

# Have It Your Way

by Sarah Pincko

## Catering captures San Francisco events with elegance and panache

These days, catering companies do much, much more than just food preparation. They're in charge of creating a total atmosphere—from lights to music to decorations and everything in between. Take a look at some of the city's top caterers and keep this list handy when your next big event comes around.

### Fork & Spoon Productions

415.552.7130

[forkandspoonproductions.com](http://forkandspoonproductions.com)

The staff at Fork & Spoon Productions is as impressive as you're likely to find anywhere. Combined, they boast over 35 years experience in some of the best restaurants in the country—including Spago and Jardinière. Jennifer Spiegel founded the company almost eight years ago while she was in between restaurant jobs, helping a friend cater a party. Her husband, Jonathan, later left his job at Jardinière and joined her as a partner. Firmly established, the company now conceptualizes events, envisioning every sensory detail from the lighting to the flowers, music, and, of course, the food. “We take our clients' ideas and try to add our own in a very complementary way,” Spiegel explains. “We think about every single element at the party—what you see, what you smell, what you hear. Those are the things that make a great party.”

### Grapevine Catering | 707.869.1277

[grapvinecatering.com](http://grapvinecatering.com)

Family-owned Grapevine Catering is based in Guerneville, just off Sonoma County's scenic Russian River. Chef and Owner Christopher Ludwick, who started the company in 2002 with

his wife Amy, describes his food as “rustic wine-country style with a little Southern influence.” “We create everything fresh in our kitchen,” Ludwick says. Everything from local heirloom tomatoes to baby freckles lettuce to Point Reyes blue cheese are incorporated into Grapevine's dishes. Ludwick's staff also includes an expert wine professional who helps pair the perfect wine to each dish on every uniquely tailored menu. In addition, Grapevine helps design, site selection, entertainment selection, and equipment rentals. “We'll take care of as much or as little as the client wants,” Ludwick says. “At the end of the day, it's their event. We're happy to be a part of it.”

### Betty Zlatchin Catering

415.641.8599 | [bettyzlatchin.com](http://bettyzlatchin.com)

Betty Zlatchin started her catering company almost 30 years ago. After learning how to cook Southern food with her mother and grandmothers, Zlatchin worked as a stewardess for TWA. “At that time, stewardesses cooked all the meals to order. It was very similar to catering,” Zlatchin says. Not long after her tenure at TWA, she decided to go into catering full time; her son, David, joined as a partner 11 years ago. Betty Zlatchin Catering prides itself on its use of



Betty Zlatchin Catering

organic food from local vendors. As Account Executive Michelle Downey explains, “We are a fine dining company. We focus on sustainable, local, and seasonal food made with the freshest and best possible ingredients.” They also put great effort into serving guests in a gracious and professional manner. “I love to create an atmosphere,” Zlatchin says.

### Whole Foods Catering |

[wholefoodsmarket.com](http://wholefoodsmarket.com)

Many people are familiar with Whole Foods the grocery store—they relish it as a place to shop for fresh meats and vegetables. Not everyone, however, is aware of the full-scale catering department the store also maintains. Their set menus, which can be found online, include mouth-watering dishes like enchiladas, lasagna, field green salad, and Thai skewers. The catering department also prepares food to specific tastes using the same high-quality ingredients found in their stores to prepare each dish. “We're making everything from scratch with the same ingredients you can buy yourself, right here in the store.” For casual gatherings, Whole Foods boxed lunches are ideal. “You can order 20 vegan lunches, 20 roast beef, 20 turkey, or whatever they want, and you know that everyone is going to get a quality lunch,” Monaco says. “It's proven to be very popular.”

—Brenden Salmon



Fork and Spoon Productions