tock

HOLIDAY REVENUE PLAYBOOK FOR RESTAURANTS

A roadmap to maximize the holiday season and boost your restaurant's seasonal earnings.





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Year after year, guests indulge in holiday specials and unique experiences, all in the spirit of celebration. Recognizing and capitalizing on these consumer behaviors can significantly increase your restaurant's bottom line. With the right strategies, tools, and tactics in place, your restaurant can drive sales and serve up seasonal experiences that keep customers coming back.

In this playbook, you'll learn how to create unforgettable customer experiences during peak holiday times with effective operational strategies—from menu optimization and staff planning to marketing tactics. By implementing these best practices, you set the stage for a holiday season that boosts both revenue and customer satisfaction, solidifying your restaurant as the premier choice for memorable holiday dining.

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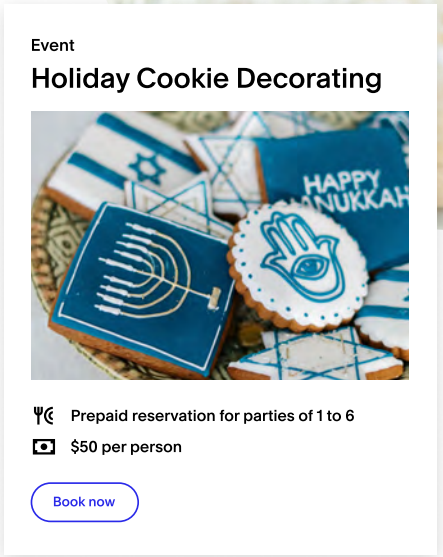
PREPARE FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON





Create new dining experiences that resonate with the season.

To pique your guests' interest and set your business apart from the competition, brainstorming new experiences for the holidays is key. Whether you craft a special chef's tasting menu with luxe ingredients such as truffles with vintage varietals or host a kid-friendly cookalong holiday class, now is the time to decide what types of experiences you wish to host this season.



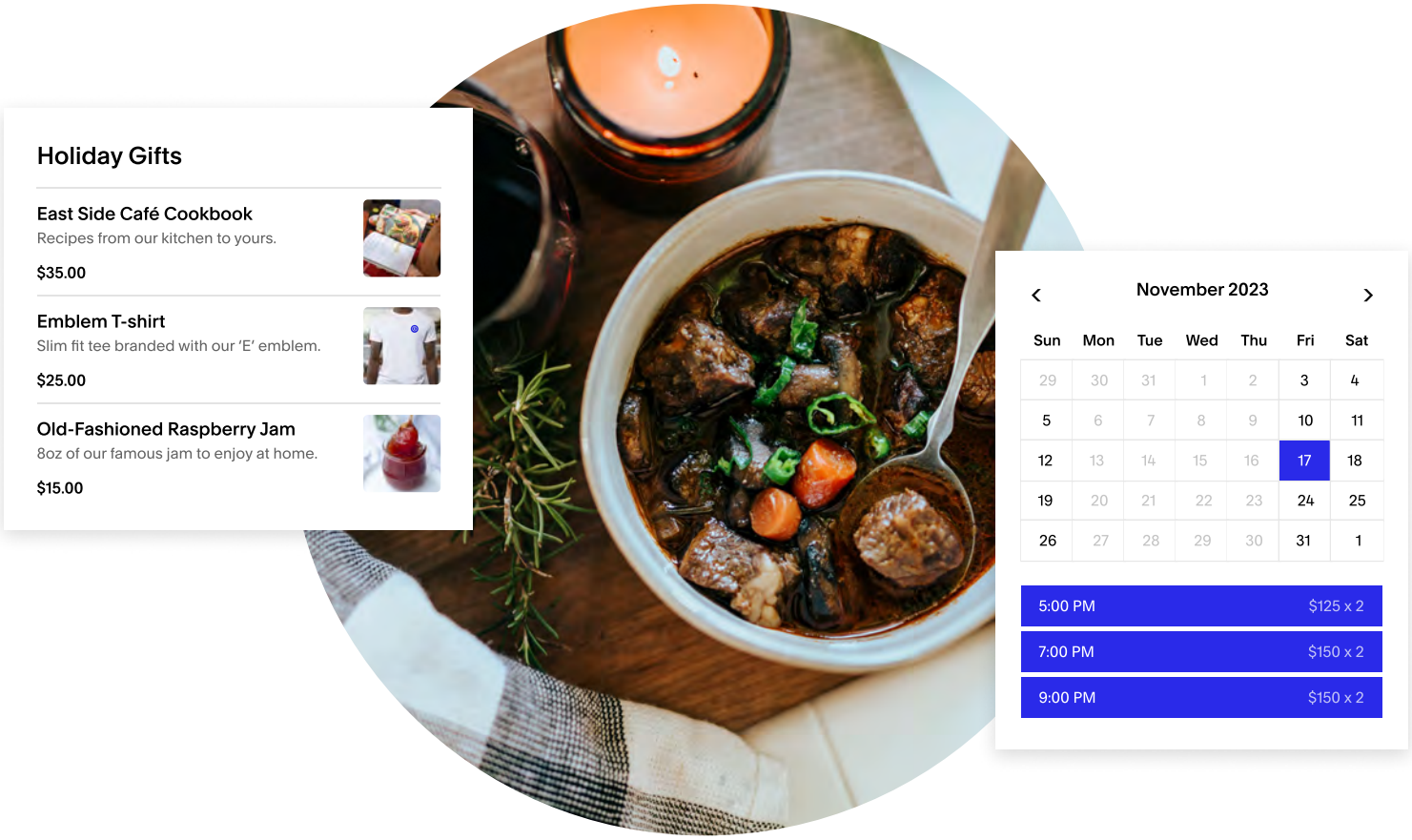
As a part of your limited-time offerings, consider bundling dishes into a festive meal package for your diners to bring home. Think a fully cooked roast with all the fixings for Hanukkah, a breakfast box of bagels, housemade jams, mimosas to refuel after Christmas morning, or a bundle of your favorite sparkling wines for New Year's Eve.



Prioritize major holidays that appeal to your ideal guest.

Determine the major holidays that hold significance for your customer base. For example, if you're an Indian restaurant, don't shy away from celebrating occasions like Diwali or even Raksha Bandhan. Recognizing and celebrating these occasions, with offerings that match the spirit of the holiday, can help create a sense of community and belonging among your customers, encouraging loyalty and repeat visits.

PREPARE FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON



Consider add-ons to drive even more revenue.

In addition to your core holiday offerings, upsell add-ons to add to your bottom line. This could be anything from an upgraded champagne selection to branded t-shirts from your business to photo shoots with Santa or an afternoon tea.

Tock's platform serves as a full-fledged sales engine, prominently featuring everything from reservations and takeout to your businesses merchandise, all in one place. On Tock, special add-ons such as wine pairings or signed cookbooks can be seamlessly integrated into the checkout process. Remember, the goal is to make the process as easy as possible for both your staff and your guests.

Attract a diverse range of clientele by strategically pricing your experiences.

Pricing tiers can help bring in customers of all kinds, extended families, couples looking for an affordable happy hour, or solo diners looking to try something new. Offer premium pricing during the weekends and evenings to maximize peak times. By contrast, offer affordable options during the early half of the week to boost sales during slower periods.

Recruit seasonal staff to account for the holiday uptick.

Ensuring you have adequate staff is instrumental to handling the holiday rush. This might mean hiring temporary or seasonal help or offering overtime to existing workers. Prepare incoming hires with training modules that cover essential tasks, including using your point-of-sale (POS) and reservation systems, taking orders, serving, and handling customer inquiries. Tock customers can rely on Tock Academy—an online resource filled with instructional videos and articles—to facilitate rapid team training.

Keep the mental wellness of your team in mind.

Remember, an overwhelmed team can lead to turnover and poor customer service. Start thinking about a staff wellness program now. Use the expertise of trained mental health experts to create wellness protocols that best suit your business. You can also host training sessions to equip your team with necessary tools. Fostering a supportive working environment will not only help your team but improve job satisfaction moving during the holidays and beyond.



Equip your back of house to handle the new offerings.

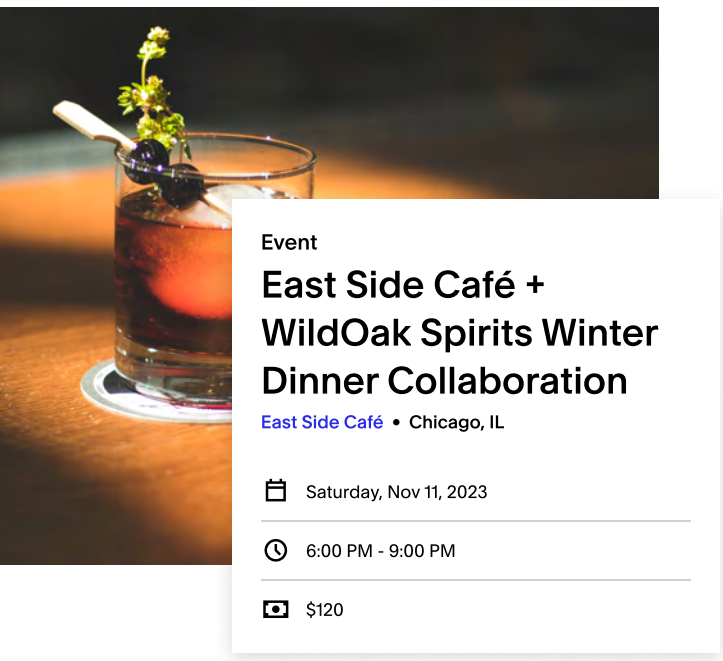
Once you have an idea of your menu and offerings, ready your kitchen for the coming season. This entails stocking up on supplies such as utensils, packaging and takeout containers. Also start investing in equipment, and tracking inventory levels to prevent running out of crucial items.

Invest in decorations that will make a lasting impression.



Decorating your restaurant is not just about adding a festive touch—it's a strategic move that can influence customer sentiment and draw in crowds. Don't wait to start planning your decor—the earlier you start, the better you can source quality items that align with your theme while keeping the price point down. And if you don’t have the space to store, rental items are an option.

When sourcing, think about customizing your decor to align with the overall dining experience and budget. For instance, a family-friendly Halloween gathering can embrace a more playful and kitschy atmosphere with costumes, masks, and candy. In contrast, an upscale New Year's Eve dinner may warrant an investment in high-end tablecloths and sparkling decorations.



Initiate collaborations early to ensure ample time for planning and coordination.

The holiday season provides an ideal time to establish partnerships with other businesses in your area. These collaborations can take on numerous forms, from collaborating with a local baker for a special wine and dessert pairing to teaming up with a nearby brewery for a festive beer flight. These partnerships expand your offerings, increase appeal to your customers, and promote a sense of community spirit.

02

LAUNCH YOUR HOLIDAY EXPERIENCES



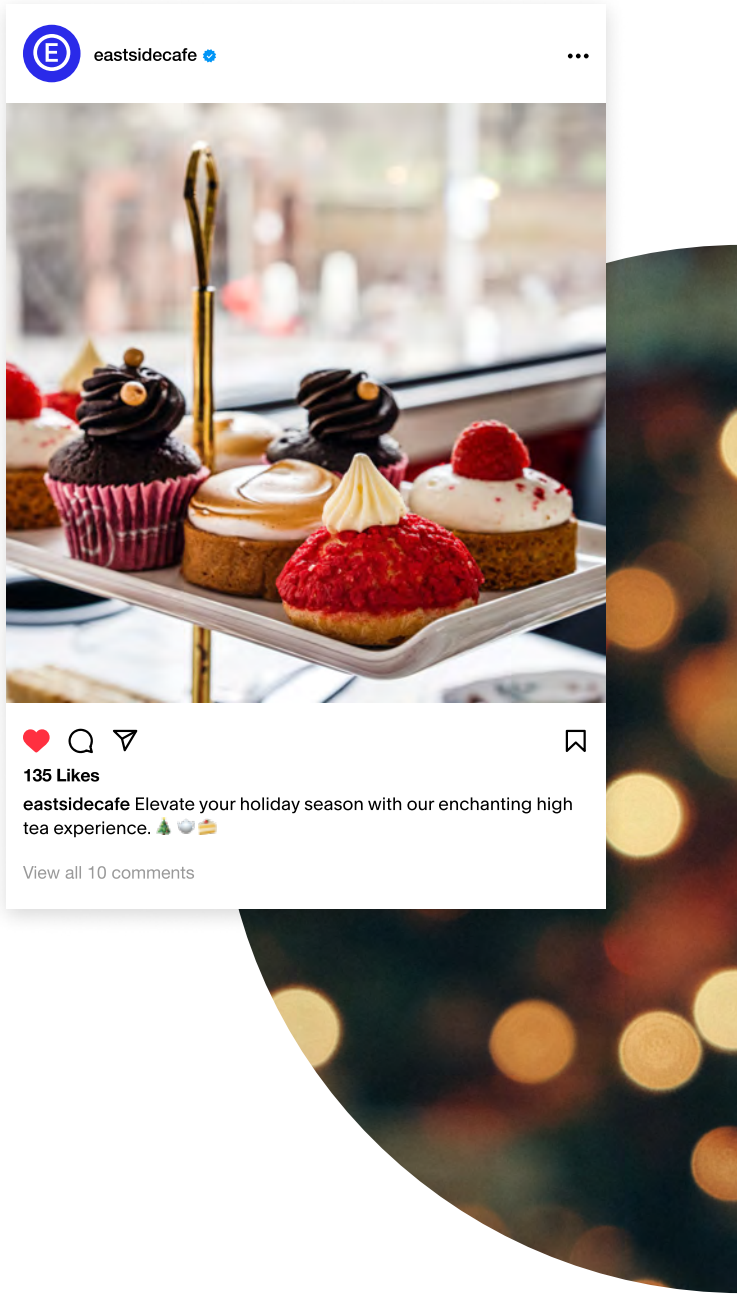
Share your offerings on relevant platforms.

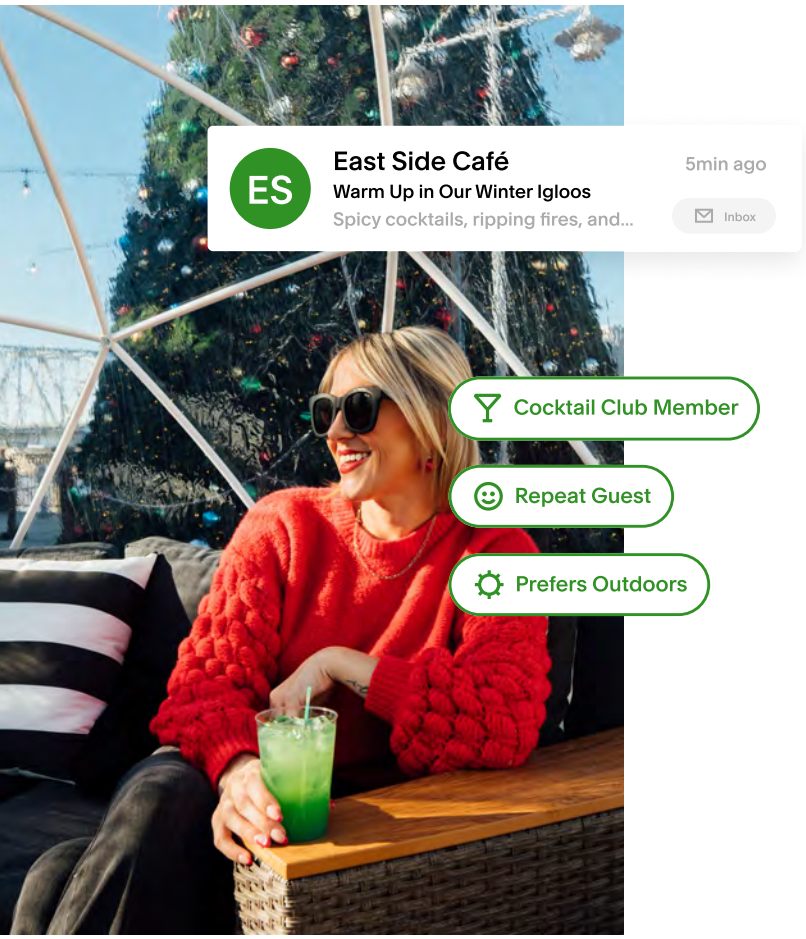
Menu ready? Check. Wine stocked? Check. Dining room decorated? Check. Now is the time to launch! Luckily, Tock's dedicated hospitality team makes going live easy, providing step-by-step guidance on uploading your menus, configuring your booking settings, and customizing your offerings.

Once you go live, post your experiences where your guests can find them—on your restaurant's website, online ordering platform, reservation system and via social media.

Generate excitement by sharing experiences on social media.

Don't underestimate the power of social media in promoting your holiday offerings. Clear, appetizing photos of your dishes and over-the-top decor can influence whether a customer will decide to spend the holidays with you or not. If possible, dedicate a staff member to post on social media, interact with followers, and manage comments and messages. You can also incentivize engagement by offering discounts or giveaways for customers who share your posts.





Strategize targeted marketing campaigns to relevant customers.

Personalized email communication is a great way to inform your existing customer base, encourage repeat visits, and boost your holiday season revenue. One of the key strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of your email marketing campaign is personalization based on customer behavior and guest data. For example, if you plan to host a holiday wine dinner this season, target past customers who have previously attended a wine tasting at your restaurant. This approach increases the chances of repeat guests engaging with you and visiting your restaurant again.

Ensure staff is aware of the new menu items and experiences.

Use pre-shift to inform your staff about upcoming offerings and happenings. Special menu for the holiday? Ensure your team can speak to the ingredients, preparation, and taste profiles to answer customer queries and confidently make recommendations. Additionally, educate your staff on upcoming experiences so they can pass them along to customers during service.

To juggle both in-house and takeout operations, consider dedicating specific staff members to each task. For example, assign a team member to handle takeout orders—from order receipt, preparation, and packaging to delivery coordination—to reduce customer wait time.

Communicate when your restaurant is open or closed for the season.

Make sure to communicate your restaurant's holiday hours well in advance. Update this information on your website, social media platforms, and any other place where your restaurant is listed. This will help customers plan their visits and avoid confusion.

03

EVALUATE YOUR HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE

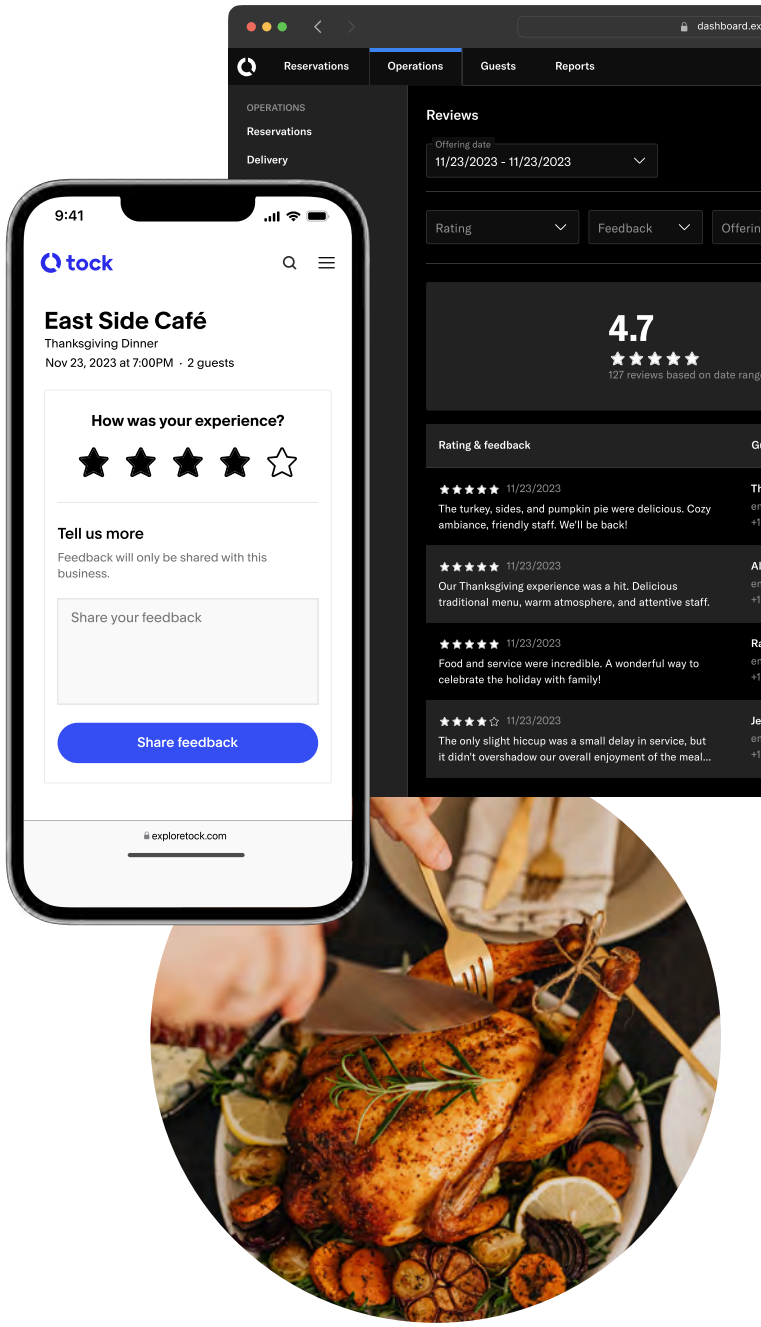


Improve upon experiences by gathering customer feedback.

Utilize feedback collection features to gather insights from holiday diners. Ask open-ended questions, and pay attention to positive and negative feedback to make necessary improvements. Tock customers can opt to send a customized survey to guests automatically after dining. Use this data to better serve customers to come.

Evaluate reservation patterns to make planning for next year even easier.

Use your reservation data to understand booking trends during the holiday season. Identify peak times and days when your restaurant was most in demand and when it wasn't. Save this information for next year to help you better plan for future holiday seasons, retool events, and optimize staffing on peak or slow days.





Extend your hospitality by personally thanking your guests.

Never underestimate the impact of saying thank you. This simple act can enhance the overall customer experience, generate a positive sentiment towards your brand, and foster loyalty. Repeat customers are more likely to become brand advocates, effectively becoming a free marketing tool.

Show appreciation to your dedicated staff members who contributed to your holiday season's success.

Recognize their hard work and commitment, and offer incentives or bonuses as a token of appreciation.

CONCLUSION

The holiday season presents an ideal opportunity for restaurants to shine and create cherished memories that boost revenue in the process. While the holiday season brings a surge in restaurant foot traffic, it also presents operational challenges like handling customer flow, reservation modifications, and addressing no-shows.

Notably, leveraging a reservation system like Tock can help mitigate these issues by providing a clear picture of your restaurant's occupancy, allowing you to facilitate staffing and inventory management with ease. To ensure a smooth transition, introducing a reservation system well before the holiday season allows you and your staff ample time to become familiar with the system before the busy period begins.

With these strategies in place, your restaurant is poised to make the most of this joyful time and leave a lasting impression on your customers.

Want to learn more about how Tock can support you during the holiday season and beyond?

Schedule a demo at jointock.com.