



Ian Perris is co-founder and executive Vice-President of **Le Basque**, whose specialties include seasonal and continental dishes. CEO Alejandro Muguerza says ‘conspicuous luxury’ is a thing of the past.

Moris Moreno – For the Miami Herald

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BY ELLEN KANNER - Special to the Miami Herald

As the holidays approach, local caterers are swirling until after New Year’s. But they’re not complaining and ’90s, they’re not as cost-averse as they were. Sarah Davidoff, CEO of Fare to Remember, “they’re

South Florida’s top caterers have found ways to adapt to culinary trends. Back in the decadent days, clients Alejandro Muguerza, CEO of Le Basque. “Now it’s about good food, local food. They’re not asking for filet or Delmonico, they’re asking for short ribs cooked perfectly.”

And at least for the holidays, they want mac-and-cheese or mashed potatoes to go with their beef. “When I first started, the Pritikin Diet was hip, then Atkins, then fat-free. This year, clients don’t care,” Davidoff says.

“People want comfort food,” agrees Mena Catering CEO Jorge Mena. It has an added benefit for caterers, too. “When you do stations with a stir-fry of noodles or a Balinese rice dish, it makes it fun and it’s not expensive.”

But these days, prices are affected more by labor costs than by ingredients. “Somebody to buy it, prep, pack it up, serve it, keep the lights, dishwashers and the gas on,” Davidoff says. And, says Muguerza, “there’s constant competition from new high-end restaurants. To hire and keep quality staff, caterers are paying more than just a few years ago.”

Location logistics, design and rental costs also factor in. So how do caterers price an event?

Read more here: <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article4781451.html#storylink=cpy>

Le Basque

CEO: Alejandro Muguerza

Year launched: 1992

Number of employees: 15 full-time, plus another 10 full-time during season. Part-time staff: in the hundreds.

Specialties: High contemporary, seasonal and classic continental dishes.

Events catered in 2014: 275

Le Basque 305-669-1070, www.lebasque.com.

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