

# How to Choose a Hog Roast Company for your Wedding

You're planning a wedding and have decided to book a hog roast. But before you do, there are some important things you should consider says **Richard Farrow**...

**There is a general belief that all hog roasts are the same, so there may be a tendency to simply go for the cheapest – often without being aware of the various elements that go into making a safe and delicious hog roast. You rightly expect everything to be delivered on time, trouble free and be enjoyed by your guests. But, if it all goes pear shaped, you can't turn the clock back and start again. So, it's important that you hire the very best hog roast company you can to deliver you a memorable dining experience.**

Remember the saying 'You get what you pay for'? This is particularly true when choosing a hog roast company. It is still surprising that we get so many telephone enquirers simply asking "I'd like a price for a hog roast please" without asking any other questions. But you should ask...

## WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE?

A hog roast can vary greatly in exactly what is included within the stated cost. Make sure the quote you receive includes everything! Check for

## Important Things to Ask...

1. Check their credentials!
2. Check exactly what is included in their price
3. Ask to see their Hygiene and Public Liability Insurance
4. Do they roast a whole hog?
5. Do they allow for seconds?
6. Can they supply all sides and accompaniments?
7. Can they cater for guests with special dietary requirements?
8. Can they provide Allergen information?
9. Does their price include VAT?

sausages, bread, stuffing, servers, cutlery, plates, napkins, serving tables, mileage, even VAT. In order to compare hog roast suppliers fairly, it needs to be on a 'like' for 'like' basis.

Choose a company that is well established, with impeccable credentials and good testimonials. It should be staffed by professionals and be capable of ensuring that there are always staff available to turn up. Incredibly, some hog roast companies don't! Check that they are registered with their local health authority and have a '5 out of 5 stars' Hygiene rating and also have adequate Public Liability Insurance in place. Ask to see their certificates for both, as you want your guests to take home happy memories, not food poisoning!

## SIZE MATTERS

Some hog roasters will serve smaller portions and supply a smaller hog. This could make them cheaper when comparing prices. Also, check whether there will be enough pork for some seconds - if it's a good roast, your guests will want more! Check that your hog roaster has an oven capable of cooking a hog complete and intact. It can be very disappointing if the end result resembles a large joint, which is not really the ethos and theatre of a proper, rustic hog roast.

## THE HOG

Commercial breeds, such as the Landrace, are firm favourites with many 'run of the mill' hog roast companies, but are nothing to write home about flavour wise. Instead, choose a rare breed, in particular the Gloucester Old Spot. This breed carries extra fat which helps to infuse moisture and a superbly distinctive



flavour into the meat whilst it cooks. And the crackling is simply to die for!

## DO YOUR RESEARCH!

If you are searching for a hog roast company on the internet, chances are you will have no idea who, or where, they are, what their experience is and what previous clients think of them. Look for testimonials on their website, which will give you a very good idea of their reputation. Check too whether the companies you are considering can also supply all sides, accompaniments and desserts. You may also require a range of vegetarian, vegan and gluten free options and also take into account food allergies and intolerances. It is a requirement by law that they should be able to provide you with allergen information if requested and in writing if required.

## AND FINALLY, VAT

Always ask the hog roast companies whether or not their price includes VAT. To give you a cheaper price, they might not declare so - until they present you with the bill, and then it's too late!

If you would like more information, or advice, please visit our website at [www.hogandroast.co.uk](http://www.hogandroast.co.uk)

*Richard is an award winning Hotelier and Restaurateur and partner in the locally based Hog and Ox Roast Company, and managing director of Heart of England Catering, specialists in weddings, private occasions and corporate events.*

