

5 Hospitality Tips to Dazzle Your Guests This Christmas - Complete Hospitality Training

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Details:

A room at full capacity does not forgive a slow first course. In December the same dining room that runs comfortably on a Tuesday is carrying long tables, tight turns and a roster with more new faces on it than at any other point in the year. The difference between a good festive service and a memorable one is almost entirely a matter of sequencing and consistency.

And underneath the sequencing sit three things that are not matters of taste: public holiday and penalty rate obligations, responsible service of alcohol at functions, and food safety at volume. Those are the parts of December that can cost a venue money or a licence, so they are set out properly below rather than left as an afterthought.

Five ideas for the person hosting at home

The original festive guide is a home-hosting piece. Welcome people with a greeting and a comfortable place to settle. Plan drinks guests can identify and serve safely, including an alcohol-free option. Set the scene with a table and music that fit the gathering rather than a complicated display. Keep food manageable by choosing familiar dishes, checking dietary needs and preparing what you can early. Add a personal touch such as a shared game or simple surprise, then enjoy the company yourself.

The venue-service, employment and RSA sections below are for a commercial or staffed Christmas function. A private dinner with friends is a different setting; its host should not read the employment-award or licensed-service discussion as a requirement merely to invite guests home.

1. Give the long table one clock

A table of eighteen is not eighteen individual services. Courses have to land together, which means the table needs a single timing decision rather than a series of small ones. Pre-orders taken in advance are the strongest tool here: they let the kitchen fire as a block and let the floor plan the gaps. Where pre-orders are not possible, reduce the choice, put drinks in front of people within a few minutes of arrival, and give the table an honest estimate of when food will appear.

The most common failure is silence. A table that has been told a twenty-minute wait waits comfortably; the same table left to guess starts asking after eight minutes.

The core service unit anticipates this. SITXCCS014 Provide service to customers, core in both Certificate III in Hospitality qualifications, requires staff to identify and anticipate operational problems and take action to minimise the effect on customer satisfaction, and to proactively recognise customer dissatisfaction and take swift action to avoid escalation to a complaint. Telling a table the kitchen is twenty minutes behind is both of those criteria in one sentence.

The unit also fixes how much of this is assessed, which is a useful benchmark for a December induction: quality service to three different internal customers and three different external customers, the resolution of three different customer complaints, effective communication with at least one customer with special needs, and service delivered within designated response times. "Internal

customers" means the kitchen and the bar, which in December is half the job.

2. Sequence the room, not just the table

At capacity the constraint is the kitchen, and the floor controls what the kitchen receives. Stagger the arrival times of large bookings when taking the reservation. Group the room into zones with a clear owner each, and keep one senior person off a section so that there is someone able to move to whatever is going wrong. A supervisor carrying their own tables cannot see the room.

Moment	What usually breaks	What good looks like
Arrival of a large booking	Everyone arrives at once, bar floods	Drinks pre-poured or a set arrival window given
First course to a long table	Plates trickle out over ten minutes	One fire time, plates carried in a single run
Mid-service peak	No one is watching the room	A senior person off section, moving to pressure
Dietary meals	Delivered late or announced loudly	Plated with the course, delivered quietly and correctly
Close of the table	Guests wait for the bill	Payment offered before it is asked for

The supervisory unit that covers this is SITXMGT004 Monitor work operations , core in the Certificate IV in Hospitality and the Diploma of Hospitality Management. It requires the supervisor to monitor efficiency and service levels through close contact with day-to-day operations and to assess current workloads and schedule work to maximise efficiency and customer service quality within budget constraints . "Close contact with day-to-day operations" is the unit's way of saying the person doing this is in the room, not in the office.

If functions are a significant part of your December rather than an overflow from the dining room, there is a coded skill set for it: SITSS00092 Event Coordination , current on our scope as RTO 3722. Worth naming the code when you enquire, because it is not advertised as a course.

3. Handle dietary requirements without ceremony

A guest with a dietary requirement wants the same meal experience as everyone else, delivered at the same time as everyone else. That means the requirement is captured at booking, carried on the docket, confirmed at the pass, and delivered to the right seat without a public announcement over the table. Marking the seat position on the plan is the small habit that prevents the most visible error in the room: the server standing over a table asking who ordered the gluten-free one.

The accuracy of that information is a food safety matter as much as a service one, which is why it is collected in advance rather than during service. The relevant kitchen competency is SITHCCC042 Produce food to meet special dietary requirements , a core unit of SIT30821 Certificate III in Commercial Cookery. On the floor, SITXCCS014 requires staff to identify customer needs and expectations including customers with special needs , and its knowledge requirements name special needs awareness including the customs and practices of various social and cultural groups . In December that matters more than usual, because a work Christmas function is exactly the setting where religious and cultural dietary requirements arrive in volume and without warning.

"Confirmed at the pass" is a performance criterion, not a habit

The check before the plate leaves the kitchen is written into a unit. SITXCCS015 Enhance customer service experiences , core in the Certificate IV in Hospitality, requires the candidate to check that special requests have been actioned before delivery to the customer . That is the assessed version of confirming the dietary meal at the pass, and it is the single control that prevents the worst outcome of a festive service.

The same unit requires you to anticipate customer preferences and needs throughout the service experience rather than reading them once at the door, to share customer information with team members so the floor and the kitchen hold the same picture, and to liaise with team members and suppliers to keep delivery efficient. For a long table with four dietary variations, those three criteria are the whole procedure.

The religious protocols are a core unit, not a matter of goodwill

The other core unit sitting alongside the service unit in both Certificate III in Hospitality qualifications is SITXCOM007 Show social and cultural sensitivity , and it is the accredited home of the December dietary problem. Its knowledge requirements include:

The cultural and religious protocols of the major social and cultural groups in Australian society, including Australian Indigenous peoples

The cultural and religious protocols of the main inbound tourist markets to Australia

Different types of disability and their implications for the workplace

State, territory and Commonwealth anti-discrimination law

Those are two distinct protocol lists, and a December function in an Australian city will draw on both. Halal, kosher, vegetarian and fasting practices are not "special requests" in the sense of favours; they are protocols the unit expects a competent worker to already know something about, which is a materially different starting point from asking at the table.

The unit also names the five sources of assistance it expects staff to know: government agencies, diplomatic services , disability advocacy groups, interpreter services and local cultural organisations. And it names five techniques for a language barrier — gestures and signs, simple words in English or the other person's language, simple directions and instructions, interpreter services, and assistive technology — four of which cost nothing and need no arrangement. On a December function floor with a mixed room and new casuals, telling staff that gestures and simple words are a professional response rather than a failure is worth more than any script.

One caution the unit is explicit about, and December invites it: the duty is not to discriminate, show partiality or grant special favours on the basis of social or cultural attributes. Going out of your way because of someone's background is named as a failure on the same footing as withholding service. Do it because they are a guest.

See understanding cultural awareness in hospitality and the importance of cultural competence .

4. The pay obligations December creates

This is where a festive trading plan meets employment law, and it is worth getting right before the roster is published rather than after the first pay run.

Which award, and why it matters in December

Coverage follows the premises, not the job title , and there are four awards, each covering its industry to the exclusion of any other modern award :

Award	Code	Where it applies
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Hospitality Industry (General)	MA000009	Hotels, pubs, taverns, motels, resorts, casinos, caterers , accommodation, and a restaurant or function or convention facility operating in or in connection with those premises
Registered and Licensed Clubs	MA000058	Not-for-profit registered clubs : RSL, bowls, golf, surf, sporting, community
Restaurant Industry	MA000119	Standalone restaurants, cafes, night clubs , reception centres , roadhouses, and catering by a restaurant business
Fast Food Industry	MA000003	Food sold primarily to be consumed away from the point of sale , takeaway, food courts

Two December-specific traps. Clubs are not MA000009 — clause 4.4(d)(i) of the hospitality award expressly excludes "clubs registered or recognised under State or Territory legislation", and a club is MA000058 if it is both registered and licensed under a relevant liquor, gaming, associations incorporation or corporations statute and operating on a not-for-profit basis for members and the community. So the RSL running two hundred Christmas lunches is not on the hospitality award. And a night club is MA000119, not MA000058 , because it is commercial.

Public holidays, penalty rates and hours

Both MA000009 and MA000119 provide public holiday rates , and both run an Introductory level plus Levels 1 to 6 . What differs between them is structure: MA000009 has five streams including casino gaming; MA000119 has three .

No dollar figures or penalty percentages appear on this page, deliberately. Award rates reset every 1 July and a stale figure is worse than none. Use the Fair Work Ombudsman's Pay and Conditions Tool with your award code, classification level and the specific date. Budget the December rates before you publish the roster, not after.

The seasonal hire who is already a Level 4

One classification rule matters more in December than at any other time of year, because December is when qualified people are picked up as casuals and put on an entry-level rate.

Under MA000009, MA000119 and MA000058, an employee who has completed a relevant AQF Certificate III or higher and who actually uses those competencies at work has a minimum classification of Level 4. The fast food award, MA000003, has no equivalent provision. The qualification argument works in a pub, a restaurant, a cafe and a registered club, and fails in a food court.

Award	Clause	What the definition says
MA000009	cl 18.1	Certificate III or higher relevant to the classification, and the employee makes use of those competencies in the work

		undertaken
MA000119	cl 18.1	Identical wording
MA000058	cl 18.3	"Certificate III qualifications relevant to the classification" — no "or higher", and the Fair Work Commission may require the employee to demonstrate that they utilise the relevant skills
MA000003	—	No equivalent note. No Level 4 floor

If there is a disagreement, the route is MA000009 clause 40 , MA000119 clause 34 , or for MA000058 referral to the Fair Work Commission.

Under MA000009 there is a further point that matters when you are hiring qualified seasonal cooks. Level 4 is that award's reference point — the standard weekly and hourly rate from which its apprentice percentages are calculated — and it is attached to cook (tradesperson) grade 3 . The cook stream reaches grade 3 by apprenticeship, trade test or "the appropriate level of training" , so a relevant Certificate III, genuinely used at work, is a route to a tradesperson grade without serving an apprenticeship .

"The appropriate level of training" is defined in MA000009 clause 2 : an appropriate training program meeting the requirements of a qualification or units of competency from a training package; or assessment by a qualified skills assessor as having at least equivalent skills; or , as at 30 June 2010 , having been doing that classification's work for at least 3 months. Read that third limb carefully before relying on it for a long-serving December casual: it is anchored to a closed date and is not a rolling three-month rule. The skills assessor route is the live alternative.

MA000119 and MA000058 have their own classification structures and definitions clauses, so do not carry the grade names or the clause 2 limbs across without checking the award itself.

Also under MA000009, Introductory level is time-limited : up to 3 months while the employee is trained and assessed for Level 1, extendable by mutual agreement for one further 3 months, six months maximum. It is not a seasonal parking space.

If any of your December staff are apprentices or under 18

Protection	Where it sits
An employer must not require an apprentice under 18 to work overtime or shiftwork , though they may voluntarily agree; exceptions only in emergencies	MA000009 clause 12.5
Overtime cannot be required, and except in an emergency no overtime or shiftwork may be required if it would prevent attendance at training	MA000119 clauses 12.5 and 12.6
The employer must release the apprentice for training or assessment without loss of pay or continuity of employment , and that time counts as time worked	Both awards, clause 12.7(a) and (b)

December is precisely when those clauses get quietly ignored. They are not discretionary.

The roster itself is a competency. SITXHRM008 Roster staff , core in the Certificate IV in Hospitality and the Diploma, requires rosters developed according to relevant industrial agreements, other

considerations and wage budgets , and names the provisions the rosterer is expected to understand: leave, mandated breaks between shifts, maximum allowed shift hours, and standard, overtime and penalty pay rates . It also requires consulting colleagues for input , rostering a complementary skills mix — which in December means not putting three new casuals on the same section — and taking account of social and cultural considerations , which in December means not assuming everyone is indifferent to which days they work. See steps for rostering and time management and working hours, rosters and public holidays .

5. RSA at a function is harder than RSA at a bar

A Christmas function concentrates every difficult RSA situation into one room: a paid bar tab, a group dynamic that encourages drinking, people who do not normally drink at this pace, and staff who may not know any of them.

Refusing service to a person who is unduly intoxicated is a legal duty under state liquor law, and it attaches to the individual serving as well as to the licensee , so penalties can fall on a staff member personally. The statutory threshold is unduly intoxicated , not drunk. No bar tab, function agreement or instruction from a host changes it.

RSA is one unit, SITHFAB021 , also available as the standalone SITSS00071 Responsible service of alcohol skill set, but eight jurisdictions regulate it separately:

Jurisdiction	The position
Victoria	Use a current Victorian RSA certificate. Eligible interstate holders can apply for free bridging: approved original training within three years, with the online-course residence condition. Specific exemptions apply at qualifying producer events. Victorian RSA Refresher every three years.
New South Wales	Eligible temporary interstate workers can use approved interstate RSA. Permanent movers and security or RSA marshal roles must meet NSW training and competency-card requirements; eligible holders can use bridging instead of the full NSW RSA course. NSW competency card: five years. Interstate concessions have separate eligibility and certificate-age requirements.
South Australia	Check provider approval and training date. Training from 1 November 2020 must be through a Commissioner-approved RTO. Earlier RSA training need not be repeated solely because of that approval change. No routine RSA renewal period stated in the cited CBS guidance; check applicable licence conditions.
Queensland	Accepted where the evidence is a Statement of Attainment for the nationally accredited Provide Responsible Service of Alcohol course. An attendance certificate is insufficient. Valid RSA training generally has no expiry; training completed before 2002 must be replaced.

Western Australia	Provide the RSA certificate showing completion of the nationally accredited course. An interstate RSA card alone is not accepted as evidence. Keep the RSA certificate as training evidence; approved-manager cards have separate renewal requirements.
Northern Territory	Certificates from an RTO registered to deliver RSA are accepted, including interstate certificates. Check certificate age and the NT refresher requirements. NT guidance gives a three-year limit for interstate certificates and directs holders to a refresher; check current renewal guidance.
Australian Capital Territory	Valid interstate RSA certificates are recognised, subject to the ACT's three-year currency limit and ACT-approved refresher requirements. Three years from course completion, then an ACT-approved refresher.
Tasmania	Interstate certificates can be accepted under the Commissioner's conditions. Requirements differ for employees and liquor licence holders; check the appropriate role. No RSA expiry date in the regulator's FAQ; an employer may request updated training.

Current regulator guidance: NSW , VIC , SA , QLD , WA , NT , ACT , TAS .

An RSA Statement of Attainment is a national training record, but permission to serve alcohol depends on the destination's rules. NSW permits eligible temporary interstate workers; permanent movers and security or RSA marshal roles must meet NSW training and competency-card requirements, using bridging where eligible. Victoria offers bridging to eligible interstate holders. SA applies approved-provider rules to training from 1 November 2020, with earlier training not required to be repeated solely for that change. QLD and WA require suitable national RSA evidence. Tasmania distinguishes staff from licence holders; the ACT and NT have local currency and refresher requirements. Check the regulator before your first shift. See RSA recognition by jurisdiction , NSW's rules and SA's rules . See managing intoxicated patrons .

The practical version: refuse early rather than late. Slow the service, put water and food on the table, and stop at the point of doubt. A function that is cut off at eleven is a problem; a function where three people were slowed down at nine is not.

When a function turns

If it does escalate, the supervisory unit is SITXCOM010 Manage conflict , core in the Certificate IV in Hospitality and the Diploma. It is worth knowing what the unit treats as the standard repertoire, because a December function can produce several of them in one night. A candidate must resolve escalated complaints or disputes with customers in relation to at least three of eight named matters : cultural misunderstanding ; incorrect pricing of a product or service; delays or errors in providing a product or service; misunderstanding of a customer request or a communication barrier; a person who appears to be violent or threatening ; a problem or fault with a product or service; refused entry or ejection from the premises ; and a situation where someone has been or may be hurt .

The same unit separately requires resolution of team member disputes in at least two of four matters, one of which is a drug or alcohol-affected person , and another of which is job duties or rosters . Both

are December problems, and the fact that they are in a conflict unit rather than an HR policy is the point: the register treats a staff dispute on a Friday night as the same category of skill as a guest dispute.

Food safety at volume, which is where December failures cluster

A venue with a kitchen that cooks is category one under Standard 3.2.2A of the Food Standards Code, which commenced 8 December 2023 . The categories are activity-based : category one processes unpackaged potentially hazardous food into food that is both potentially hazardous and ready to eat. Restaurants, cafes, pubs and caterers are expressly named. A restaurant is not category two.

Category one carries the substantiation records duty , which category two does not. The Standard's control temperatures are 5 °C or below and 60 °C or above for receipt and for temperature control, and the span between them is the range the records exist to minimise time in. The record types are:

receipt at correct temperature

storage under temperature control

process steps achieving pathogen reduction

minimising time at growth-permitting temperatures

cooling and reheating within specified timeframes

display under temperature control

transport under temperature control

cleaning and sanitising of food-contact surfaces and equipment

Records must be kept for 3 months after being made and be accessible at the premises .

Cooling and reheating is where December goes wrong , and the reason is structural rather than careless. Festive menus are batch-cooked ahead. Large volumes of hot food cool slowly, because a full bain-marie insert of anything cools far more slowly than a single portion. Then it gets reheated under time pressure in a kitchen already at capacity. Every one of those steps is a record obligation and a hazard at the same time. The controls are unglamorous: divide into shallow portions to cool, use a calibrated probe rather than judgement, and write the reading down as you go rather than reconstructing it afterwards.

The unit that covers this properly is SITXFSA006 Participate in safe food handling practices , core in SIT30821, which requires controlling food hazards at nine critical control points — receiving, storing, preparing, processing, displaying, serving, packaging, transporting and disposing — plus procedures to calibrate a temperature probe . SITHCCC032 covers cook-chill and cook-freeze and SITHCCC033 covers re-thermalising chilled and frozen foods, both Group A electives in that qualification. If your December production model is cook-ahead, those are the units that describe it.

A Food Safety Supervisor must be appointed before the business engages in a prescribed activity, hold a certificate issued within the immediately preceding five years , and remain reasonably available , on site or easily contacted, for example by phone. That last requirement is the one December tests: a supervisor on leave for three weeks while the venue runs functions is not reasonably available. Check the certificate date now rather than in the second week of December. See the Food Safety Supervisor course and understanding Standard 3.2.2A .

Food handler training itself must be completed before a person engages in a prescribed activity and must cover four topics: safe handling of food, food contamination, cleaning and sanitising of premises and equipment, and personal hygiene. It does not have to be nationally accredited, mandates no refresher period , and the business is not required to keep records of it. So a December casual can be brought up to the legal standard quickly. The accredited unit SITXFSA005 buys portability and proof, not permission — and it is also the mandatory prerequisite for nine units in the current food and beverage stream, SITHFAB022 , SITHFAB023 , SITHFAB024 , SITHFAB025 , SITHFAB026 ,

SITHFAB027 , SITHFAB030 , SITHFAB034 and SITHFAB035 , which is worth knowing if your December casuals will also be making coffee or working the floor. See food handling .

On allergens specifically, this page states no legal duty, because none appears in the material behind it and inventing one would be worse than the gap. The operational controls above are sound practice; the allergen obligation itself is a question for your state or territory food regulator or local council, and December is the right time to have asked them rather than the right time to be guessing.

Hold the standard when the team is stretched

December rosters are full of casuals who joined in November. They will not absorb a culture by observation over six weeks, so it has to be stated. A five-minute pre-service briefing covering the menu changes, the two or three non-negotiables and who to ask does more for consistency than any amount of correction afterwards. Pairing a new casual with an experienced server for their first several shifts is the other half of it.

There is a competency for that pairing too. SITXHRM007 Coach others in job skills is a core unit of both Certificate III in Hospitality qualifications and of the Certificate IV in Hospitality, so the capacity to bring someone up to standard on the floor is built into the qualification rather than assumed.

Formal training carries the same intent. Our scope includes SIT20322 Certificate II in Hospitality and SIT20421 Certificate II in Cookery at entry level — two different qualifications, both current — and SIT30722 Certificate III in Hospitality (Restaurant Front of House) , 20 units of which 9 are core, with RSA and processing financial transactions core rather than elective , which is the closest match for a table-service floor. Delivery states vary by qualification, so confirm the current position, the intake and the fee with us directly rather than from an article.

For short, targeted training before a December season, our scope carries 81 current skill sets , including SITSS00071 Responsible service of alcohol , SITSS00068 Food Handling , SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision , SITSS00078 Customer Service , SITSS00092 Event Coordination and SITSS00087 Mentoring and Supervision . Two of those are worth naming with their contents, because December teams usually need exactly this combination: SITSS00078 Customer Service is SITXCCS014 Provide service to customers plus SITXCOM007 Show social and cultural sensitivity, and SITSS00091 Service for International Visitors is those two plus SITXLAN007 Conduct basic oral communication in a language other than English. For venues developing existing staff on site, workplace training is the usual delivery route, and a skills assessment can establish what experienced hands already hold. On seasonal hiring, see 5 tips to hiring hospitality staff .

Finish the table properly

The last five minutes are remembered out of proportion to their length. Clear completely, offer payment before it is requested, and thank people at the door rather than at the table. Guests deciding where to hold next year's booking are making that decision on the way out.

And because next year's booking is the actual prize, it is worth noting that repeat business is itself an assessed element. SITXCCS015 element 4 covers developing customer relationships and building repeat business , and requires customer profiles to be maintained and tailored products and services based on the customer's profile and history . A short note against the company name — table shape that worked, the four dietary variations, who the organiser was — is what turns this December's function into next December's booking. See the key to building a loyal customer base .

If you are hosting rather than catering the party, see 3 quick tips to keep your Christmas party stress free .

About us

We are Complete Hospitality Training , RTO 3722, CRICOS 04242E. Legal entity COMPLETE HOSPITALITY TRAINING (VIC.) PTY. LTD. , ABN 27 006 947 262 , ACN 006 947 262 . Registered as RTO 3722 since 1 June 1994 , transferred from the Victorian regulator to the national regulator, ASQA, on 8 September 2017 , with the current registration period running 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2032 . Level 3, 28 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC 3000, and 410 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Contact melbourne@cht.edu.au or +61 3 9654 1554 .

We link to the relevant course and regulatory sources in this guide. Check those sources for current requirements, and confirm course availability, delivery, fees and entry requirements with us before enrolling.

Source records and further guidance

We link the unit records and regulator guidance relevant to this page below. Check the current source before making an enrolment, licensing or employment decision.

SITXCCS014 Provide service to customers

SITXCOM007 Show social and cultural sensitivity

SITSS00078 Customer Service

SITSS00092 Event Coordination

SITXCCS015 Enhance customer service experiences

Responsible Service of Alcohol training requirements (Victoria)

Responsible Service of Alcohol training requirements (Queensland)

Responsible Service of Alcohol training requirements (Western Australia)

Responsible Service of Alcohol training requirements (South Australia)

Responsible Service of Alcohol training requirements (Tasmania)

Responsible Service of Alcohol training requirements (Northern Territory)

Responsible Service of Alcohol training requirements (Australian Capital Territory)

Food Standards Code — Standards 3.2.2 and 3.2.2A (food safety practices and food safety management tools)

Hospitality Industry (General) Award 2020 (MA000009)

Restaurant Industry Award 2020 (MA000119)

How far ahead should pre-orders be requested for a large group?

Early enough for the kitchen to order and prep against them. The specific cut-off is set by the venue, but the pre-order should be closed well before the week of the booking.

What is the single biggest cause of complaints at a festive service?

Waiting without information. The wait itself is often tolerated; the absence of an update is not. SITXCCS014 treats anticipating the problem and acting before it escalates as an assessed criterion.

How should a dietary meal be delivered?

Plated and delivered with the rest of the course, to the correct seat, without announcing it to the table. Seat numbering on the floor plan is what makes this reliable.

Is checking the dietary meal at the pass actually a requirement?

Yes. SITXCCS015 Enhance customer service experiences requires the candidate to check that special requests have been actioned before delivery to the customer. It is a performance criterion, not a good habit.

Which unit covers knowing about religious dietary observance?

SITXCOM007 Show social and cultural sensitivity, core in both Certificate III in Hospitality qualifications. Its knowledge requirements name the cultural and religious protocols of the major social and cultural groups in Australian society, including Australian Indigenous peoples, and separately those of the main inbound tourist markets to Australia.

What should staff do if they cannot understand a guest at a function?

The unit names five techniques: gestures and signs, simple words in English or the other person's language, simple directions and instructions, interpreter services, and assistive technology. Four of the five need no arrangement at all.

Should we make a special effort for guests from a particular community?

Not on that basis. SITXCOM007 names the duty not to discriminate, show partiality or grant special favours based on social or cultural attributes. Look after them because they are guests.

Do I have to pay public holiday rates in December?

Both MA000009 and MA000119 provide public holiday rates. The figures come from the Fair Work Ombudsman's Pay and Conditions Tool using your award code and classification, and they reset each 1 July, which is why none are printed here.

We are an RSL running Christmas functions. Which award?

MA000058, the Registered and Licensed Clubs Award, not the hospitality award. MA000009 clause 4.4(d)(i) expressly excludes clubs registered or recognised under State or Territory legislation, and MA000058 clause 4.3 requires the club to be both registered and licensed under a relevant statute and operating on a not-for-profit basis for members and the community.

A qualified chef is doing casual December shifts. Entry-level rate?

Not under MA000009, MA000119 or MA000058. If the qualification is relevant to the classification they are employed in and they use those competencies at work, the minimum classification is Level 4. Both conditions have to be met. The one exception is MA000003, the fast food award, which has no equivalent provision.

Can a Certificate III reach a tradesperson grade?

Under MA000009, yes. Level 4 is that award's reference point and is attached to cook (tradesperson) grade 3, and the cook stream reaches grade 3 by apprenticeship, trade test or the appropriate level of training. Do not assume the same grade names under MA000119 or MA000058 — each has its own classification structure.

***Our best December casual has ten years' experience and no certificate.
Anything I can use?***

Under MA000009 clause 2, assessment by a qualified skills assessor as having at least equivalent skills. There is a third limb covering people already doing the classification's work for at least 3 months as at 30 June 2010, but that date is closed and cannot be newly satisfied, so it is not a rolling three-month rule.

Can I roster a 17-year-old apprentice on overtime during the December rush?

You cannot require it. MA000009 clause 12.5 prohibits requiring an apprentice under 18 to work overtime or shiftwork, though they may voluntarily agree, with exceptions only in emergencies. MA000119 clauses 12.5 and 12.6 add that overtime or shiftwork cannot be required where it would prevent attendance at training.

Can interstate casuals use their existing RSA?

An RSA Statement of Attainment is a national training record, but permission to serve alcohol depends on the destination's rules. NSW permits eligible temporary interstate workers; permanent movers and security or RSA marshal roles must meet NSW training and competency-card requirements, using bridging where eligible. Victoria offers bridging to eligible interstate holders. SA applies approved-provider rules to training from 1 November 2020, with earlier training not required to be repeated solely for that change. QLD and WA require suitable national RSA evidence. Tasmania distinguishes staff from licence holders; the ACT and NT have local currency and refresher requirements. Check the regulator before your first shift. See RSA recognition by jurisdiction ([/rsa/](#)), NSW's rules (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/business-and-economy/liquor-and-gaming/training/rsa-bridging>) and SA's rules (<https://www.cbs.sa.gov.au/sections/LGL/RSA-approved-providers>).

Does my Victorian bartender need the three-yearly RSA Refresher if they are not a licensee?

Yes. The free RSA Refresher must be completed every 3 years by anyone holding a Victorian RSA certificate to keep it current — it is not limited to licence holders. Licensees carry a separate three-yearly obligation under s 108AA of the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998; the two are different rules and satisfying one does not answer the other. Check the date on a Victorian certificate before December, not after.

Does a bar tab change the duty to refuse service?

No. Refusing service to an unduly intoxicated person is a legal duty that attaches to the individual serving as well as to the licensee. A tab, a function agreement or a host's instruction does not displace it.

What does the conflict unit expect a supervisor to be able to handle?

SITXCOM010 requires resolution of escalated complaints or disputes in at least three of eight named customer matters, including cultural misunderstanding, incorrect pricing, delays or errors, a communication barrier, a person who appears violent or threatening, a product fault, refused entry or ejection, and someone being or possibly being hurt. It separately requires two of four team member matters, including a drug or alcohol-affected person and disputes about job duties or rosters.

Why do food safety failures cluster around Christmas?

Because festive menus are batch-cooked ahead, large volumes cool slowly, and reheating happens under time pressure. Cooling and reheating within specified timeframes is one of the category one record requirements, and it is the one volume makes hardest.

What temperatures does the Standard actually use?

5 °C or below and 60 °C or above for receipt and temperature control. The span between them is the range the records exist to minimise time in, which is why "minimising time at growth-permitting temperatures" is itself a record type.

How long do the food safety records have to be kept?

Three months after being made, and accessible at the premises.

Our Food Safety Supervisor is on leave over Christmas. Is that a problem?

Probably. The supervisor must remain reasonably available, on site or easily contacted, for example by phone, and must hold a certificate issued within the immediately preceding five years. Plan cover before December rather than during it.

Can I get a December casual food-safety compliant quickly?

Yes. Food handler training must be completed before the person engages in a prescribed activity and must cover four topics, but it does not have to be nationally accredited and no refresher period is mandated. The accredited unit SITXFSA005 gives them portable proof, which in a casual workforce is worth having, and it also unlocks nine units in the food and beverage stream. Ask via contact (/contact/).

Is there a skill set for the functions side specifically?

SITSS00092 Event Coordination is on our scope. SITSS00078 Customer Service, which is SITXCCS014 plus SITXCOM007, is the closer fit for a December floor team, and SITSS00091 Service for International Visitors adds SITXLAN007 to those two.