

Father's Day in Restaurants

This past weekend we celebrated Mother's Day, which gives you no time at all to start planning for the next big parent-themed holiday— Father's Day.

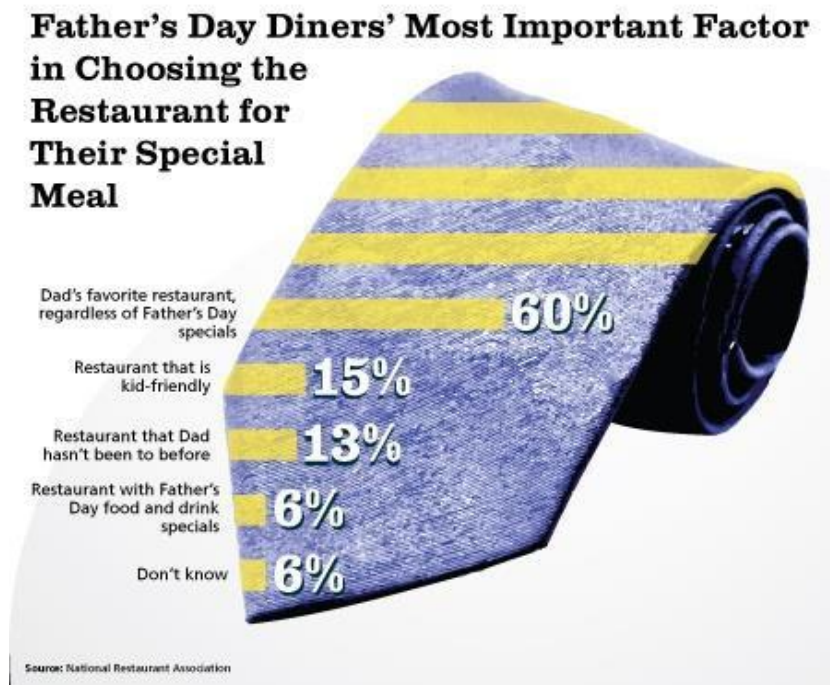
Father's Day will bring 50+ millions Americans into restaurants, with 10 percent of guests planning on eating in more than one restaurant on June 17.

It's never too early to start preparing your promotion strategy, so here are some examples of how other restaurants will be raising a glass to dads everywhere.

Compared to Mother's Day, Father's Day can be an enigma for restaurateurs. Most agree that Father's Day *can* be good for business, but it's tough to figure out exactly *how* to bring families in on this day.

Father's Day is the 3rd most popular day for dining out, behind Valentine's Day and Mother's Day; 25 percent of the nation's 68 million dads say going out to dinner is their ideal Father's Day gift.

Instead of throwing out random promotions as bait and hoping you can reel in some hungry fathers and their families, here are some stats that will help you come up with a data-informed plan that's best suited for your establishment.



The Bad News: According to the National Restaurant Associations, the vast majority of Father's Day diners aren't phased by specials; if you're looking to run the best promotion in the country, 30 million diners won't bat an eye at your efforts.

The Good News: This still leaves 20 million Americans who are receptive to specials on Father's Day, including the 6 percent of diners who list specials as their top priority in choosing a holiday restaurant. And who knows, the right promotion could make your restaurant stand out to the additional 13 percent of diners who want to go somewhere they've never been before.

Wondering what time of day you should run your promotion? Here's what The National Restaurant Association says about Father's Day diners' plans:

- 67% of diners plan to go out for an **evening meal**.
- 24% plan to go out for **lunch**.
- 10% plan for a family **brunch**.
- 11% plan to head out for **breakfast**.

Here you can see the stark difference between Father's Day and Mother's Day dining behavior. On Mother's Day, 49% go out to dinner and 24 percent opt for brunch.

Below are some great examples of how restaurants can attract guests and show customer appreciation on Father's Day. From the obvious to the ingenious, here are a few of my favorites.

1) Dads Eat Free

Let's start with the rudimentary Father's Day deal that I include on this list *because* it works: Dads eat free.

Beff O' Brady's, known for their flavorful wings and craft beer selection, promoted a free 2016 Father's Day meal special on their social media pages.



While the promotion isn't anything we haven't seen before, at the very least it will attract families to your restaurant who are on the fence about a Father's Day destination rather than to a competitor who isn't offering a special. At best, it shows your appreciation and support for your community's father figures — and brings the rest of their paying family into your restaurant.

2) Don't Forget Grandpa

So many restaurants focus *exclusively* on the nuclear family instead of the extended one. Big mistake.

Marketing to *all* fathers on Father's Day this year, including grandfathers, captures an extra generation and increases your party and ticket size. Before, you seated two parents and maybe two kids. By targeting grandfathers, your restaurant may instead seat two grandparents, four parents, and four children, growing the party size from four to ten.

That's more apps, more drinks, and more money for extending your promotion to cover one additional Dad.



As pictured above, it's clear that Buffalo Chophouse hasn't forgotten about grandfathers. Will you?

3) Free Dessert for Dad

Since desserts tend to follow higher-priced drinks, apps, and dishes, promoting a free dessert is an effective way to bring in fathers and families that want a sweet way to end their day.

Even TCBY – a frozen yogurt establishment that *exclusively* sells desserts – offered up free yogurt to dads on Father's Day.

4) Cheers to Free Beer

What better way to reflect on the joys and pains of fatherhood than with a nice cold one? Offer up your paternal patrons a free glass of their favorite beer for coming by your restaurant this year (so long as mom is D.D.).

Bareburger ran a beer-oriented promotion and their announcement over social media garnered over 2,000 likes from thirsty dads.

5) Whiskey for a Grown Man

Take a cue from Childish Gambini's "Bonfire," and offer some whiskey for a grown man.

If your restaurant is more elegant or doesn't have an extensive draft line, follow suit with Searsucker in San Diego, where dads got a shot of scotch on the house for Father's Day 2017.

6) Host a Special Concert or an Event

Most dads wouldn't trade their families for anything, but that doesn't mean they don't miss the good ol' days.

In 2016, Beat Brasserie in Cambridge, Massachusetts held the "Grateful Dad Bluegrass Brunch," a meal inspired by the band, The Grateful Dead. A cover band played some of the group's legendary songs, while Beat Brasserie created a special Father's Day menu to accompany the vibe.

beat brasserie
13 BRATTLE STREET, HARVARD SQUARE, CAMBRIDGE

GRATEFUL
DAD
BLUEGRASS BRUNCH

Beat's Grateful Dad Bluegrass Brunch features great food and Musician Frank Drake and his band playing sophisticated, fun, upbeat music complete with Grateful Dead cover songs and a mash up of jazz, western swing, roots country, and bluegrass

FATHER'S DAY SUN JUNE 19
BRUNCH 10AM-3:30PM OPEN ALL DAY 10AM-12AM

For More Info & Dining Reservations
WWW.BEATBRASSERIE.COM
617-499-0001

They also had plenty of specials for the kids — a win/win for the 15 percent of diners looking for a kid-friendly restaurant on Father's Day.

7) Free Things *Always* Work



BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse offered a free Father's Day gift to dads who made it in time for one of the restaurant's limited-edition pint glasses.

Dads love beer. Dads love free things. Need I say more?

If it's not an option to just give a free trinket away, make it *kind of* free by gifting with the purchase of a meal, appetizer, or dessert.

Michael Jordan's Steak House gave away 23 steak knives to the first 23 people who ordered a Delmonico steak on Father's Day. This tactic still offers up something for free, but only to those who order an expensive steak. With limited quantities of steak, people are incentivized to act quicker and get to the restaurant sooner.

8) Run a Contest

If you're not running a contest on Father's Day, you're missing the opportunity to build excitement for Father's Day at your restaurant weeks in advance; it's also a way to expand your social media footprint.

The Melting Pot called on their Facebook fans to share how they're celebrating their fathers this year for the chance to win a \$100 gift card. In 2017, the contest generated nearly 1,500 comments, which made the content more likely to appear in Facebook users' news feeds.

9) Simplify the Shopping Experience

Does the phrase, "He's impossible to shop for," apply to your father?

Yup, mine too.

FATHER'S DAY
Buy one full rack of our St. Louis pork ribs, and get the second half price
\$44.49 GIFT PACKAGE FOR DAD
A Nat Hayden's t-shirt, a bottle of our famous Smoke 'N Thunder sauce, and a gift certificate for \$30
If you're planning a party for Father's Day, let us cater for you!

Nat Hayden's Barbecue in Connecticut alleviated this headache by crafting a custom gift set for dads. For \$45, dads got:

- A \$30 gift card to the restaurants (an *excellent* way to keep guests coming back)
- A restaurant T-shirt
- A bottle of Nat Hayden's famous cooking sauce

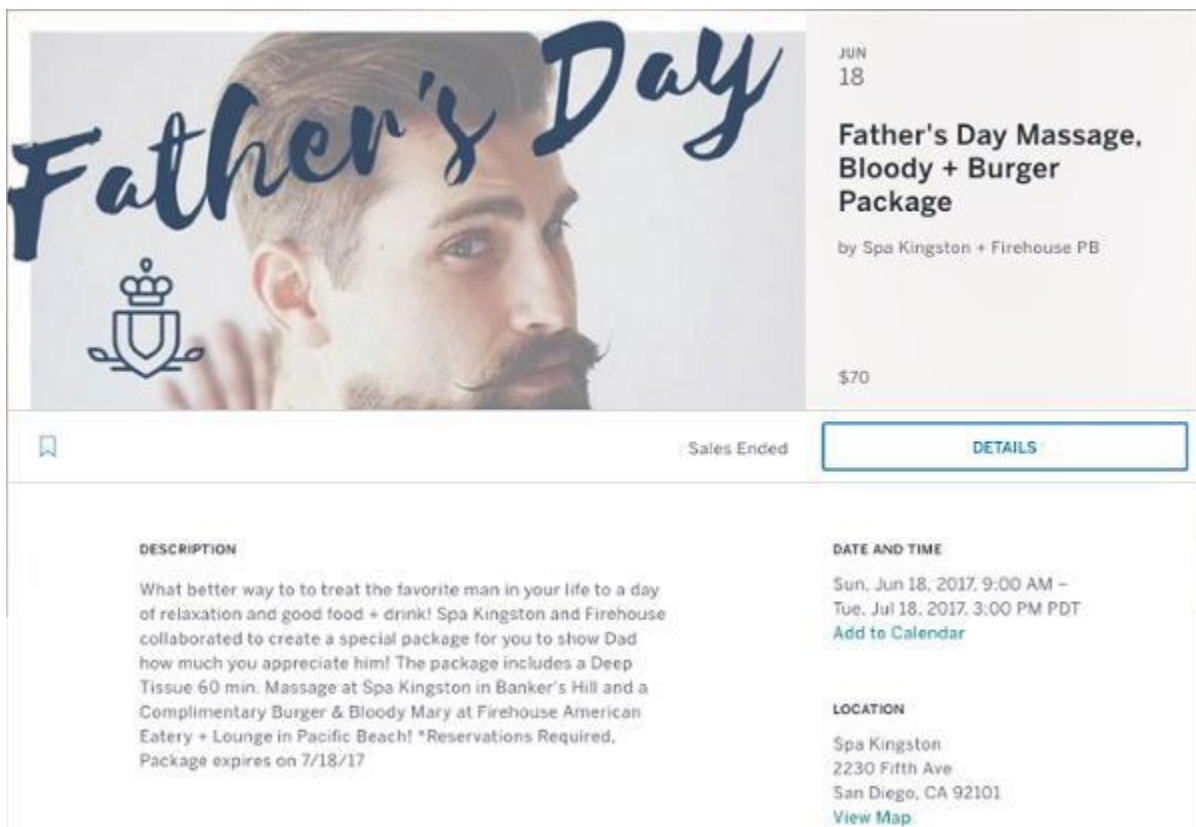
If you ask me, these are gifts that most fathers wouldn't complain about. Plus, they act as great branding tools for your business *and* fill tables for Father's Day.

And as a quick aside, this restaurant *kills it* with their Father's Day Promotions. Half-price ribs? An offer for catering? Sign me up.

10) Make the Day Experiential

Enhance the dining experience.

To do more for your guests than just feed them, consider teaming up with a local business for a bundle deal. Firehouse Pacific Beach partnered with Spa Kingston to offer a Father's Day package including a massage, burger, and Bloody Mary.



Father's Day

JUN 18

Father's Day Massage, Bloody + Burger Package

by Spa Kingston + Firehouse PB

\$70

Sales Ended

[DETAILS](#)

DESCRIPTION

What better way to treat the favorite man in your life to a day of relaxation and good food + drink! Spa Kingston and Firehouse collaborated to create a special package for you to show Dad how much you appreciate him! The package includes a Deep Tissue 60 min. Massage at Spa Kingston in Banker's Hill and a Complimentary Burger & Bloody Mary at Firehouse American Eatery + Lounge in Pacific Beach! *Reservations Required. Package expires on 7/18/17

DATE AND TIME

Sun, Jun 18, 2017, 9:00 AM - Tue, Jul 18, 2017, 3:00 PM PDT

[Add to Calendar](#)

LOCATION

Spa Kingston
2230 Fifth Ave
San Diego, CA 92101

[View Map](#)

At your restaurant, consider collaborating with a sports stadium, a movie theater, an interactive activity company like an escape room, or another well-known activity in your community.

11) Beef up the Menu

Free food can only move the needle so much, so make sure your kitchen is stocked with the *right* food for Father's Day.

For a limited time during Father's Day week, Outback Steakhouse offered a massive 35 oz Tomahawk Bone-In Ribeye. In your restaurant, consider adding a special dish for Father's Day that is equal parts exciting and challenging for dads to eat.

12) "Relish" in the Dad Jokes

Something we all hate to admit that we love about our dads is their sense of humor...or lack thereof.

Ergo, no matter where you're dining on Father's Day, it wouldn't be the same without dad jokes!



The Cheesecake Factory uploaded a “Delicious Dad Jokes” album on their Facebook page to celebrate Father's Day. These jokes and the images accompanying them are simple – text overlaid on pictures of their restaurant's food – and the album received over 200 combined reactions and shares.

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