

FREE OPERATIONAL TEMPLATE

Food Tasting Checklist

Use this 60-point checklist to evaluate appearance, aroma, flavour, seasoning, texture, doneness, temperature, portion, consistency, beverages, desserts, takeaway, delivery, defects, retesting, and corrective-action closure.

Restaurant / location

Tasting date

Tasting lead

Kitchen lead

1. Tasting session setup, product scope, standards, and ownership

1

Confirm the restaurant or location, tasting date, session purpose, product category, tasting lead, kitchen lead, and final decision owner.

FOOD TASTING

NAME | Enter

DATE / TIME | Enter

APPROVAL | Enter

Execution tip: Set the tasting scope, reference standards, scoring scale, sample plan, evidence rules, and safety escalation conditions before the session

2

Define the approved recipe, product specification, reference sample, plating image, scoring scale, and pass, retest, or reject thresholds.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Set the tasting scope, reference standards, scoring scale, sample plan, evidence rules, and safety escalation conditions before the session

3

Confirm panel roles and calibration, including trained tasters, culinary, quality, operations, product development, or brand representatives where applicable.

FOOD TASTING

Compliant

Partial

Non-compliant

N/A

Execution tip: Set the tasting scope, reference standards, scoring scale, sample plan, evidence rules, and safety escalation conditions before the session

4

Review previous tasting results, guest complaints, remakes, returns, supplier changes, recipe updates, and unresolved corrective actions.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Set the tasting scope, reference standards, scoring scale, sample plan, evidence rules, and safety escalation conditions before the session

5

Identify critical checks for allergen accuracy, safe temperature, spoilage, off-odour, foreign material, undercooking, and incorrect product identity.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

Compliant

Partial

Non-compliant

N/A

Execution tip: Set the tasting scope, reference standards, scoring scale, sample plan, evidence rules, and safety escalation conditions before the session

6

Confirm the sampling plan covers relevant menu items, batches, shifts, employees, suppliers, service channels, and locations.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Set the tasting scope, reference standards, scoring scale, sample plan, evidence rules, and safety escalation conditions before the session

2. Sample selection, traceability, preparation, serving, and bias control

- 7

Assign every sample a code and record its product, batch, preparation time, employee, equipment, ingredients, and service channel.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Standardize sample preparation, serving temperature, utensils, coding, order, environment, and palate cleansing so the comparison is fair.

- 8

Select representative samples without cherry-picking, including early, middle, and late batch items plus held or delivered products where relevant.

FOOD TASTING

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Standardize sample preparation, serving temperature, utensils, coding, order, environment, and palate cleansing so the comparison is fair.

- 9

Verify the sample was prepared with approved ingredients, recipe quantities, equipment settings, and authorized substitutions or deviations.

FOOD TASTING

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Standardize sample preparation, serving temperature, utensils, coding, order, environment, and palate cleansing so the comparison is fair.

- 10

Prepare and serve samples using the standard method, portion, cook time, hold time, serving temperature, utensil, and container.

CRITICAL FOOD TASTING

Execution tip: Standardize sample preparation, serving temperature, utensils, coding, order, environment, and palate cleansing so the comparison is fair.

- 11

Reduce bias through blind coding, randomized serving order, neutral lighting, consistent presentation, and separation of strong aromas.

FOOD TASTING

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Standardize sample preparation, serving temperature, utensils, coding, order, environment, and palate cleansing so the comparison is fair.

- 12

Confirm hygiene, allergen, dietary, and panel-safety controls, with clean utensils, palate cleansers, water, and adequate breaks between samples.

CRITICAL FOOD TASTING

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Standardize sample preparation, serving temperature, utensils, coding, order, environment, and palate cleansing so the comparison is fair.

3. Appearance, colour, plating, portion, and visual defects

13

Evaluate the sample against the approved visual reference for overall appeal, freshness, composition, and expected product identity.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Photograph each sample before tasting and record actual portions, visual defects, and differences from the approved reference.

14

Check colour, browning, clarity, gloss, opacity, surface finish, and visual uniformity against the approved standard.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Photograph each sample before tasting and record actual portions, visual defects, and differences from the approved reference.

15

Measure or verify portion weight, volume, count, slice size, coverage, component ratio, and garnish quantity within the approved tolerance.

FOOD TASTING

ACTUAL | Enter

TARGET | Enter

DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Photograph each sample before tasting and record actual portions, visual defects, and differences from the approved reference.

16

Inspect plating or assembly for item placement, sauce application, garnish, edge cleanliness, packaging, labels, and presentation consistency.

FOOD TASTING

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Photograph each sample before tasting and record actual portions, visual defects, and differences from the approved reference.

17

Identify visual defects such as separation, curdling, drying, sogginess, collapse, discolouration, freezer burn, foreign material, or uneven cooking.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Photograph each sample before tasting and record actual portions, visual defects, and differences from the approved reference.

18

Capture a clear live photo and record the observed visual variance before the sample is cut, stirred, tasted, or otherwise disturbed.

FOOD TASTING

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Photograph each sample before tasting and record actual portions, visual defects, and differences from the approved reference.

4. Aroma, freshness, ingredient character, and off-odour detection

19 Evaluate aroma intensity, freshness, balance, and match with the approved product or recipe profile before tasting.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Smell the sample before tasting and immediately isolate any product with an odour suggesting spoilage, contamination, or chemical exposure.

20 Check that expected ingredient aromas such as herbs, spices, dairy, roasting, smoke, fruit, or fermentation are clear and appropriate.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Smell the sample before tasting and immediately isolate any product with an odour suggesting spoilage, contamination, or chemical exposure.

21 Identify off-odours such as rancid, sour, burnt, stale, chemical, soapy, freezer, musty, sulphur, or uncontrolled fermentation notes.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Smell the sample before tasting and immediately isolate any product with an odour suggesting spoilage, contamination, or chemical exposure.

22 Compare aroma across samples to detect variation caused by ingredients, cooking, holding, packaging, employee execution, or equipment.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Smell the sample before tasting and immediately isolate any product with an odour suggesting spoilage, contamination, or chemical exposure.

23 Reassess aroma after cutting, stirring, opening, warming, or cooling the sample when the product releases aroma differently during consumption.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Smell the sample before tasting and immediately isolate any product with an odour suggesting spoilage, contamination, or chemical exposure.

24 Isolate and escalate any sample with an unexpected odour that may indicate spoilage, contamination, chemical exposure, or unsafe handling.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Smell the sample before tasting and immediately isolate any product with an odour suggesting spoilage, contamination, or chemical exposure.

5. Flavour, taste balance, seasoning, authenticity, and aftertaste

25

Evaluate the first taste for overall flavour intensity, freshness, ingredient definition, and match with the approved product standard.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Use small neutral bites, evaluate the complete flavour profile, and record the specific difference rather than only marking pass or fail.

26

Assess the balance of saltiness, sweetness, sourness, bitterness, umami, richness, acidity, and heat where applicable.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Use small neutral bites, evaluate the complete flavour profile, and record the specific difference rather than only marking pass or fail.

27

Check seasoning, spice level, sauce concentration, ingredient ratios, and flavour distribution across the full bite or serving.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Use small neutral bites, evaluate the complete flavour profile, and record the specific difference rather than only marking pass or fail.

28

Confirm the product delivers the intended recipe identity, regional character, key ingredient notes, and brand-specific flavour profile.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Use small neutral bites, evaluate the complete flavour profile, and record the specific difference rather than only marking pass or fail.

29

Identify off-flavours such as metallic, rancid, chemical, soapy, stale, burnt, raw, freezer, medicinal, or excessive oil notes.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Use small neutral bites, evaluate the complete flavour profile, and record the specific difference rather than only marking pass or fail.

30

Evaluate the finish and aftertaste for duration, cleanliness, bitterness, coating, lingering spice, and any unwanted residual flavour.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Use small neutral bites, evaluate the complete flavour profile, and record the specific difference rather than only marking pass or fail.

6. Texture, mouthfeel, doneness, moisture, and serving temperature

31

Record the actual serving temperature and confirm it supports the expected eating quality as well as the approved safe limit.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

ACTUAL | Enter

TARGET | Enter

DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Record actual temperature and evaluate doneness, moisture, texture, and mouthfeel before the sample changes through cooling or holding.

32

Assess doneness and internal condition for proteins, grains, vegetables, bakery products, eggs, batters, and other cooked components.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Record actual temperature and evaluate doneness, moisture, texture, and mouthfeel before the sample changes through cooling or holding.

33

Evaluate tenderness, crispness, crunch, chewiness, juiciness, moisture, creaminess, viscosity, carbonation, and other intended texture attributes.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Record actual temperature and evaluate doneness, moisture, texture, and mouthfeel before the sample changes through cooling or holding.

34

Check mouthfeel across components for balance, coating, oiliness, dryness, graininess, fibrousness, temperature contrast, and ease of eating.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Record actual temperature and evaluate doneness, moisture, texture, and mouthfeel before the sample changes through cooling or holding.

35

Identify texture defects such as tough, mushy, rubbery, dry, oily, soggy, grainy, watery, stale, collapsed, separated, or under-set product.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: Record actual temperature and evaluate doneness, moisture, texture, and mouthfeel before the sample changes through cooling or holding.

36

Compare texture immediately after preparation and after the approved holding, display, takeaway, or delivery period where relevant.

FOOD TASTING

ACTUAL | Enter

TARGET | Enter

DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Record actual temperature and evaluate doneness, moisture, texture, and mouthfeel before the sample changes through cooling or holding.

7. Recipe, portion, batch, employee, shift, and location consistency

37

Compare multiple samples from the same batch to confirm flavour, appearance, texture, temperature, and portion remain consistent.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Compare more than one sample across batches, employees, shifts, or locations before concluding that a variation is isolated or systemic.

38

Compare samples prepared by different employees, shifts, equipment, supplier lots, service channels, or locations where consistency matters.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Compare more than one sample across batches, employees, shifts, or locations before concluding that a variation is isolated or systemic.

39

Weigh or measure sampled portions and record actual variance against the target weight, count, volume, or yield tolerance.

FOOD TASTING

ACTUAL | Enter

TARGET | Enter

DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Compare more than one sample across batches, employees, shifts, or locations before concluding that a variation is isolated or systemic.

40

Verify component ratios, toppings, fillings, sauces, garnishes, accompaniments, and packaging remain consistent with the approved build.

FOOD TASTING

ACTUAL | Enter

TARGET | Enter

DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Compare more than one sample across batches, employees, shifts, or locations before concluding that a variation is isolated or systemic.

41

Review whether ingredient variation, measurement, preparation method, equipment setting, hold time, or employee technique explains any difference.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Compare more than one sample across batches, employees, shifts, or locations before concluding that a variation is isolated or systemic.

42

Classify the sample as approved, approved with minor adjustment, retest required, remake required, held, or rejected.

FOOD TASTING

Compliant

Partial

Non-compliant

N/A

Execution tip: Compare more than one sample across batches, employees, shifts, or locations before concluding that a variation is isolated or systemic.

8. Beverages, desserts, sauces, bakery, cooking styles, and delivery quality

43

Evaluate beverages for aroma, strength, sweetness, temperature, dilution, carbonation, foam, body, garnish, and recipe consistency.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: For takeaway and delivery, evaluate the product after a defined travel period so packaging, temperature, condensation, and texture loss are

44

Evaluate desserts and bakery products for freshness, rise, crumb, moisture, set, sweetness, filling, decoration, and serving temperature.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: For takeaway and delivery, evaluate the product after a defined travel period so packaging, temperature, condensation, and texture loss are

45

Check sauces, soups, gravies, dips, and dressings for viscosity, emulsion, seasoning, clarity, temperature, separation, and coating quality.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: For takeaway and delivery, evaluate the product after a defined travel period so packaging, temperature, condensation, and texture loss are

46

Assess fried, grilled, roasted, smoked, or baked products for colour, crust, oil quality, smoke level, doneness, moisture, and flavour development.

FOOD TASTING

Matches standard

Retest after adjustment

Reject / remake

Execution tip: For takeaway and delivery, evaluate the product after a defined travel period so packaging, temperature, condensation, and texture loss are

47

Evaluate takeaway or delivery samples after the defined travel time for temperature, leakage, condensation, texture loss, assembly, and packaging impact.

FOOD TASTING

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: For takeaway and delivery, evaluate the product after a defined travel period so packaging, temperature, condensation, and texture loss are

48

Confirm allergen-free, dietary, reduced-salt, plant-based, and other modified versions remain accurate and meet the intended quality standard.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

Compliant

Partial

Non-compliant

N/A

Execution tip: For takeaway and delivery, evaluate the product after a defined travel period so packaging, temperature, condensation, and texture loss are

9. Defect classification, product acceptance, containment, and immediate action

- 49 Record every defect with the item, batch, approved standard, observed condition, affected quantity, risk, evidence, and customer or operational impact. CRITICAL FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Stop release of any unsafe or unacceptable product, contain affected stock, document the decision, and assign the immediate correction.

- 50 Classify findings as critical, major, minor, or observation using approved safety, sensory, remake, hold, reject, and escalation rules. CRITICAL FOOD TASTING

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Stop release of any unsafe or unacceptable product, contain affected stock, document the decision, and assign the immediate correction.

- 51 Stop service, isolate, hold, discard, remake, or replace any sample that is unsafe, incorrectly identified, or outside the approved acceptance limit. CRITICAL FOOD TASTING

Acceptable Needs action Critical LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Stop release of any unsafe or unacceptable product, contain affected stock, document the decision, and assign the immediate correction.

- 52 Identify the likely cause across ingredients, recipe, measurement, method, equipment, time, temperature, employee practice, packaging, or delivery. FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Stop release of any unsafe or unacceptable product, contain affected stock, document the decision, and assign the immediate correction.

- 53 Assign the immediate correction to a named owner with priority, due time, temporary control, required proof, and escalation route. CRITICAL FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Stop release of any unsafe or unacceptable product, contain affected stock, document the decision, and assign the immediate correction.

- 54 Communicate the release, retest, hold, reject, or discard decision to kitchen, service, supply chain, quality, and restaurant management as required. CRITICAL FOOD TASTING

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Stop release of any unsafe or unacceptable product, contain affected stock, document the decision, and assign the immediate correction.

10. Scoring, panel consensus, corrective actions, retesting, trends, and sign-off

55

Calculate and record scores for appearance, aroma, flavour, taste balance, texture, temperature, portion, consistency, and overall acceptability.

FOOD TASTING

ACTUAL | Enter

TARGET | Enter

DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Keep actions open until controlled retasting confirms the product meets the standard and the underlying cause has been addressed.

56

Resolve material panel disagreement through controlled retasting, reference comparison, discussion of evidence, and a documented lead decision.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep actions open until controlled retasting confirms the product meets the standard and the underlying cause has been addressed.

57

Verify corrective-action closure through retasting, remeasurement, temperature checks, live photos, training proof, maintenance evidence, or recipe review.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical

LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Keep actions open until controlled retasting confirms the product meets the standard and the underlying cause has been addressed.

58

Review trends by item, location, shift, employee, supplier, batch, defect type, complaint, remake, refund, waste, and action-closure time.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep actions open until controlled retasting confirms the product meets the standard and the underlying cause has been addressed.

59

Update recipes, training, ingredient specifications, equipment settings, holding rules, packaging, or supplier controls when root causes require change.

FOOD TASTING

Finding / record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep actions open until controlled retasting confirms the product meets the standard and the underlying cause has been addressed.

60

Record the final decision, rejected or held items, unresolved risks, next tasting date, tasting lead, kitchen lead, reviewer, date, time, and signatures.

CRITICAL

FOOD TASTING

NAME | Enter

DATE / TIME | Enter

APPROVAL | Enter

Execution tip: Keep actions open until controlled retasting confirms the product meets the standard and the underlying cause has been addressed.

RUN THIS CHECKLIST DIGITALLY

Turn quality checks into consistent guest experiences

Use Taqtics to score samples, capture evidence, assign actions, verify retests, and track repeat sensory defects.

Try This Checklist
in Taqtics