

RecipeMapping™

— HOW TO TURN GOOD RECIPES INTO GREAT MENU ITEMS —

A good recipe for home cooking doesn't always work out when you attempt to replicate it in the restaurant. Startup restaurateurs find out quickly that a recipe intended to yield four, six or even 10 servings might not be practical when feeding dozens or even hundreds of guests — every day.

We've said it once, we'll say it again: Success in the restaurant business is often measured in pennies. Toss in an inaccurate purchase order here, a dash of wasted product there, and mix in a bit of inefficient labor use, and you've got a recipe for slim margins. And while your friends and family never minded waiting an extra half-hour or so for your famous meatballs, your restaurant guests will not be so forgiving to slow service and inconsistency.

For good recipes to become great menu items, you must learn to make them pleasing to both your guests and your accountant. You must break them down into stages that assist purchasing and inventory control, organize prepping, reduce production time, and maximize yield. Then you must build them up to serve dozens of covers.

We call it RecipeMapping — a three-step process that allows you to add new items to the menu consistently, methodically and profitably. We hope it helps “map out” your strategy for adding items to your menu, as well as help you put your startup “on the map.”

Step 1 – Add Ingredients to the Master Inventory List.

Every restaurant should maintain a Master Inventory List that includes all of the ingredients that a restaurant must use in the preparation of their menu items. This list can be maintained using a spreadsheet format that includes purchasing information such as the pack, size and price of the ingredients — information that is useful when creating other management forms such as inventory and order forms. But to accurately calculate the real cost to produce a menu item, the Master Inventory list should not only reflect the purchasing cost and unit of measure, but also the corresponding recipe cost and unit of measure. Any ingredient used in cooking can be expressed in one of three units of measure when using it in a recipe — weight measure (typically ounces or lbs.), volume measure (such as tsp., tbsp., cups, qts. or gal.), or by piece. Many products are purchased by weight units of measure but are measured for recipes in terms of volume (fluid) measure. To determine a true recipe unit cost, it can require measuring a pound of product to determine its recipe yield. We provide Recipe Conversion Notes to assist in this process.

Step 2 – Create the Prep Stages. Here we identify parts of the menu item that can be prepared prior to final cooking and presentation, to reduce the time from order to service. Even a simple, single menu item often requires several subrecipes that are produced in batch and become part of the routine preparation tasks. Each subrecipe is then added to the Recipe Manual for reference by the kitchen staff. The cost of each subrecipe ingredient is calculated by multiplying the number of recipe units used by the recipe unit cost listed in the Master Inventory. The subrecipe batch is then assigned its own recipe unit and cost based on total cost to produce the batch and how much it yields.

Step 3 – Calculate Menu Item Cost. Finally, the cost of the menu item is determined by calculating the cost of each individual recipe or ingredient needed to produce the menu item, then affixing a selling price that produces the desired profit. Restaurants should review their menu item cost every three to six months to ensure that cost expectations are accurate.

This Month's Features: Pacific Coast Shellfish Louie and Tilapia with Cilantro Lime Butter

In this issue, Tom Bruce, owner of Sacramento Food & Beverage Consulting documents the step-by-step process used to determine accurate costing information for two very popular menu items. Pictures and recipes were graciously provided by John Eales, proprietor of Bullwacker's Restaurant on historic Cannery Row in Monterey, California.



Menu items featured in our RecipeMapping department are available online at www.RestaurantOwner.com/recipe.htm.



Pacific Coast Shellfish Louie

- | | | |
|-----|---------|-----------------------------|
| 3 | leaves | Green leaf lettuce |
| 3 | cups | Salad mix |
| 5 | fl. oz. | Shellfish salad filling |
| 2 | fl. oz. | Louie dressing |
| 1/2 | each | Avocado (sliced and fanned) |
| 2 | each | Boiled egg halves |
| 3 | each | Red onion slices |
| 3 | each | Sliced cucumber |
| 3 | each | Cherry tomato halves |
| 2 | each | Steamed shrimp (21/25-ct.) |
| 2 | each | Asparagus spears (blanched) |
| 2 | each | Lemon wedge quarters |
| 1/2 | tsp | Chopped parsley (garnish) |

Line Cook Instructions

1. Layer 2 large or 3 medium lettuce leaves in the bottom of a chilled salad plate or bowl; then place 3 cups of salad mix on the leaves as a bed.
2. Using a #5 portion scoop, place about 3/4 cup of shellfish salad mix in center of lettuce bed.
3. Next, arrange 1/2 avocado (sliced and fanned), 1 boiled

egg cut in half lengthwise, 3 red onion rings, 3 bias-cut and scored cucumber slices, 3 cherry tomato halves, 2 lightly blanched asparagus spears, 2 steamed shrimp and 2 lemon wedge quarters.

4. Serve with a 2-oz. side of Louie dressing.
5. Sprinkle with chopped parsley.



Tilapia with Cilantro Lime Butter

- | | | |
|-----------|--------|------------------------------|
| 1 | each | Tilapia fillet (7- to 8-oz.) |
| 3 | each | Roasted potatoes |
| 1/2 | tsp. | Chopped garlic |
| 2 | oz. | Fresh spinach |
| 3 | slices | Zucchini |
| 1 | tsp. | Chopped tomatoes |
| 1 | oz. | Olive oil |
| As needed | | Lemon juice, sea salt, flour |

Line Cook Instructions

1. Spinach - Heat 1/2 oz. olive oil in a sauté pan; add 1/2 tsp. chopped garlic and gently sauté until garlic begins to brown. Add spinach and toss quickly; add a squeeze of lemon juice and season with sea salt.
2. Grilled Zucchini - Lightly spray zucchini with olive oil and season with sea salt. Grill over high heat just until marked.
3. Tilapia - Check fresh fillets for any remaining bones before

beginning. With the fillet bone side up, season with salt and white pepper. Lightly dredge the bone side with flour. Heat a sauté pan over medium heat and add 1/2 oz. oil. Place the fillet in the pan, floured side down, taking care to lay it into the pan facing away from you. Cook for 1-2 minutes until nicely browned. Turn and finish on the other side. Remove from the pan and drain any remaining oil before plating. Plate with spinach, zucchini, roasted potatoes and garnish with finely chopped fresh tomatoes and cilantro lime butter.

Step 1 Inventory Master

The first step is to identify each ingredient for all the subrecipes and then to get the purchasing unit pack, size and cost information from your foodservice distributor. Raw ingredients for these menu items were chosen based on availability from local distributors. Once you have the purchasing information, you're ready to calculate the number of recipe units there are in each purchase unit.

Item Description	Case Pack/ Size	Purchase Unit (PU)		Recipe Cost Unit (RU)			
		U/M	Current Price	U/M	# RU per PU	Yield %	Cost
* Tilapia, 7- to 8-oz. portions	10# case	Case	41.50	OZ-wt	160	100%	0.259
* Spinach, fresh	3#	Bag	14.60	OZ-wt	48	100%	0.304
* Zucchini	20#	Case	18.25	OZ-wt	320	85%	0.067
* Garlic, whole cloves peeled	3# tub	Each	11.50	OZ-wt	48	100%	0.240
* Lime juice	4/1 gallon	Case	30.00	OZ-fl	512	100%	0.059
* Potatoes, yellow creamers	50#	Bag	29.95	EA	350	100%	0.086
* Tomatoes 4X5	12#	Bag	11.50	OZ-wt	192	85%	0.070
** Bay shrimp	4/5#	Case	77.00	OZ-wt	320	95%	0.253
* Butter, salted	36/1#	Case	37.03	OZ-wt	576	100%	0.064
* Cilantro, fresh	12 ea. bunch	Bag	9.60	OZ-wt	33.6	100%	0.286
* Worcestershire	1 gallon	Bottle	14.28	OZ-fl	128	100%	0.112
** Mayonnaise, heavy-duty	4/1 gallon	Case	26.50	OZ-fl	512	100%	0.052
** Celery	24 bu.	Case	21.60	OZ-wt	768	69%	0.041
** Onion, whole yellow	25#	Bag	15.00	OZ-wt	400	90%	0.042
** Onion, red	25#	Bag	27.25	OZ-wt	400	90%	0.076
** Hot sauce	1 gallon	Bottle	34.76	OZ-fl	128	100%	0.272
** Crabmeat, fresh pasteurized	10/1# tins	Case	55.00	OZ-wt	160	100%	0.344
** Lettuce, greenleaf	24 ea.	Case	10.80	EA	336	100%	0.032
** Salad, precut mixed greens	4/5#	Case	23.72	OZ-wt	320	100%	0.074
** Avocado	70 ct.	Case	31.99	EA	70	100%	0.457
** Eggs, fresh shell large	15 dz.	Case	14.80	EA	180	100%	0.082
** Cucumber	10#	Case	19.00	OZ-wt	160	92%	0.129
** Tomato, cherry	12/12 oz.	Box	19.79	OZ-wt	288	100%	0.069
** Shrimp, 21/25 raw p&d	10/5#	Case	227.50	EA	1150	100%	0.198
** Dressing, Louie	4/1 gallon	Case	31.32	OZ-fl	512	100%	0.061
* Oil, olive pomace	4/1 gallon	Case	84.00	OZ-fl	512	100%	0.164
** Asparagus, fresh jumbo	20#	Case	27.40	OZ-wt	320	75%	0.114
* Salt	1/25#	Bag	8.00	OZ-fl	310	100%	0.026
** Lemons	140 ct.	Box	26.50	EA	140	100%	0.189

* Tilapia with Cilantro Lime Butter **Pacific Coast Shellfish Louie

Recipe Conversion Notes

Many products are purchased by the weight units of measure but are measured for recipes in fluid measures such as teaspoons, tablespoons or cups. Precise conversion formulas are necessary to attain accurate costs. Here are some facts we noted when calculating the number of recipe units:

- ✓ 1 bunch of cilantro yields about 2.8 ozs. chopped product
- ✓ 1 cup of finely diced celery weighs about 4 ozs.
- ✓ 1 cup of finely diced onions weighs about 4.5 ozs.
- ✓ 3 onion rings weigh about 1/2 oz.
- ✓ A single head of green leaf lettuce yielded about 14 leaves for garnish.
- ✓ 1 oz. wt. of salad mix yields about 4/5 cup
- ✓ Zucchini yield represents trimming and scoring but not peeling; 3 slices weighed 2 ozs.
- ✓ Our tomatoes averaged 32 each per lb. (about 1/2 oz. each).
- ✓ Our local asparagus required only trimming and weighed approximately 1 oz. ea.
- ✓ 1 cup of salt weighs about 10 oz. wt.

Step 2 The Prep Stage - Pacific Coast Shellfish Louie

Bullwacker's - Recipe Card

Shellfish Salad Dressing

Batch

INGREDIENTS	MEASURE	PROCEDURE
Mayonnaise, heavy-duty	1 quart	1. Place mayonnaise in mixing bowl. 2. Finely dice both the celery and the onions; place in mixing bowl with mayonnaise. 3. Using a wire whisk or rubber spatula, thoroughly blend all the ingredients. 4. Refrigerate for service.
Celery	1½ cup (finely diced)	
Onion, whole yellow	¼ cup (finely diced)	
Hot sauce	2 tsp.	

TOOLS/EQUIP.: French knife, mixing bowl, wire whisk or rubber spatula, measuring cup, measuring spoons

STATION: Prep cook

YIELD: Enough dressing for 1 batch of seafood salad

SHELF LIFE: 4 days

Recipe Cost

RU	# of RU	RU Cost	Cost
OZ-fl	32	0.052	\$ 1.66
OZ-wt	5.5	0.041	\$ 0.22
OZ-wt	1	0.042	\$ 0.04
OZ-fl	0.33	0.272	\$ 0.09
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -

Total \$ 2.01

RU EA

of RU 1

RU Cost \$ 2.01

Subrecipes are usually prepared ahead of time and can be components for one or several menu items.

Shellfish Salad Dressing

Since this subrecipe is used as an ingredient in only one other recipe (Shellfish Salad Filling), the recipe unit is listed as an each measure for the entire batch. If it were used in other recipes then the more practical recipe unit would be in volume measure — fl. oz.

Bullwacker's - Recipe Card

Shellfish Salad Filling

Batch

INGREDIENTS	MEASURE	PROCEDURE
Shellfish Salad Dressing	1 batch	1. Defrost bay shrimp under refrigeration, drain thoroughly and press lightly if necessary to remove any excess moisture. 2. Place 1 batch seafood salad dressing, crab, and shrimp in a mixing bowl and blend thoroughly with a rubber spatula. 3. Refrigerate for service. 4. Allow the salad to stand for 1 hour then season to taste with salt and white pepper. <i>Note: The dressing may be made ahead, however, the salad filling should be assembled on a daily basis to ensure a fresh product.</i>
Bay shrimp	2 lbs.	
Crabmeat, fresh pasteurized	2 lbs.	

TOOLS/EQUIP.: Ounce scale, mixing bowl, rubber spatula

STATION: Prep cook

YIELD: Approximately 17 5-oz. portions

SHELF LIFE: 1 day

Recipe Cost

RU	# of RU	RU Cost	Cost
EA	1	2.012	\$ 2.01
OZ-wt	32	0.253	\$ 8.11
OZ-wt	32	0.344	\$ 11.00
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -

Total \$ 21.12

RU OZ-fl

of RU 84

RU Cost \$ 0.25

Shellfish Salad Filling

A single menu item may have several "subrecipes," and a recipe card should be created for each step. Bullwacker's also uses the Shellfish Salad Filling for a sandwich served on baguette bread.

RecipeMapping

Step 2 The Prep Stage - Tilapia with Cilantro Lime Butter

Roasted Potatoes

It is best if the potatoes are roasted frequently throughout the day for a higher-quality product.

Bullwacker's - Recipe Card

Roasted Potatoes

Batch

INGREDIENTS	MEASURE	PROCEDURE
Potatoes, yellow creamers	50# bag	1. Using a peeler, score the potatoes in one complete circle (refer to photo of finished tilapia dish).
Oil, olive pomace	1 quart	
Salt	1 cup	2. Place the potatoes in one or two large stockpots and cover with water. Add 1 cup salt if using one pot or 1/2-cup to each pot if using two.
		3. Bring the potatoes to a light boil and simmer for 8-10 minutes; potatoes should still be firm.
		4. Drain, cool and refrigerate for final preparation.
		5. To roast the potatoes, place them in a mixing bowl and oil lightly. Season with salt and toss. Place potatoes in a single layer on a sheet pan and roast in a 425- to 450-degree convection oven until golden brown; carefully remove the sheet pan and drain any excess oil from the potatoes. Hold in the steam table for service.
		<i>Note: The potatoes should be roasted frequently throughout the day to maintain a fresh product.</i>

TOOLS/EQUIP.: Potato peeler, colander, stockpots, measuring cups, quart measure, sheet pan
STATION: Prep cook
YIELD: Approximately 120 3-potato portions
SHELF LIFE: 4 days

Recipe Cost

RU	# of RU	RU Cost	Cost
EA	350	0.086	\$ 29.95
OZ-fl	32	0.164	\$ 5.25
OZ-fl	8	0.026	\$ 0.21
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -

Total	\$ 35.41
RU	EA
# of RU	350
RU Cost	\$ 0.10

Bullwacker's - Recipe Card

Cilantro Lime Butter

Batch

INGREDIENTS	MEASURE	PROCEDURE
Butter, salted	2 lbs. softened	1. Allow butter to soften to room temperature. Place butter in mixing bowl.
Cilantro, fresh	2 bunches	
Worcestershire	1 Tbsn.	2. Using a whisk or rubber spatula, slowly incorporate the Worcestershire and lime juice, mixing until all liquid is absorbed.
Lime juice	6 Tbsn.	
		3. Rinse the cilantro under cold water and pat dry with a towel. Chop the cilantro taking care not to overprocess.
		4. Fold in the chopped cilantro until smooth and well blended.
		5. Refrigerate for service.
		<i>Note: Cilantro lime butter, like all compound butters, can be rolled in parchment or wax paper while still at room temperature, refrigerated and then cut into medallions for service.</i>

TOOLS/EQUIP.: Mixing bowl, measuring spoons, whisk or rubber spatula

STATION: Prep cook
YIELD: 53 3/4-oz. portions
SHELF LIFE: 5 days

Recipe Cost

RU	# of RU	RU Cost	Cost
OZ-wt	32	0.064	\$ 2.06
OZ-wt	5.6	0.286	\$ 1.60
OZ-fl	0.5	0.112	\$ 0.06
OZ-fl	3	0.059	\$ 0.18
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -
		-	\$ -

Total	\$ 3.89
RU	OZ-wt
# of RU	40
RU Cost	\$ 0.10

Cilantro Lime Butter

Cilantro lime butter is excellent with most grilled fish and also works well with grilled or sautéed shellfish. Add a touch of hot sauce for a bit of a different twist.

Step 3 Calculate Menu Item Cost

The final step for turning the recipe into a menu item is to add the cost of the ingredients needed to produce it. Calculating the cost of each recipe needed to produce the menu item makes it easy to cost out the finished menu item and affix a selling price that is profitable. (Please note: A standard practice when costing out menus is to include a cost for certain menu items for unlisted incidentals such as seasonings, bread, condiments, or sauces; oftentimes referred to as plate cost or Q-cost.)

Menu Item: Pacific Coast Shellfish Louie				
Item Description: Mixed seasonal greens with fresh crabmeat, bay shrimp, shrimp and classic Louie dressing				
Recipe Unit	Quantity	Ingredient	Unit Cost	Extension
EA	2	Lettuce, greenleaf	0.03	0.06
OZ-wt	3.5	Salad, precut mixed greens	0.07	0.26
OZ-fl	5	Shellfish salad filling	0.27	1.37
OZ-fl	2	Dressing, Louie	0.06	0.12
EA	0.5	Avocado	0.46	0.23
EA	1	Eggs, fresh shell large	0.08	0.08
OZ-wt	0.5	Onion, red	0.08	0.04
OZ-wt	2	Cucumber	0.13	0.26
OZ-wt	0.75	Tomato, cherry	0.07	0.05
EA	2	Shrimp, 21/25 raw p&d	0.20	0.40
OZ-wt	2	Asparagus, fresh jumbo	0.11	0.23
EA	0.5	Lemons	0.19	0.09
EA	1	Plate cost (Q-cost)	0.10	0.10
			Total Cost	3.29
			Menu Price	12.95
			Gross Profit	9.66
			Food Cost %	25.43%

Menu Item: Cilantro Lime Tilapia				
Item Description: Served with roasted potatoes, sauteed spinach and grilled zucchini				
Recipe Unit	Quantity	Ingredient	Unit Cost	Extension
OZ-wt	8	Tilapia, 7- to 8-oz. portions	0.26	2.08
EA	3	Roasted potatoes	0.10	0.30
OZ-wt	2	Spinach, fresh	0.30	0.61
OZ-wt	2	Zucchini	0.07	0.13
OZ-wt	0.5	Tomatoes 4X5	0.07	0.04
OZ-fl	0.5	Oil, olive pomace	0.16	0.08
OZ-wt	0.25	Garlic, whole cloves peeled	0.24	0.06
OZ-wt	0.75	Cilantro lime butter	0.10	0.07
			0.00	0.00
EA	1	Plate cost (Q-cost)	0.10	0.10
			Total Cost	3.47
			Menu Price	13.95
			Gross Profit	10.48
			Food Cost %	24.88%