



Checklist: How to Write Menu Descriptions That Sell

You don't need to be a copywriter to write a menu that sells. If you know your food, you're already most of the way there.

For independent cafés, pubs and restaurants, your menu is one of your hardest-working tools – often viewed on a phone, in a hurry, and alongside a few nearby competitors.

Done right, it doesn't just list dishes. It builds confidence, sparks appetite, and nudges people to book or order a little more.

Use this checklist to make sure yours does exactly that.

Where does your menu appear?

Your website

Google Business Profile

Booking platforms

Delivery and click & collect apps

Social media

Do your descriptions sell the food, not just list the ingredients? Have you included:

The location you sourced an ingredient from

The grade or quality of ingredient

The flavour of a sauce or ingredient type

The way an ingredient is cooked

Any standout ingredients or unusual combinations

The portion size

Any sides or extras

Are you clear to customers? Ask yourself:

Would someone new to your menu or business understand instantly?

Is it obvious if an item is vegetarian, vegan, spicy or lighter?

Are the key ingredients clear?

Do you make it clear what sets you apart? Are any of your dishes:

Made in-house

Locally sourced, from a well-known supplier or market

Cooked specially (slow-cooked, wood-fired, marinated)

A customer favourite

A signature dish

6 steps to refresh your menu

1. Rewrite the top 5 best-selling dishes using the prompts above
2. Remove vague or overly clever wording that makes your offer unclear
3. Add at least one appealing detail to each key item
4. Flag one or two customer favourites from delivery app reviews, social media or word-of-mouth
5. Check how it appears on a mobile
6. Keep a copy of your allergen list if a customer asks for it

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