and includes subjects such as food safety and handling, placing orders, meal service, plating, presentation and garnish. "We have an average of about eight people at every class," said Linder. "We

also invite a different FBO each week to send people here for a tour of the kitchen and lunch.”

### The Cork in the Dom Perignon

Flight attendants are already aware that passengers are far more concerned with their ability to open the Dom Perignon without launching the cork on a pinball trajectory through the cabin than with their safety training and knowledge of safety procedures.

They assume the flight attendant is well trained. They demand good service. Such passengers are,

are inclined to look at the cost of catering for a flight and assume the offering has to be at least as good as what they were served last night at Spago in Los Angeles.

“I’m hearing about more and more flight attendants learning the skills of a chef, but I’m also hearing about more and more chefs becoming flight attendants,” she said.

A unique entry in the field is Executive Chef Services, an online referral database of chefs with skills beyond the ordinary. Several have experience with in-flight meal preparation or other experience with business aviation, said founder Alex Forsythe, an executive chef who is also a contract flight attendant.

### It’s Going To Cost

As complaints about costs continue, no one associated with the industry—customers or caterers—expects the cost of catering to remain at current levels, and it certainly isn’t going to go down.

“A lot of people look at our pricing and think, ‘Wow, I’d better get on the bandwagon,’” said Silver Lining’s Linder. “There is a lot of revenue,” he added. “But there are also a lot of costs.”

“Everything costs more,” said Kraft of Tastefully Yours, “ingredients, rent, utilities, insurance, labor and especially gas. Last year, we averaged about \$2,000 a month for gas for our delivery vehicles. Last month, that bill alone was \$4,800. My payroll costs alone are about \$250 an hour.”

Joe Celetano, co-owner with brother John of Rudy’s Inflight Catering near Teterboro Airport in New Jersey, has observed a pricing increase of 6 to 8 percent from 2005 to 2006 and expects “the same or

a little more this year.”

Faced with complaints about rising costs and occasional cries of gouging, caterers point out that theirs is a labor-intensive business in which business jet passengers are no less demanding than diners at the finest restaurants. “We’re not a grocery store and we’re not a deli,” said Kraft, “we’re more like room service at a five-star hotel, except that we don’t get the dishes back.”

Caterers are also quick to point out that unlike a restaurant menu, a typical catering menu must offer something for a wide variety of ethnic tastes and demands, which means keeping a greater variety of stock on hand, and often going shopping for items that aren’t on the menu. Shopping for something not on the menu will typically double the cost, say caterers, and with justification.

“I have most of the name-brand sodas, and a few

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*A lobster beggar’s purse is among the menu options from Tastefully Yours catering.*

according to some, “products of the Food Network” and benefit from the culinary genius of celebrity chefs ranging from Giada de Laurentis to Emeril Lagasse. What’s more, said Bombardier chief flight attendant Debbie Franz, they’ve grown up “going out to fine restaurants, attending cooking classes and going to wine tastings.

“I’ve had clients ask the flight attendant to call their personal chef when putting together the menu for a flight. I’ve even gone myself and met with a client’s chef,” Franz said.

“For a lot of flight attendants, the culinary arts were a hobby,” she explained. “Now it’s becoming part of the job.” Franz attended The Gourmet Institute in New York City and the Culinary Institute of America in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Donna Cassacia, founder of The Corporate School of Etiquette, Long Beach, Calif., agrees. Cassacia recently reintroduced her school with a new curriculum and plans to add a two-day course in culinary arts that includes in-flight meal preparation (see story on page 58). “Passengers today



*As travelers become more health conscious, caterers are including new items on their menus, such as this salad Niçoise variant from Tastefully Yours.*

# Catering Directory

See cross index by city on page 59

## Above the Best Catering

145 S. Gene Autry Trail  
Palm Springs, CA 92262  
(760) 327-6878; fax: (760) 327-7645  
www.abovethebestcatering.com  
Orders and general info: atbc@abovethebestcatering.com  
Airports served: PSP, TRM, UDD  
• Alcohol license  
• Cabin products service

## Absolutely Delicious Catering

15255 Lambda Dr., San Antonio, TX 78245  
(210) 677-0655; fax: (210) 677-0984  
www.absolutelydelicious.com  
Orders and general info: info@AbsolutelyDelicious.com  
Airport served: SAT  
• 24/7 service

## Absolute Taste

14 Edgel St.  
London, England SW18 1SR  
+44 20 8875 4080; fax: +44 20 8870 9191  
www.absolutetaste.com  
Orders and general info: inflight@absolutetaste.com  
Airports served: EGSS, EGWU, EGKB, EGKK, EGLL, EGLF, EGGW, EGLC  
• 24/7 service

## Aerohawk Catering

867 Horan Dr.  
Fenton, MO 63026  
(636) 305-1209; fax: (636) 305-1313  
Orders and general info: Aerohawk@sbcglobal.net  
Airports served: CPS, STL, SUS, RGL  
• 24/7 service

## Air Chef

www.airchef.com (for all locations)  
Order and general info: comments@airchef.com  
(for all locations)

All locations

- Linen cleaning service
- Third-party alcohol service
- Refrigerated delivery vehicles
- Cabin products service

209 Main St., Little Ferry, NJ  
(201) 641-6006; fax: (201) 641-5045  
Airports served: TEB, MMU, HPN, JFK, LGA, EWR, CDW

585 Route 112, Patchogue, NY  
(631) 475-8843; fax: (631) 475-8844  
Airports served: HTO, ISP, FRG, FOK

21750 Red Rum Dr., Suite 142, Ashburn, Va. 20147  
(703) 723-7090; fax: (703) 723-3090  
Airports served: IAD, BWI, DCA, FDK, GAI, HEF, JYO

9425 West Ogden Ave.  
Brookfield, IL 60513  
(708) 485-3900; fax: (708) 485-3925  
Airports served: ARR, DPA, GYY, IGQ, LOT, MDW, ORD, PWK, UGN

8001 Lemmon Ave., Dallas, TX 75209  
(469) 461-0283; fax: (469) 461-0288  
Airports served: ADF, AFW, DAL, DFW, DTO, FTW, GKY, RBD, TKI

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*The kitchen staff at Rudy's Teterboro, N.J. headquarters prepares for another day of serving New York, New Jersey and Washington, D.C. airports.*

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that aren't, in stock and priced at about dollar a can or bottle," said one caterer. "But if I have to send out for a six-pack of some designer juice or soda, not only is the

juice going to cost maybe double what an ordinary brand would cost, I have to add maybe \$20 to cover my costs for the driver and gas."

At the same time, flight attendants say this is not always the case. One flight attendant provided AIN copies of several recent catering invoices. One invoice included \$16.95 for a loaf of sourdough bread and \$2.95 for a single whole lemon. Another invoice listed

12 cans of common brand-name soda at \$54 and assorted petit fours and mini tarts at \$144 for nine people. Yet another invoice from a standardized affiliate catering menu listed a fruit tray at \$33.95 per person, \$16.95 for a quarter-pound of cole slaw, and \$19.95 for a single cup of fruit dip.

Pricing in general is a moving target. The cost of ingredients—fruits, vegetables, seafood and meat—is affected by the weather. Some food items are seasonal, and out of season they might have been flown in from around the world. Other delicacies are rare, and still others are on an endangered species list. For example, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has suspended the import of and foreign commerce in beluga caviar and beluga meat in the U.S. since 2005, and even when it was available, the price was in the \$250-an-ounce range.

Does the customer want Chilean sea bass? First of all, not all of it comes from Chile, and it isn't actually bass. If it is available, this flaky, white-fleshed fish must come with documentation verifying that it was caught legally. A single sashimi-grade Chilean sea bass (also known as Patagonian toothfish) can command as much as \$1,000. Gorton's of Gloucester's online seafood shop lists four eight-ounce fillets for \$103.

#### **Finding Ways To Cut Costs**

Many flight attendants working full-time for flight departments and charter operators keep catering costs in check by having on hand frequently demanded items, such as sodas, lemons and limes, crackers and the like. Both full-time and contract flight attendants will often look over a customer's catering request and go shopping en route to the airport.

"I'll use three different sources for a single trip," said one flight attendant—the supermarket for fresh fruit

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## Catering Directory cont'd

4321 General Aviation Ave., Hangar 1, Austin, TX 78719  
(512) 247-5800; fax: (512) 923-4577  
Airports served: AUS, GTU

6860 South Clinton Ct., Unit 1, Greenwood Village, CO 80012  
(303) 662-9335; fax: (303) 342-5604  
Airports served: DEN, APA, BJC, FTG

8285 Perimeter Rd., Seattle, WA 98108  
(206) 249-5255; fax: (206) 249-5275  
Airports served: BFI, SEA, RNT, TIW, PAE

#### **Air Concierge**

2677 Forest Hill Blvd. No. 109  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406  
(561) 434-0081; fax: (561) 434-4771  
www.airconciiergeinc.com  
General info: airconsal@aol.com  
Airports served: VRB, SUA, FYS, PBI, BCT, FXE, FLL, OPK, MIA  
• 24/7 service  
• Linen cleaning service  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Alcohol license  
• Refrigerated delivery vehicles  
• Cabin products service

#### **AirFare Aviation**

107 Poinciana Dr.  
Birmingham, AL 35209  
(205) 872-6650; fax: (205) 871-3698  
General info: airfare101@aol.com  
Airports served: BHM  
• 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. • Credit card  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Shopping service for special items  
• Alcohol license • Linen cleaning service  
• Cabin products service

#### **AirFare Catering**

5834 E. Edison St.  
Tucson, AZ 85712  
(520) 444-8033; fax: (520) 327-1119  
www.airfarecatering.com  
Order and general info: info@airfarecatering.com  
Airports served: TUS, AVQ, OLS, CGZ, RYN  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive  
• Linen cleaning service  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Cabin products service

#### **Airway Executive Aircraft Catering**

2403 Green Valley Dr.  
Houston, TX 77032  
(281) 443-6464; fax: 281-443-4715  
Order and general info: airwayexec@swbell.net  
Airports served: DWH, DFD, GLS, IWS, SGR, IAH, HOU  
• Credit card  
• 24/7 service  
• Cleaning service  
• Cabin products service

#### **A Touch of Elegance**

5959 Kellogg Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH 45228  
(513) 797-0001 (manned line);  
(513) 231-2312 (office); fax: (513) 231-1666  
www.atouchofelegance.info  
Order and general info: catering45228@aol.com  
Airports served: LUK, CVG, DAY, MCO,  
LEX, MGY, HAO, MWO  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive "if ordered  
by FBO that is on direct bill with us" electronic debit  
• Linen cleaning service  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Alcohol license  
• Cabin products service

#### **Atiki's Flight Catering**

4749 N. Albany St., Chicago, IL 60625  
(312) 731-9444; fax: (773) 463-6712  
www.atikiscatering.com  
Order and general info: atikiscatering@netscape.com  
Airports served: MDW, ORD, PWK  
• 24/7 service • Credit card, FBO inclusive  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Cabin products service

#### **Back to Earth Organic Catering**

1327 61st St., Emeryville, CA 94608  
(510) 652-2000; fax: (510) 217-9707  
www.organiccatering.com  
Order and general info: info@organiccatering.com  
• 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. (unless special order)  
• Direct bill, credit card • Linen cleaning service  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service

#### **Baja Catering Service**

5 De Mayo #1034, San Jose Del Cabo, Mexico 23406  
(624) 142-4060; fax: (624) 146-9166  
Order and general info: grupomares@hotmail.com  
Airports served: MMSD  
• 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. • Direct bill, FBO inclusive  
• Linen cleaning service  
• Alcohol license • Refrigerated delivery vehicles

#### **Blue Parrot Catering**

2119 63rd Ave. E, Bradenton, FL 34203  
(941) 727-9900; fax (941) 727-9950  
www.inflightfood@aol.com  
Three Kitchens (Bradenton, Orlando, Naples)  
Airports served: ORL, ISM, MCO, SFB, DAB, TIX, SRQ, VNC,  
PGD, TPA, PIE, RSW, APF, FMY, MKY, LAL  
• 24/7 service • Credit card, direct billing  
• Linen cleaning • Alcohol • Refrigerated delivery vehicles  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Cabin products service

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**New England-based Sensations In-Flight Catering boasts seafood among its specialties.**

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and vegetables, a restaurant for some specialty, and finally, the caterer's standard menu.

He groaned about the current cost of catering, but he also noted, "It's the flight attendant's responsibility to know the caterers and which ones do a good job at a reasonable price.

"Be proactive," he advised. "Take an extra minute or two and explain carefully how you want the order packaged, and tell them what size the packages should be, and whether you want plastic or aluminum. Carry an assortment of zip-top bags to repack if necessary," he said.

More and more flight attendants take that responsibility seriously. At Bombardier, the company's flight attendants often order par-broiled meat or fish and part-steamed vegetables from the caterer and finish cooking in the aircraft galley. They make simple items such as omelets to order on the airplane.

Caterer packaging remains a concern of many flight attendants, but it appears to be most often aimed at caterers less familiar with the limited amount of storage space in a business aircraft galley.

"There's nothing that makes me crazier than a lousy job of packaging," said contract flight attendant Jewel Miller of Phoenix. "When items aren't completely wrapped, they leak, and invariably at the

worst possible time and on the wrong thing!"

Some caterers, said Bombardier flight attendant Franz, are better than others. "We have one caterer who actually shrink-wraps every item. It's great!"

Flight attendants and anyone ordering from a caterer would be well advised to remember the Latin caution *caveat emptor* (let the buyer beware). Perhaps more accurately, the buyer should be aware. Most caterers will work within the constraints of a budget. "I usually ask if there's a price point," said Kristen Wasylyszyn, owner of Atiki's Flight Catering, which serves Minneapolis and Chicago. "If there is, I'll do everything I can to help them stay within budget and still give them the quality they want."

There are still complaints about how FBOs regard

catering. Many are still charging a handling fee for catering orders placed through them, and it can run as high as 30 percent, with no regard to the total cost of the order. "We don't like it," said one caterer. "We know they're doing it, but there's not a lot we can do about it. Our advice is to always ask the person taking the order at the FBO if there is a handling charge, and how much."

Stories of agreements between certain FBOs and certain caterers are difficult to confirm. Some caterers deny any such agreements. "We do not have such agreements with any FBO," said Linder at Silver Lining. "Our job is to provide good service and take care of our clients, and that's not part of it."

"We had a driver who wanted to drop off an order at an FBO for pickup by the customer, and the FBO demanded a refrigeration fee," recalled Patti Kupczyk of Chantal's Par Avion in Stuart, Fla. "The driver called me, and I spoke with the FBO and said they would have to check with NetJets," she said with a chuckle. "They haven't bothered us with it since, so I guess they figured the fuel contract was worth more than the refrigeration fee."

### The Health-conscious Passenger

Bombardier flight attendant Franz also pointed out that passengers are much more aware of how they're fueling their bodies "thanks to places like Whole Foods and Wild Oats." Flexjet contracts with Air Chef to provide most of the catering from Air Chef's affiliate catering kitchens in North America and is in the process of reviewing the Flexjet menu.

"I've noticed a tendency toward more simple tastes," said a catering executive for the fractional ownership operator. "It might be steak, but not so heavy on the sauce, and the side items are grilled vegetables and salads rather than corn and mashed potatoes."

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## Catering Directory Cont'd

### Chantal's Par Avion

1811 S.E. Airport Rd., Stuart, FL 34996  
(772) 283-4466; fax: (772) 283-4303  
General info: chantalsparavion@bellsouth.net  
Orders: chantalsairport1@bellsouth.net  
Airports served: SUA, VRB, FPR

- 24/7 service • Direct bill, credit card • Linen cleaning service
- Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service
- Refrigerated delivery vehicles • Cabin products service

### Cucina Deli

1026 Second Ave., Salt Lake City, UT 84103  
(801) 322-3055; fax: (801) 532-8360  
www.cucinadeli.com  
Orders and general info: owner@cucinadeli.com  
(faxes preferred)

Airports served: SLC, 36U, U42  
• 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

### Dagwood's Catering

5717 S. Laburnum Ave., Richmond, VA 23231  
(804) 652-1900; fax: (804) 652-1901  
www.dagwoodscatering.com  
Orders and general info: orders@dagwoodscatering.com  
Airport served: RIC

- 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Can deliver anytime with notice
- Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive

### Executive Aircraft Catering

8321 Lemmon Ave., Dallas, TX 75209  
(888) 899-3663  
www.executiveaircraftcatering.com (under construction)  
General info: kelliott1961@yahoo.com  
Airports served: DFW, SAC  
• 24/7 service

### Executive Jet Catering by Chefs de France

102 Route de la Baie Nettlè, Saint-Martin  
Netherlands Antilles 97150  
+590 29 15 99; fax: +590 29 68 64  
www.catering.saint-martin.com  
Order and general info: nico@chefs-de-france.com  
Airport served: TNCM/SXM

- 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.
- Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive, wire transfer
- Linen cleaning service
- Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service
- Alcohol license • Refrigerated delivery vehicles
- Cabin products service

### First Class Caterers

300 Horizon Dr., Coraopolis, PA 15108  
(412) 472-0555; fax: (412) 472-6709  
www.firstclasscaterers.com  
Order and general info: fccaterer@yahoo.com  
Airports served: AGC, PIT, BVI, AFJ  
• 24/7 service

### Fly-Away Gourmet

32 Eagle Park East, Eagle, CO 81631-4562  
(970) 328-2770; fax: (970) 328-2772  
Orders and general info: Chefkeeg@aol.com  
Airports served: EGE, RIL  
• 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### Gate Gourmet

Borddientsstrasse, Zurich Airport, Zurich, Switzerland CH8058  
+41 43 812 60 85; fax: +41 43 812 17 50  
www.gategourmet.com  
Orders and general info: vip-zrh@gategourmet.com  
Airport served: ZRH  
• 24/7 service • Direct bill, credit card, electronic debit
- Linen cleaning service
- Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service
- Alcohol license • Refrigerated delivery vehicles
- Cabin products service

### Georgis Catering Executive Services

6339 South Central Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60638  
(773) 585-3663; fax: (773) 585-5062  
www.georgiscatering.com  
Orders and general info: buzcooks@georgiscatering.com or  
greatfood@georgiscatering.com

- Airports served: ARR, DPA, GYY, LOT, ENW,  
MKE, ORD, TWK, UDN, MDW
- 24/7 service • Direct bill, through FBO fuel bill
  - Cleaning service • Cabin products service
  - Refrigerated delivery vehicles

### GoGo Jet Inflight

1809-J Cross Beam Dr.  
Charlotte, NC 28217  
(704) 714-2833; fax: (704) 714-2838  
www.gogojetinflight.com  
Orders and general info: gogojetinflight.com  
Airports served: CLT, CAE, CUB, EQY, JQF, GSP,  
GSO, INT, HKY, SVH, UZA  
AVL, RDU, TDF by special arrangements only

- 24/7 service
- Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive, electronic debit
- Linen cleaning service
- Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service
- Alcohol license • Refrigerated delivery vehicles
- Cabin products service

### Gourmet AirFare

44850 N. I-94 Service Dr.  
Belleville, MI 48111  
(866) 538-3663; (866) JET-FOOD;  
fax: (734) 699-8182  
www.gourmetairfare.com  
Order and general info: orders@gourmetairfare.com  
Airports served: YIP, DTW, DET, PTK, LAN,  
TOL, TDZ, GRR, AZO

- 24/7 service

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## Recipe Book Benefits Corporate Angel Network

International handling specialist Air Routing introduced its *Agent Network Cookbook* to benefit the Corporate Angel Network, which arranges free flights to treatment for cancer patients by using empty seats on business aircraft.

Sales of the book, \$29.99 a copy, have added \$3,960 to CAN's nonprofit efforts. The books will be on sale at the Air Routing booth (No. 1705) at this month's NBAA Convention in Atlanta. Those who can't wait can purchase a copy by contacting Air Routing's Kerry Borrosso at (713) 430-7030. —K.J.H.

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Some regions of the U.S. are at least somewhat immune to trends such as organic foods produced without the use of artificial pesticides and other chemicals.

"I honestly don't get a lot of demand for organics," said Chantal's Kupczyk. "What we get here in Florida is primarily traditional menu items, and mostly seafoods."

"I get about 100 orders a day, and only about five percent of them include anything organic," said Brenda Paauwe-Navori, president and cofounder of GoGo Jet, Charlotte, N.C. But her customers are typically from regional sports teams and the Nascar race circuit. "We can do it. We just don't get a lot of call for it."

Other caterers are seeing a substantial growth in demand for organic foods. "I've seen a twenty- to twenty-five-percent increase in demand for organic since I bought the business in late 2005," said Steve Kelley, owner of Airway Executive Aircraft Catering in Houston.

Rudy's Celentano described last year as "an explosive year for organics."

"Organic is off the charts now," said Eric Pevar of

Mireilles Inflight Caterers in San Francisco. "We're a little spoiled out here," he said, referring to the fact that agriculture is California's second largest industry and organic farms represent a rapidly growing percentage of that industry.

According to caterers, eating organic foods is only one element of eating healthy. "We're seeing a whole new demographic among business aviation passengers," said Celentano. "They're younger. They're a generation that understands the importance of eating healthy. They want wild salmon and free-range chicken. And they'll ask for specific brands, like Bell & Evans chicken."

He added that customers are becoming much more eclectic in their tastes. For example, any old fish won't do for a sandwich. It has to be tilapia. He also paid homage to the large health food outlets such as Whole Foods and Wild Oats for introducing new fruits to Americans, pointing out that "tropical" fruit trays and specific exotic fruits are replacing the standard fruit tray.

Middle Eastern dishes are perceived as "healthy" and Mezzas, or Middle Eastern sampler platters, are showing up on the menu of almost every large caterer. The variety is such that virtually no two platters are exactly the same, though certain items are typical—hummus (chick pea spread), baba ghanoush (roasted eggplant spread), dolmas (stuffed grape leaves) and mahamara (roasted red peppers).

"Middle Eastern cuisine," mused Celentano. "Who would have thought?"

The only downside of eating health-

ier is the cost. Organic items are typically 20 to 30 percent more at the wholesale point and sometimes double the cost of nonorganic at the retail end. And the ingredients for such menu specialties as Mezza are often difficult to come by and must be purchased at an ethnic market, which is always more expensive.

As passengers show interest in more exotic menu items, caterers are becoming more adventurous in their menu selections. Beluga caviar is being replaced by what true gourmets consider lesser roe—Ossetra

*Caterers have noticed passengers modifying their menus, opting for grilled vegetables instead of sauce-covered sides.*



KIRBY J. HARRISON

## Catering Directory Cont'd

### Gourmet Catering To Go

801 Hangar Lane, Hangar 7, Nashville, TN 37217  
(615) 360-9999; fax: (615) 360-9076  
Orders and general info: simonscatering@bellsouth.net  
Airports served: BNA, MQY, JWN  
• 24/7 service • Billing: credit card, FBO inclusive  
• Linen cleaning service: 24-hour minimum  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Alcohol license • Refrigerated delivery vehicles  
• Cabin products service

### Gourmet Inflight Catering

185 Hackensack St., Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075  
(201) 460-0777; fax: (201) 460-0759  
www.gourmet-air.com  
Orders and general info: gourmetair5@msn.com  
Airports served: TEB, MMU, EWR, HPN, LGA, JFK, ISP, FRG, SWF  
• 24/7 service • Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive

### Guthrie's Dining Designs

4343 Jerry L. Maygarden Rd., Pensacola, FL 32504  
(850) 436-4517; fax: (850) 436-6500  
www.guthries.net  
Orders and general info: guthries@airmail.net  
Airport served: PNS

### Hit's Fly By Catering

124 St. Johns Forest Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32259  
(904) 829-3177; fax: (904) 827-1977  
Orders and general info: hitsflyby@aol.com  
Airports served: SGJ, JAX, CRG, VQQ  
• If an order is placed 24 hours in advance, we will provide service. Limited Saturday/Sunday service unless given 24 hours' notice. First delivery 6 a.m. Normal hours 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
• Credit card • Alcohol license

### In Flight Services

2303 North 44th St., Suite 5  
Phoenix, AZ 85008  
(602) 956-8512; fax: (602) 957-9218  
www.inflight-services-online.com (under construction)  
Orders and general info: debrakeevans@msn.com  
Airports served: PHX, SDL, DVT, GYR, FFZ, IWA, GEU, CHD  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive, electronic debit  
• Linen cleaning service  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Alcohol license  
• Refrigerated delivery vehicles  
• Cabin products service

### Isaac's Inflight Catering

2051 Palomar Airport Rd.  
Carlsbad, CA 92011  
(760) 931-0267; fax: (760) 931-0918  
www.isaacscatering.com  
Orders and general info: isaacscatering@sbcglobal.net  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive  
• Alcohol license  
• Refrigerated delivery vehicles

### Jetfinity Aviation Catering

563 Pilgrim Dr., Suite A  
Foster City, CA 94404  
(866) 538-3464; fax: (866) 538-3460  
www.jetfinity.com  
Airports served: SFO, SJC, OAK, HWD, SQL  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive  
• Alcohol license  
• Refrigerated delivery vehicles  
• Cabin products service

### JetStream Seasoning

0871 Cooley Mesa Rd.  
Gypsum, CO 81637  
(970) 618-0610; fax: (970) 524-5226  
www.jetstreamseasoning.com  
jetfood@sopris.net  
Airport served: EGE  
• 24/7 service

### KAT Air Services

1589 Vapor Trail  
Colorado Springs, CO 80916  
(719) 596-6115; fax: (719) 596-6195  
Orders and general info: katairservices@aol.com  
Airports served: COS  
• Cabin products service

### Lindy's Premier Inflight Cuisine

2904 Pacific Hwy.  
San Diego, CA 92101  
(619) 298-7704; fax: (619) 298-7021  
Orders and general info: info@jimsair.com  
Airport served: SAN

### M Foods Limited

7B Dr. Mazhar Ashour St.  
Ground Floor  
Al Nozha area  
Cairo, Egypt  
+20 122 46 1056; fax: +20 126 23 5518  
www.mfoods-ltd.com  
General info: info@mfoods-ltd.com  
Orders: mdeen@mfoods-ltd.com  
Airport served: HECA  
• 24/7 service • FBO inclusive

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and Sevruga. And there is organic caviar from at least two sources—Riofrio Caviar near Grenada, Spain, and Tsar Nicoulai in Wilton, Calif.

Lindy's Premier Inflight Catering, San Diego, often has black cod and marlin on the menu. "The black cod," said catering director Brad Thomas, "is very flaky and melts in your mouth. We do it with pad Thai noodles. It's pan seared and finished off in the airplane."

Wasylyszyn at Minneapolis-based Atiki's takes pride in making everything from scratch,

including strawberry rhubarb muffins and wild rice and cranberries. One of Atiki's specialties is indigenous walleyed pike, rolled in bread crumbs from dried pumpernickel with a hint of cayenne and pan-fried. "And we have a great relationship with local farmers and markets," said Wasylyszyn, who also tends to the kitchen's herb garden, grown in the backyard in terracotta pots.

Breads are important. At Tufo's To Go, Columbus, Ohio, owner and chef Steve Tufo has become accustomed to requests for a

specific bread, even an ordinary bread. "I have clients who'll OK a ham-and-cheese sandwich, and then emphasize that it has to be on Panera bread."

Harry Purut, CEO and co-owner of Gourmet InFlight Catering, Wood-Ridge, N.J., orders gourmet breads daily—"olive bread, whole grain, cibata, Panera and a dozen different varieties of rolls."

Tastefully Yours has taken an adventurous approach. Kraft said every Friday their kitchen is "sample Friday." She puts a stack of recipes she has gleaned from vari-

ous newspapers and magazines on her desk, calls in the chefs and tells everyone, "Pick one and do it." One of the results from the culinary throw-down, she recalled with a laugh, was watermelon gazpacho [a cold soup]. "Bizarre as it sounds, it was incredible!"

To some degree, most catering menus are regional in flavor. Caterers in the Northeast typically have a menu heavy on seafood—in particular, lobster. In the Southwest, variations on TexMex are common. Around the Chesapeake Bay, soft shelled crabs and crab

cakes are popular from about May through the summer. New Orleans has shrimp étouffée, and in Florida, seafood is also a major menu item (as is key lime pie).

Barbecue is particularly sought after in the South. Some caterers do their own. Others believe that really good barbecue can come only from someone willing to devote the time necessary. According to those who truly love good barbecue, the various cuts of beef and pork may spend from 12 to 18 hours in the cooking process.

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## For Carnivores Only— Is it Kobe or Wagyu?

For those who are vegans, vegetarians or even slightly health conscious, stop reading here. Carnivores, read on!

Steak is making a comeback, and no longer as simply a 32-ounce slab of meat seared over an open fire and tossed on a plate. Today's steak has evolved in a way the average cowboy in the old west would never have imagined, from aging techniques to boutique cuts to organic filet mignon. That is to say nothing of the exotic marinades and dry rubs, or the pan-searing, oven-roasting, slow-poaching and grilling at 1,200 degrees F.

With the growing popularity of Kobe beef, a number of business aviation caterers these days have it on their menu. But what is Kobe beef, and does it live up to a restaurant price that can sizzle at about \$300 a pound?

Kobe is a city on the southeast coast of Japan. But the term "Kobe beef" is something of a misnomer. Kobe beef actually comes from the Wagyu breed of cattle, which is known for its natural, genetic inclination to produce meat with intense and even marbling, which is enhanced by grain feed and minimal exercise.

In Japan, the beef cannot be called "Kobe" unless it meets exacting standards and the animal was born, bred and fed in Kobe and meets all those standards. But because of the demand, ranches outside Japan, primarily in the U.S., have sprung up to breed and raise Wagyu cattle for the market. Ironically, Japan is the largest market for Wagyu cattle raised in the U.S., with much of it shipped back to the U.S., where it is frequently sold as "Kobe beef."

Does the beef warrant the price? Maybe. But as for any prime cut of beef that has been aged well, proper cooking is a critical element. Chefs seem to agree that in an ideal kitchen, most cuts from Wagyu Kobe and A5-grade Japanese Kobe, aged 28 to 32 days, should be slow-poached in butter or olive oil, then grilled over a wood fire (mesquite and hickory are popular).

How much should you pay? Generally, a six-ounce A5-grade Japanese Kobe filet mignon will run in the \$200 range. A nice Wagyu Kobe from the U.S.? A little less.

Is it worth it, taking into consideration the price, and the possibility that the steak masquerading as A5-grade Japanese Kobe might be ordinary Wagyu Kobe born and bred in the U.S. Maybe. Maybe not. On the other hand, it might still be the finest steak you've ever had.

So as the street hustlers in New York City have been wont to say, "You pays your money and you takes your chances." —K.J.H.

# Etiquette

## It's A Lot More Than 'Knife 'n' Fork School'

For a generation growing up with a burger in one hand, a French fry in the other and both elbows on the table, "etiquette" is not much more than a word in a dictionary. Most people, in fact, can more easily define what etiquette isn't than what it is by simply quoting their parents.

"Keep your elbows off the table; don't slurp your soup from the bowl; don't lick the spoon and put it back in the potatoes; and don't talk with your mouth full." It's all good advice, and Emily Post would have approved.

But at its heart, etiquette is much more than knowing the difference between "class" and "crass." It is a measure of the individual and the manner in which people exhibit their respect for one another by conforming to certain accepted norms of behavior.

For those who want the Emily Post version: "Whenever two people come together and their behavior affects one another, you have etiquette." But she also noted, "Etiquette is not some rigid code of manners, but simply how people's lives touch one another."

No matter what the setting, said Donna Cassacia, founder of The Corporate School of Etiquette, following the rules of etiquette is good form. This is particularly true in the business aviation industry, where clients are demanding and a breach of decorum can be a deal-breaker.

Cassacia, 47, began her career as a corporate flight attendant with Aramco in Saudi Arabia. After that she went to school at Webster University's campus in Geneva for a bachelor's degree in business and marketing. Three years ago, she launched The Corporate School of Etiquette in Long Beach, Calif., providing basic on-site service training for business aviation flight attendants.

Last year, Cassacia began reorganizing the curriculum and expanding the school to accommodate an even broader client base. More recently, she moved the school into a larger facility near Daugherty Field in Long Beach and added as classroom props a refurbished cabin from a wrecked Gulfstream and a side-view, cut-away mockup of a Gulfstream IV.



THE CORPORATE SCHOOL OF ETIQUETTE

The new curriculum, said Cassacia, is now up to speed with five classes:

- **Practical Flight Assignment** (one day) takes the student on an actual "timed flight assignment," from receipt of a trip sheet to placing a catering order, to preparing and plating a meal. It ends with the actual serving of menu items to "passengers" on the flight.
- **Business Essentials Training** (one day) covers the necessary steps for flight attendants to prepare for working with premier companies in corporate aviation and then guides them through the application and interviewing process.
- **Service Essentials Training** (two days) provides essential service skills for new and transitioning flight attendants and flight technicians, with an introduction to corporate aviation, chef demonstration, mechanics of service, before and after landing procedures, and international travel requirements and documents.
- **Service and Business Essentials Training** (three days) covers skills that include a résumé workshop, dressing for success, business communication skills, employment resources, one-on-one interview expertise and dispatch briefing.
- **Advanced Course** (four days) is hands-on class that includes all aspects of cabin services, from wine and food pairing and knife skills to international etiquette and catering recovery techniques.

In the works are plans for a division devoted to business executives. The course will include dining etiquette, protocol, letter writing and even how to shake hands.

In the future, the school will add a two-day class devoted to culinary skills, from selecting ingredients and cooking, to recovering from a mistake. In the past, she explained, a flight attendant was rarely—if ever—expected to do more than serve what the caterer delivered. But that's changing. Airplanes are larger with better equipped galleys, and with nonstop flights lasting up to 14 hours, more aircraft owners are looking for flight attendants who are skilled in the culinary arts.

Flight attendants quickly learn that while they must be current in terms of FAA training requirements, and that medical emergency training is important, more of them are fired for poor service or some breach of etiquette.

Cassacia added floral design and scents to the curriculum after hearing the story of a passenger who not only objected to the flowers on board but went so far as to snatch them out of the vase and throw them onto the runway.

Noting the increase in global business, Cassacia said, "Etiquette, comportment, the ability to make people feel comfortable has never been more important."

Etiquette has taken an equally important place in the hiring process. "When [the interviewers] invite you to lunch after the interview, it's not because they want to feed you," said Cassacia. "They want to see how you handle yourself in a social situation."

"The idea," she said, "is that students will not only learn but embrace the principles of etiquette, which will in turn give them the confidence to handle themselves well in any social or professional situation." —K.J.H.

## Catering Directory cont'd

### Marcia's Catering

Haroldo Paranhos, 400  
São Paulo, Brazil 04357-060  
+55 11 5031-0981; fax: +55 11 5031 0981  
www.marciascatering.com.br  
General info: Julceiaz@marciascatering.com.br  
Order info: Recepcao@marciascatering.com.br  
Airports served: CGH, GRU, VCP, BSB  
• 24/7 service

### Mireille's Inflight Caterers

4151 Carson St.,  
Lakewood, CA 96712  
(562) 938-1580; fax: (562) 938-1590  
www.mireillesinflight.com  
General info: mpevar@mireillesinflight.com  
Airports served: LGB, SNA, LAX, CHO, TOA,  
SMO, VNY, BUR, SFO  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive, electronic debit

### Nature's Window

6944½ North Oak Trafficway  
Gladstone, MO 64118  
(816) 436-1334; fax: (816) 436-1351  
Orders and general info: natwin@sbcglobal.net  
Airports served: MKC, MCI, LWC, OJC, IXD  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card  
• Alcohol license  
• Cabin products service

### New Horizons Inflight

2400 Griffin Rd.  
Dania Beach, FL 33312  
(954) 966-7006; fax: (954) 966-5003  
www.newhorizonsinflight.com  
General info: newhorizons6@earthlink.net  
Orders: nhinflight@earthlink.net  
Airports served: PBI, BCT, FXE, FLL,  
OPF, MIA, TMB  
• 24/7 service • Direct bill, credit card, electronic debit  
• Linen cleaning service • Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Alcohol license • Cabin products service

### Northwinds

2117 W. River Rd., Minneapolis, MN 55411  
(612) 767-1778  
www.twincitycatering.com  
Orders and general info: northwinds@twincitycatering.com  
Airports served: MSP, STP, ANE, FCM, SGS, MIC

### Rudy's Inflight Catering

(866) 727-1122  
www.rudysinflight.com  
• 24/7 service all locations • Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive  
• Linen cleaning service • Cabin products service  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Alcohol license • Refrigerated delivery vehicles

180 North St., Teterboro, NJ 07608  
Fax: (201) 721-0777  
Airports served: TEB, MMU, EWR, CDW, TTN, BLM

14303 Sullyfield Circle, Chantilly, VA 20151  
Airports served: BWI, DCA, HEF, IAD, JYO

2 Taxi Lane, Bldg. 15, White Plains, NY 10604  
Airports served: LGA, JFK, HPN, SWF, ISP, FRG

### Sensations In-flight Catering

43 Jackson St., Saugus, MA 01906  
(781) 233-5150; fax: (781) 233-3998  
www.sensationsinflightcatering.com  
General info: info@sensationsinflightcatering.com  
Airports served: PVD, BVY, BED, BOS, HYA,  
EWB, LWM, ASH, PSM, MHT  
• 24/7 service • Linen cleaning service • Alcohol license  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive, electronic debit  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Refrigerated delivery vehicles  
• Cabin products service

### Skyway Catering Service

2410 Lucknow Dr. #32, Toronto, Canada  
(905) 677-2526; fax: (905) 677-2775  
www.skywaycatering.com  
Orders and general info: david@skywaycatering.com  
Airports served: CYYZ, CYHM, CYKZ  
• 24/7 service  
• Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive  
• Linen cleaning service • Cabin products service  
• Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service  
• Alcohol license • Refrigerated delivery vehicles

### Tastefully Yours Catering

3187 Corsair Dr., Suite 100, Atlanta, GA 30341  
(770) 455-7002; fax: (770) 455-7004  
www.tycatering.net  
Orders and general info: tycatering@aol.com  
Airports served: ATL, FTY, PDK, LZU, RYY, FFC, GVL  
• 24/7 service  
• Through FBO, direct bill, credit card  
• Cleaning  
• Cabin products service  
• Refrigerated delivery vehicles

# Catering Directory Cont'd

## **Temptations Everyday Gourmet**

8207 Market St.  
Wilmington, NC 28411  
(910) 686-9343; fax: (910) 686-4084

Orders and general info:

temptationscafe@hotmail.com

Airport served: ILM

- 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Mon. to Sat.)
- Direct bill, credit card, FBO inclusive, electronic debit
- Alcohol license (beer and wine only)

## **Tufo's To Go Inflight Catering**

7492 Lindbrook Ct.  
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068  
(740) 927-9024; fax: (740) 964-0941  
www.tufostogo.com

Orders and general info: tufostogo@rroho.com

Airports served: LCK, CMH, TZR, SGH,  
OSU, DAY, EWR

- 24/7 service • Direct bill, credit card
- Flatware/stemware/china cleaning service
- Alcohol license
- Cabin products service

## **TW's Catering**

P.O. Box 641  
Tulsa, OK 74101-0641  
(918) 582-8608; fax: (918) 582-8270  
www.twsafabcatering.com  
General info: twscatering@aol.com  
Airports served: TUL, RVS, OKC, PWA,  
BVO, SWO, SGF, JLN, XNA

- 24/7 service

# Catering Cross Index Directory by City

**Ashburn, Va.** - Air Chef

**Atlanta, Ga.** - Tastefully Yours Catering

**Austin, Texas** - Air Chef

**Belleville, Mich.** - Gourmet AirFare

**Birmingham, Ala.** - AirFare Aviation

**Bradenton, Fla.** - Blue Parrot Catering

**Brookfield, Ill.** - Air Chef

**Cairo, Egypt** - M Foods

**Carlsbad, Calif.** - Isaac's Inflight Catering

**Chantilly, Va.** - Rudy's Inflight Catering

**Charlotte, N.C.** - GoGo Jet Inflight

**Colorado Springs, Colo.** - KAT Air Services

**Coraopolis, Pa.** - First Class Caterers

**Chicago** - Atiki's Flight Catering  
Georgis Catering Executive Services

**Cincinnati** - A Touch of Elegance

**Dallas** - Air Chef  
Executive Aircraft Catering

**Dania Beach, Fla.** - New Horizons Inflight

**Eagle, Colo.** - Fly-Away Gourmet

**Fenton, Mo.** - Aerohawk Catering

**Foster City, Calif.** - Jetfinity Aviation

**Gladstone, Mo.** - Nature's Window

**Greenwood Village, Colo.** - Air Chef

**Gypsum, Colo.** - JetStream Seasoning

**Houston, Texas** - Airway Executive  
Aircraft Catering

**Jacksonville, Fla.** - Hit's Fly By Catering

**Lakewood, Calif.** - Mireille's Inflight Caterers

**Little Ferry, N.J.** - Air Chef

**London, England** - Absolute Taste

**Minneapolis, Minn.** - Northwinds

**Nashville, Tenn.** - Gourmet Catering To Go

**Palm Springs, Calif.** - Above the Best Catering

**Patchogue, N.Y.** - Air Chef

**Pensacola, Fla.** - Guthrie's Dining Designs

**Phoenix, Ariz.** - In Flight Services

**Reynoldsburg, Ohio** - Tufo's To Go  
Inflight Catering

**Richmond, Va.** - Dagwood's Catering

**Salt Lake City** - Cucina Deli

**San Antonio** - Absolutely Delicious Catering

**San Diego** - Lindy's

**San Jose Del Cabo, Mexico** -  
Baja Catering Service

**Saint-Martin, Netherlands Antilles** -  
Executive Jet Catering by Chefs de France

**San Francisco, Calif.** - Back to Earth  
Organic Catering

**São Paulo, Brazil** - Marcia's Catering

**Saugus, Mass.** - Sensations In-Flight Catering

**Seattle, Wash.** - Air Chef

**Stuart, Fla.** - Chantal's Par Avion

**Teterboro, N.J.** - Rudy's Inflight Catering

**Toronto, Canada** - Skyway Catering Service

**Tucson, Ariz.** - AirFare Catering

**Tulsa, Okla.** - TW's Catering

**West Palm Beach, Fla.** - Air Concierge

**White Plains, N.Y.** - Rudy's Inflight Catering

**Wilmington, N.C.** - Temptations Everyday  
Gourmet

**Wood-Ridge, N.J.** - Gourmet Inflight Catering

**Zurich, Switzerland** - Gate Gourmet

*To be included in a future AIN catering directory, send information to kharrison@ainonline.com.*

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GoGo Jet doesn't even try to do barbecue. "We have a supplier who does it for us. It's just a small place in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains, about an hour's drive from the kitchen," said Paauwe-Navori. We pick it up in ten-gallon pails." It's popular enough that GoGo Jet even does pulled-pork canapés and brisket as appetizers. And don't ask the name of her supplier. It's a secret.

Paauwe-Navori also talks of Southern comfort food—cheddar-cheese grits, Savannah shrimp in a Southern sauce.

Caterers these days chuckle when asked about the popularity of so-called "comfort food."

"It's whatever makes you comfortable," said Lindy's Thomas. In a world made small by global travel and in a country such as America with its incredibly diverse ethnic mix, comfort food can be anything from shrimp gumbo to sushi.

"Everything is comfort food," Thomas declared. "It's not always the same for everyone, but it is usually something you ate as a kid, and the scent and tastes bring back good memories. And if you're traveling, it's like getting a little gift from home."

### Box Lunches

If anyone on the airplane needs "comfort food," it's the guys up front. Gone, and perhaps better forgotten, is the simple pilot's box lunch with a couple of ham-and-cheese sandwiches, a pickle, a bag of chips and a soda. In its place are hot meals, gourmet wraps, shrimp cocktail and Japanese bento boxes.

Air Gourmet has taken the "box" to a whole new level. It offers the "Asian Moon," which is a combination of shrimp summer rolls, chicken satay, Thai glass noodle salad and peanut dipping sauce. And there's a box featuring papaya halves stuffed with curry chicken salad.

A typical box lunch from Atiki's reflects the kitchen's rather original approach and might include local artisan cheeses, shrimp cocktail, a mixed berry cup, filet mignon sandwich and prosciutto-wrapped melon. "Why not?" asked Wasyliszyn of Atiki's.

Tufos To Go tries to keep the price for a box lunch to about \$15. That price includes a choice of eight deli sandwiches or a Thai chicken wrap, along with chips, a salad and dessert.

But while the box lunch has gotten a considerable upgrade, the palate of the typical pilot in some ways remains unchanged. Asked what the most popular item on the pilot menu was, one caterer choked back laughter and replied, "Peanut butter and jelly—good ol' PB&J."

While passengers and pilots alike are enjoying a new variety in cuisine, some customers are just plain hard to please. Purut at Gourmet Inflight Catering recalled an order from a customer who made it clear that her passenger did not drink alcohol. She also insisted that she wanted chicken Marsala, a dish distinguished by the use of Marsala wine.

In the past decade, according to NBAA, the general aviation turbine fleet



*In-flight catering involves more than just cooking; customer-service reps stay busy coordinating customer requests.*

has doubled, and the number of hours flown has grown from 2.3 million in 1994 to 4.8 million in 2005. It should be no surprise then that the business aviation catering industry has benefited mightily.

LaRosa, with partner Michael DePao-lis, bought Sensations In-flight Catering in 2005. "We almost doubled our business from 2005 to 2006, and I'm ready for a huge year in 2007," he said.

Wasyliszyn said Atiki's has doubled its business in the past two years, and she anticipates a 20- to 30-percent increase this year over last year.

At Gourmet Inflight Catering, Purut reported a 30-percent increase in business from 2005 to 2006 and expects similar growth this year.

Aerohawk Catering serves five airports in the St. Louis area and has seen sufficient demand to considering expanding.

According to Rudy's Celentano, part of the growth in the business aviation industry has been the result of fractional ownership expansion and membership card charter services. "The fractionals and the card memberships have brought a lot of new people into the industry—people with more sophisticated palates who know what they want," he said.

Kupczyk of Chantal's Par Avion normally sees a seasonal drop in business in early summer, but this year, she said, "We were actually busy all through June. We had about a thirty-percent increase in private jet catering in 2006 over 2005, and 2007 looks like more of the same."

GoGo Jet's Paauwe-Navori reported a slightly lower increase in overall volume, about 15 percent. "But," she added, "I'm really pleased. Any time you see double-digit growth, you're happy."

Operators flying into San Diego International Airport (Lindbergh Field) may find a wider choice in catering if plans by the local airport authority go through and a second FBO is added. To date, Jimsair has been the only FBO on the field and its lease with the airport has effectively made Lindy's Premier Inflight Cuisine—owned by Jimsair and located at the FBO—the only choice in catering. Jimsair has historically refused to allow other caterers access to aircraft at the FBO.

At Sky Gourmet in San Jose, Calif., owner Alex Pedroza is anticipating a long-term, steady growth across the business aviation industry, "maybe twenty or thirty percent over the next five years." Meanwhile, he added, "Our customers are happy. They're paying their bills, and we're paying our bills, so I think we're going to be here for a while." □