

Term	Definition
Additive free	Foodstuffs that are not added to food to improve it. This could be to enhance the flavour, colour, texture or appearance.
Airborne	An allergen that can be dispersed into the air (e.g. during cooking, grinding, or serving) and potentially cause a reaction in individuals through inhalation or skin contact, even if they don't eat the food. Note: Using fans can circulate & disperse an allergen even further.
Alcohol free	In Europe, an 'alcohol-free' drink is defined as one with an ABV of less than 0.5%. In the UK, however, an 'alcohol-free' drink must be 0.05% ABV or below. They aren't suitable if you're alcohol dependent or in recovery, or need or want to avoid alcohol for any other reason.
Buddhist diet	Often vegetarian or vegan, avoiding pungent ingredients like garlic and onions.
Clean eating	Unprocessed, simple ingredient diets (subjective and non-medical).
Coeliac	Coeliac disease is a serious medical condition that affects the autoimmune system of the small intestine. Even trace amounts of gluten can trigger symptoms and or cause damage to the gut, which in some cases can be irreversible. Coeliac disease is not an allergy or an intolerance, but should be treated in the same way as an allergy.
Dairy-free	Avoids all milk products from animals, including cheese, butter, and yoghurt.
Diabetic	People with diabetes struggle to process sugar. A diabetic/low sugar diet focuses on controlling blood sugar levels by limiting refined carbs and sugars.
Egg-free	Avoids eggs in any form (including as an ingredient in baked goods).
Fish-free	Avoids all fish and fish-derived ingredients (e.g. anchovy in sauces).
Flexitarian	Primarily vegetarian with occasional meat or fish.
FODMAP	(Fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides and polyols) A low FODMAP diet is designed for people with IBS & avoids certain fermentable foods.
Food allergy	An immune system reaction to certain foods. A food allergy affects the immune system, even in small amounts. It can trigger a range of symptoms, which can be severe or life-threatening.
Food intolerance	Food intolerance often affects only the digestive system and causes less serious symptoms. It can still make someone feel very uncomfortable and unwell enough to avoid attending an event.
Gluten-free (GF)	Avoids wheat, barley, rye, and oats (unless certified gluten-free). The term "Gluten Free" is a legally protected term and must meet the specific requirements: the food must contain less than 20 ppm of gluten, as confirmed by laboratory testing.
Halal	Meat prepared according to Islamic law; excludes pork and alcohol: https://halalhmc.org/resources/definition-of-halal/
Hindu diet	Many Hindus avoid beef and may be vegetarian. Dietary strictness varies.
Intermittent fasting	This is not about ingredients but the timing of meals and is relevant for long events or religious observances such as Ramadan.
Jain diet	Strict vegetarian diet, avoiding root vegetables and sometimes dairy.
Keto	Ketogenic Diet - a very low-carbohydrate, high-fat, moderate-protein diet. It is not the same as a low-carb or paleo diet, though they can overlap.
Kosher	Follows Jewish dietary laws; includes specific rules about meat, dairy, and permitted animals. https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/what-is-kosher

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Lactose intolerant	Cannot digest lactose, a sugar in milk. May tolerate small amounts or lactose-free dairy.
Low-carb/ carbohydrate	A diet that has less than 100g net carbs per day (the average is 225 - 300g net carbs per day).
Low cholesterol	A diet that has limited saturated fats and cholesterol-rich foods (e.g. fatty meat, full-fat dairy, eggs).
Low sodium / Low salt	Limits the amount of salt in food and drink. The NHS recommends no more than 6g per day (about one teaspoon), which is especially important for people with high blood pressure or heart conditions. Salt substitutes may be high in potassium and are not suitable for everyone. Furthermore, rock and sea salt are not healthier than table salt. Foods can be flavoured with herbs and spices. If labels show sodium instead of salt, multiply by 2.5 to estimate salt content. https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-types/salt-in-your-diet/
Milk-free	Means that the food or beverage item does not contain mammalian milk, including cows, goat and sheep milk. This is commonly also referred to as Dairy-Free, given that milk is the core ingredient of many dairy products, such as butter and cheese.
Nut-free	Avoids all nuts (specify if this includes peanuts, tree nuts, or both).
Paleo	Paleolithic diet - whole, unprocessed foods that could have been hunted, fished, or gathered. It excludes most modern processed foods, grains, dairy, and legumes.
Peanut-free	Avoids peanuts only (technically a legume, not a tree nut).
Pescatarian	Eats fish and seafood, but no meat or poultry.
Preservative free	Refers to edible products that do not contain any artificial or synthetic chemical substances added to extend their shelf life or prevent spoilage. (Note: According to ReAgent: All preservatives are additives, but not all additives are preservatives; some are used for flavouring or colouring https://www.reagent.co.uk/blog/the-chemistry-of-food-additives-and-preservatives/#:~:text=Food%20additives%20are%20substances%20that,life%20of%20certain%20food%20products
Plant-based	Focuses on foods primarily from plants; not always strictly vegan.
Rastafarian / Ital	Natural, plant-based diet with no additives; often vegan and free of salt and alcohol.
Raw food	A diet that focuses on uncooked, unprocessed, often plant-based foods.
Renal diet	For people who have kidney disease. It limits the intake of sodium, potassium, and phosphorus and needs specialist preparation.
Sesame-free	Avoids sesame seeds and oil, increasingly recognised as a serious allergen.
Shellfish-free	Avoids crustaceans and molluscs like prawns, crab, and mussels.
Soy-free	Avoids all forms of soy, including soy sauce, tofu, and soy lecithin.
Texture-modified diet	For attendees who may have swallowing difficulties. They may require pureed, minced, or soft foods.
Tree nut-free	Avoids all tree nuts like almonds, walnuts, and cashews.
Vegan	Avoids all animal products, including meat, dairy, eggs, honey, and gelatine. Vegan food has not intentionally added animal or animal by-product ingredients, however where the manufacturer has declared that ingredients may contain traces of animal-derived products, including milk, egg, fish, etc., allergen information will indicate that the dish may contain the relevant allergen. These foods may not be suitable for people with

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	allergies to milk, eggs, fish, etc., therefore, persons with allergies to such products should not choose a vegan dish, thinking that they will be free of these allergens. It is always good practice to ask whether someone chooses a vegan dish for a lifestyle choice or due to an allergy.
Vegetarian	Does not eat meat, poultry, or fish. They may consume eggs and milk products. Vegetarian foods may also contain traces of animal products such as fish, shellfish, molluscs, making them unsuitable for people with allergies to these foods, so again, as with vegan, always ensure they have no specific allergies.

Further Resources:

1. PCO Checklist
2. Venue / Caterer Checklist
3. Icons