

## Wedding advice 2010 - get booked on Boxing Day

Contributed by Sara  
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Boxing Day 2009 could see more wedding enquiries and bookings than the day after Valentines Day. That's the prediction of Damian Clarkson, owner and managing director of The London Kitchen, who is advising aspiring brides to act early. He also believes that, to stay ahead of the current wedding trends sweeping the UK, you should think patriotic, relaxed and familiar.

"By lunchtime on Boxing Day after that Christmas Day proposal, the best dates, locations and caterers are booked," says Damian. "So our advice is to get as many of your wedding plans in place before the end of the festive season. Leaving it late can mean waiting another year or getting married at the wrong time and place."

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The London Kitchen's team have worked at some of the most prestigious venues and events in the UK and prides itself on its personal approach. With experience like this, Damian Clarkson, is a man whose advice is worth heeding.

"In a recession guests love what they feel familiar with and comfort food is extremely popular. Steak and chips remains firmly on the menu, as do old favorites like sherry trifle, serve yours in a tall glass and embellish with oven dried fruits sticks. We're also seeing people enjoy less formal options such as tapas as grazing is also very popular these days. In Dec 2009 we did our first 'Conveyor Belt' party - a 9 course menu, with 15 minutes per tasting plate"

And move over cupcakes. In 2010 our patriotism will see us welcoming traditional favourites such as the Eccles cake, Yorkshire parkin and Welsh cakes back to that most British of rituals, afternoon tea.

2009 saw The London Kitchen's first London wedding with East End canapés (smoked salmon mini blinis and salt beef bagels) followed by pie and mash and liquor and a desert of jam roly poly. In the evening the guest enjoyed a proper East End curry.

Drinkwise, Damian advises eschewing carton-packaged juice and soft drinks. "Our favourite is Duskin's Cox Apple Juice with a touch of Belvoir Organic Elderflower, or Botanicals like Fentimans Old Ginger Beer, Cloudy Lemonade or my Favourite Sarsaparilla."

Although Rocco Rose has been very popular at weddings and events during 2009, guests still expect Champagne not Prosecco for daddy's girl.

And as midnight approaches and appetites return, your guests will really appreciate a tasty snack. Sausage rolls or bacon butties go a long way to satisfying this celebration-induced hunger.

The London Kitchen caters for premium corporate and private clients. The team works with high quality suppliers to provide food of exceptional quality and provenance from across the UK and Europe. Rather than offer a set menu, The London Kitchen provides a bespoke service for every client and event.

The London Kitchen can be contacted on telephone 020 7232 2382 or email [info@thelondonkitchen.com](mailto:info@thelondonkitchen.com). Alternatively, visit [www.thelondonkitchen.com](http://www.thelondonkitchen.com).

### Editor's notes

The team is passionate about food, and works with high quality suppliers to provide food of exceptional quality and provenance, sourced from across the UK and Europe.

The team of five chefs and events planners are led by managing director Damian Clarkson, who has worked for some of the biggest names in British catering, event management and party planning, including The Admirable Crichton, Rhubarb Food Design and Mosimann's.

Before setting up The London Kitchen, Damian was managing director of Red Snapper Events, with clients including the Duchy of Cornwall, Tom Ford, Oswald Boateng, Mercedes Benz, Aston Martin, Wella, and Monsoon.

He has catered events alongside leading chefs Atul Kochnar and James Martin, and has catered for private clients in the

UK and the South of France.

Damian's food has impressed tough critics such as Michael Winner, and he has also appeared on The Apprentice, Noel Edmunds's show on Sky, and BBC Radio 2's Chris Evans Drive Time. In 2008 he was ISES Caterer of The Year 2008, and in Tatler's Must Have list, and was in Events magazine's Top Ten in 2007.

The London Kitchen supports a number of charities including The Foodchain and Kisses 4 Kids.