

Restaurant SOP

Fill in every field. The control block decides whether this document is still trustworthy a year from now.

SECTION 01

Control block

Procedure title

Plain language, matching what staff call it. "Opening the Patio Bar," not "FOH-BAR-001."

Version and date

A visible version number and the date it was approved. If someone has to open file properties to work out which is newest, the document has already failed.

VERSION

DATE APPROVED

Applies to — roles

The specific roles this governs. A procedure that implicitly claims to apply to everyone gets discounted by everyone.

Owner

The named person who can approve a change. Not a department — a person. Ambiguity here is a common reason changes stall.

Status

Draft, In review, or Approved. Anything not Approved should be visibly not-yet-authoritative.

☐

Draft

☐

In review

☐

Approved

Applies to — locations

All locations, or named restaurants. This is the field that lets approved local variation exist without becoming tribal knowledge.

☐

All locations — or name the restaurants below

Review trigger

What forces a review: a menu change, equipment change, vendor change, regulatory change, or a date. Event triggers catch more than calendars do.

☐

Menu change

☐

Equipment change

☐

Vendor change

☐

Regulatory change

☐

Date

SECTION 02

Procedure

Why this matters

One or two sentences on what goes wrong if this is done incorrectly — guest impact, safety, cost. Staff follow procedures they understand the reason for and shortcut ones they do not.

Before you start

Equipment, ingredients, access, or prior steps required. Most procedure failures happen because a prerequisite was missing, not because a step was performed wrong.

Steps

Numbered, one action per step, written in the order performed. Include quantities, times, and temperatures as specific values — never “until done” where a number exists.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Standards and tolerances

What correct looks like, and what range is acceptable. "4.5 oz portion" is a standard; "appropriate portion" is not.

ITEM	STANDARD	ACCEPTABLE RANGE

Common mistakes

The two or three things that actually go wrong. Usually the most-read section of any SOP, and the one most templates omit entirely.

1

2

3

When something is wrong

What to do if the procedure cannot be followed as written — who to tell, and whether to proceed. Without this, staff improvise silently.

SECTION 03

Connected information

Related material

Other procedures, recipes, or references this depends on or affects. This is what makes change manageable: when this procedure changes, this list is where the change has to travel.

Training reference

Where this appears in onboarding or role training, so a change here can be traced into what new hires are taught.

Change log

What changed, when, and who approved it. Three lines is enough. It is how you answer “when did we start doing it this way” a year later.

DATE	WHAT CHANGED	APPROVED BY