

JAPANESE BENTO BOXES MAKE CONFERENCE DINING EASY, ELEGANT, ORIGINAL

Submitted by...**Mr. Walter Leffler**
Executive Chef

The Day Conference Center at The Palace at Somerset Park

Best Practice

Meeting lunches at the new Day Conference Center at The Palace take on an eastern accent with bento boxes made of Japanese lacquer. The boxes were introduced for the center's opening in May, 2005 in Somerset NJ. Today, Executive Chef Walter Leffler fills the compartments of these specially made boxes with his own creations. A blend of east and west, contents can include sushi, soba noodles, sesame beef salad, pepper crusted tuna, lobster and a lavish dessert such as white chocolate mousse.

Bento boxes are perfect for a picnic or when guests want an alternative to a conventional sandwich or salad. They are equally at home on a white tablecloth set for lunch. Clients can also arrange to purchase the boxes to give away as a souvenir of the event.

Highlights

- Bento boxes turn a working boardroom lunch into a special break from routine.
- Great presentation - black box with lid, red interior.
- Flexible - serve in boardroom, ballroom or outdoors, room service, poolside.
- Diverse menu items.
- Answers demand for lighter, more diverse, healthful conference fare.
- Gives clients a wide choice in menu and budget.
- Efficient and elegant presentation.

Reason

These exotic 'lunchboxes' are a response to a growing demand for healthier, lighter conference food. Today's conference attendees demand a far more diverse cuisine than those of even five years ago. In a carbo-, fat- and calorie-conscious world, light and healthy are the key words.

One of New Jersey's most acclaimed chefs, Chef Leffler has been a trailblazer in bringing exciting, flavorful vegetarian and spa cuisine into the mainstream. He recognizes that meeting planners want cost-effective and energizing foods that won't put their people to sleep. They don't want to be spending on a lavish, heavy lunch and sending people back to a meeting feeling sluggish.

Bento boxes can be prepared in advance, are portable and are easy to serve in a variety of surroundings, from a ballroom to a board room. The presentation is easy and elegant. Chefs have room to create a wide variety of items and clients get a wide choice in menu.

Measurement

The bento boxes are increasingly popular, especially for smaller meetings.

Lessons

Meeting planners must meet a wide variety of demands from conference attendees in planning menus. More sophisticated tastes, a more ethnically diverse clientele, religious and dietary needs all have to be considered. The bento boxes are flexible enough to meet all of these demands and can be served in an easy, flexible and cost effective way.

See the following page for photos...

