

# Room Service

## Introduction

The term Room Service implies to service of food and beverages in guest rooms. It is an important food and beverage area of a hotel. Depending on the size and structure of the hotel, the services offered by this department varying from hotel to hotel. Though the main feature of room service is 24-hour operation, in some hotels, it may close during night hours. For example, Resorts may close Room Service by 10 p.m. as the revenue generated after 10 p.m. will be less than the cost being involved in operation during that time.

## Room Service Order Taker

### **Job Responsibilities:**

- ❖ Attends the briefings conducted by senior captain and takes assigned responsibilities.
- ❖ Learns the daily specials, not-available items, menu preparations and their presentations.
- ❖ Handles all the telephone calls according to the standards set by the management.
- ❖ Takes the food and beverage orders from the guests.
- ❖ Writes KOT and sends it across to the captain.
- ❖ Up sells the food items through suggestive selling techniques to optimize the revenue of the department.
- ❖ Ensures that food orders are delivered in the rooms within the standard time.
- ❖ Prepares the bills.
- ❖ Maintains the Whitney rack (room list) to know the status of the guest rooms.
- ❖ Informs the guests' complaints/ appreciation to the supervisor.
- ❖ Ensures utmost courtesy and manners when dealing with guests.
- ❖ Performs other tasks as directed by supervisors and managers.

## Types of Room Service

The room service department can be broadly divided into two categorized as **Decentralized Room Service** and **Centralized Room Service**.

**Decentralized Room Service:** In decentralized room service individual floor pantries are assigned the duty to dispense the orders of tea, coffee and snacks very fast. Here the RSOT at a central point takes the order from the guest and informs the concerned floor pantry to deliver the orders. In case of lunch/ dinner orders he informs the floor pantry and places the order with the main kitchen so that the food is ready by the time the floor pantry staff come for pick up.

In this form, a pantry is set up on each floor near the service elevator. Floor pantry is equipped with a mini still room and other silverware required for the preparation and service of any meal. The equipment that is commonly found in the floor pantry is;

- Sink unit
- Refrigerator
- Lift to central kitchen
- Small still set or other coffee making machine.
- Knives
- Hot plate
- Ice making machine
- Salamander
- Cutting boards
- Storage space shelves and cupboards
- China
- Cutlery, flatware and hollow-ware
- Glassware
- Cruets, Worcestershire sauce, sugars, etc.
- Linen
- Wine service equipment, wine buckets
- Trays

The main advantages of this type of room service is quick and prompt service to the guests as the stewards are stationed at the concerned floor pantries. Apart from the advantages, there are few other points that must be considered by the management before they take a decision on establishing decentralized form of room service. Duplication of equipment in each floor pantry increases the capital budget of the organization. Control on materials, beverages and so on becomes difficult as there are too many service points.

**Centralized Room Service:** In Centralized room service, all kinds of room service orders are collected from main kitchen and sent to the guest rooms by a common set of waiters. The entire workforce and functioning of the outlet is concentrated at one place. When orders are received, the room service waiters serve the orders, irrespective of the floor the orders come from. The disadvantage with this system is the time taken to serve the food in the guest rooms. All hotels have service elevators used by all service and housekeeping staff. The time taken to get one's turn in the elevator can result in delay. The challenge is to keep the food hot in transit.

Careful planning by the managers is required during the breakfast hours, as it is the busiest time and there may be chances of service getting delayed.

### **Procedure for Service**

**Taking the Order:** The room service order taker (RSOT) must answer all calls promptly by saying "Good morning, Room Service! How may I assist you.....?" He should **offer an apology if a phone rings more than a specific number of times (such as three). Points** to be kept in mind while taking orders are;

- Ask for guest's name and room number.
- Ask the guest how many portions they would like to have.

- Write order using standard abbreviations.
- Ask for and write more details if required.
- Up sell side orders, desserts and beverages.
- Inform the guest about the approximate time of delivery.
- Confirm the order with the guest by repeating the order placed.

When order takers use manual systems, it is very important that they enter all the information in Room Service Order Control Form. Properties use this form, to record information about each order, such as room number, guests' name, menu, the time order was placed and the time of delivering order in the room.

<b>Hotel Carlton</b>							
<b>Room Service Order Control Form</b>							
<b>Shift:</b>				<b>Date:</b>			
<b>S. no</b>	<b>Room no</b>	<b>Menu</b>	<b>Order taken time</b>	<b>Delivered time</b>	<b>Delivered by</b>	<b>Clearance time</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>Room Service Manager's Signature</b>							

### *Room Service Order Control Form*

**Routing the Order:** After receiving the order from the guest, the order taker must route it to the appropriate food and beverage area by entering it in the KOT. There are several methods of doing so;

- The order taker may carry the KOT to the production area by hand. This system may work well when main kitchen and dispense bar is located close to the order-taker's cabin.
- The order-taker may give the KOT to a room service steward, who then takes it to the kitchen.
- The order-taker may use a pre-check register or POS (point of sale) system with a remote printer. With this equipment, the order-taker automatically transmits the order

to production staff members as he or she enters the information into the pre-check register or POS system.

Procedures of transmitting room service orders to different production sections become more complicated when order-takers have to place orders in three to four sections and as well in dispense bar. This problem can be solved by using multi-part order ticket. First part goes to soup section, second one to hot food section, third to cold food section and the fourth one to the dispense bar.

**Preparing the Order:** Room service waiters should be aware of the orders that are being prepared by production staff so that they can do tray / trolley set-up. Meanwhile, waiters can also pick up beverage orders from the dispense bar. Once food orders are ready, attendants pick them up, cover them with lids and present them to the order-taker, and captain for inspection. During the inspection the room service captains should look for the following;

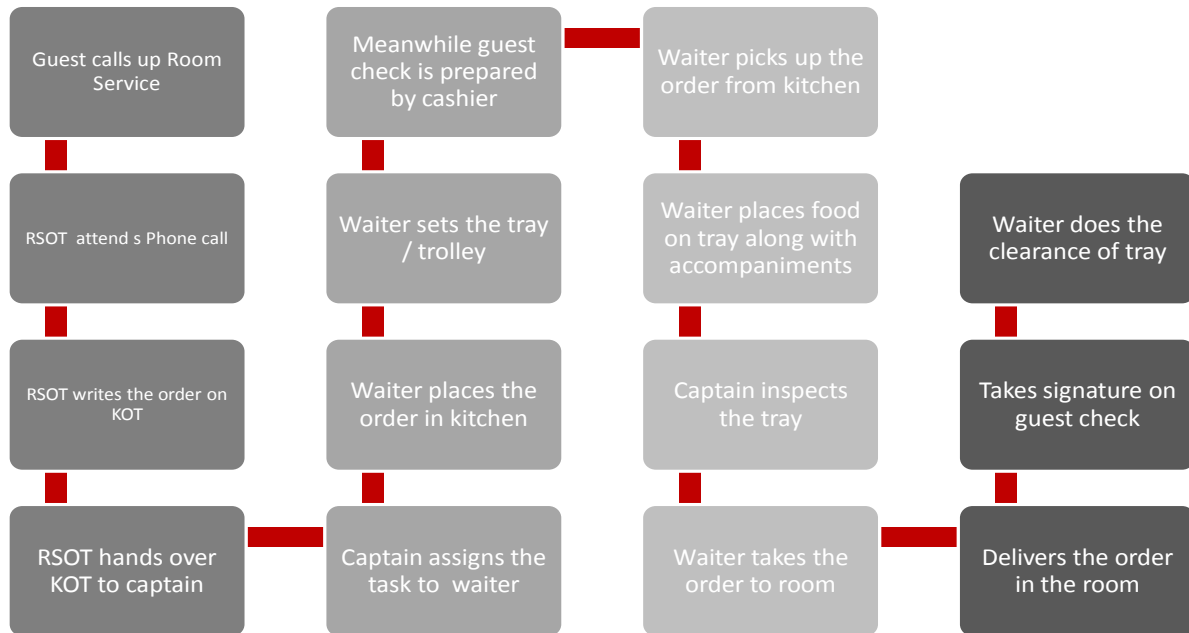
- Does the order match the guest check? Is anything missing? Has everything been prepared as the guest requested?
- Are all of the appropriate condiments, sauces, side dishes, and beverages where they should be? These items should be double-checked to be sure nothing has been forgotten.
- Does the food look appetizing? If you were the guest, would you be pleased with the presentation of the order?
- Are sufficient flatware and crockery are set in the tray?

**Delivering the Order:** After captain's thorough inspection, the tray is carried by room service waiter to deliver the order to the appropriate guest. It is important that waiters deliver orders as quickly as possible. The fastest route to the guestroom should be used; stewards and other room service staff members must know the layout of the property extremely well. Hot food should still be hot, and cold food should still be cold when it gets to the guest. Time and temperature are the most important elements in room service delivery, because as product holding times increase, so does the likelihood of contamination and loss of quality.

- On reaching guest room, the waiter knocks the door announcing "room service with your order" and should wait for guest reply.
- When the door is opened, waiter wishes the guest according to the time of the day and enters the room.
- Waiter asks the guest where he/she prefers the order to be place – on a table, left on the cart or elsewhere.
- He presents the bill to the guest and takes his signature or cash, if the guest wishes to pay.
- The waiter gives the guest room service number to dial for any additional service or to request tray pick-up. This information could be provided on a courtesy card left on the tray or cart.

**Clearance of the Order:** After standard lead time, the room service waiter returns to the guest room for the clearance of the soiled trays or trolleys. It is important to clear the soiled trays from the room as soon as possible as the soiled plates affect the aesthetics of the room and even attracts insects. Many a times, the house keeping staff clears the room service trays

during room cleaning and places them in the floor corridors. The waiters must clear the trays that are lying in the guest floors as and when they come across them.



*Flow chart of In-Room Dining Service Procedure*

### Doorknob Menu

Most room service orders are received during breakfast hours. Also, many conferences begin at 9am or earlier. Therefore, kitchen and room service staff have a great burden placed on them, when all the guests who are attending meetings order the breakfast at the same time. To intensify these problems, the leisure tourists who are staying in the hotels also order for breakfast and tea / coffee at the same time, as they also have to leave for sightseeing, usually in the morning hours. Breakfast knob card is introduced to avoid these problem and to ease the pressure during the peak hours.

The doorknob menu card is placed on the bed of the guest by the housekeeping staff, when they do turn down service. This reminds the guest to prepare his order and hang it on the doorknob outside his room. Guests not only indicate what items they desire, but also the approximate timeframe within which they would like to be served. These doorknob menus are collected during night and mise – en - place of trays and trolleys can be done well in advance, so facilitating an easy breakfast service.

This card gives sufficient time for the kitchen and room service staff to keep the mise - en - place ready for service. The volume of the business can also be predicted to a great extent by this system.

PLEASE PLACE ON THE DOOR KNOB PRIOR TO 4:00 A.M.

For Breakfast in bed please indicate

Number of guests \_\_\_\_\_

Room number \_\_\_\_\_

Please refer to our prices in the  
"In Room Dining Menu"

**CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

Fresh fruit platter

OR

Seasonal fresh fruit juice or vegetable juice

Orange  Sweet lime

Pineapple  Tomato

Watermelon  Carrot

"If your choice is not available the nearest alternative will be offered"

Select upto any three of the following:

Muffins  Banana bread

Croissants  Danish pastry

Pain au chocolat  Wholemeal toast

White Toast  Doughnut

Served with butter, honey and preserves

Tea  OR Coffee

**A LA CARTE SELECTION**

Please indicate the number of portions in each item

**SEASONAL FRESH FRUIT JUICE OR VEGETABLE JUICE**

A choice of:

Orange  Sweet lime

Pineapple  Tomato

Watermelon  Carrot

"If your choice is not available the nearest alternative will be offered"

**BAKER'S BASKET**

A choice of:

Muffins  Banana bread

Croissants  Danish pastry

Pain au chocolat  Wholemeal toast

White toast  Doughnut

Served with butter, honey and preserves

**CEREALS**

A choice of:

Bircher muesli  Cornflakes

All bran  Rice flakes

Wheat flakes  Homemade muesli

Served with:

Hot milk  Chilled milk

Home style Baked Beans on toast

Golden Pancakes with whipped cream and Maple syrup

**Choice of homemade yoghurt:**

Plain  Mixed berries  Fruit

**Omelette of your choice**

Please indicate your choice of two fillings and two accompaniments

**Fillings:**

Masala  Cheese

Tomato  Ham

Herbs  Onion

Mushrooms

**Accompaniments:**

Hash brown  Grilled Gammon ham

Finest back bacon  Rosemary potatoes

Chicken sausages

**BEVERAGES**

A choice of:

**Speciality teas**

Earl Grey  Jasmine

English Breakfast  Camomile

Assam  Peppermint

Darjeeling

**Herbal teas**

**Indian Coffee**

Freshly brewed coffee

**Other Beverages**

Hot Milk  Hot Chocolate  Chilled Milk

PLEASE MARK THE TIME BETWEEN WHICH SERVICE IS DESIRED							
6.00-6.15	6.15-6.30	6.30-6.45	6.45-7.00	7.00-7.15	7.15-7.30	7.30-7.45	7.45-8.00
8.00-8.15	8.15-8.30	8.30-8.45	8.45-9.00	9.00-9.15	9.15-9.30	9.30-9.45	9.45-10.00
10.00-10.15	10.15-10.30	10.30-10.45	10.45-11.00	11.00-11.15	11.15-11.30	11.30-11.45	11.45-12.00

NO. OF PERSONS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

ROOM NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

For large selection please see In Room Dining Menu  
All prices inclusive of taxes

*Sample Door Knob Menu*

## Mini bar

A **mini-fridge-bar** is a small private snack and beverage bar, often found in high-priced hotel rooms. Typically, a minibar comes in the form of a counter and small absorption refrigerator stocked with a precise inventory. The room's guests can take a beverage or snack at any time during their stay. The bar is commonly stocked with small bottles of alcoholic beverages, juice, and soft drinks. It may also include candy, cookies, crackers, and other small snacks.

Usually a Mini-Bar attendant administers the minibars on regular basis. He is responsible for stocking, replenishment and recording of sales in minibars. Automated minibars with sensors and snack trays with built-in electronic scales to record sales are now common practice at hotels

### **Room Service Co-ordination with House Keeping**

- House Keeping deals with Room Service staff uniforms and guest serviettes.
- It places room service menu cards and breakfast knob menu cards in the guest rooms as and when required.
- House Keeping department informs the room service about the empty trays and trolleys in the guest rooms and floors

### **Room Service Co-ordination with Front Office**

- Front Office informs the room service about the check-in and check-out of guest rooms.
- All communication relating to the status of guest (i.e VIP, Company guests) is informed to room service.
- VIP amenities vouchers and wake-up call lists are circulated by this department