

Pop-Up Restaurant Template

A. Core Concept & Brand Narrative

- **Pop-Up Name:** [e.g., "The Midnight Noodle Co." or "Chef [Name]'s Secret Supper"]
- **Concept & Culinary Theme:**
 - *(e.g., 90s Nostalgia Dinner Party, 10-Course Vegan Tasting, Underground Izakaya)*
- **Mission & "Why Pop-Up":**
 - (e.g., "To test a future brick-and-mortar concept," "To celebrate a seasonal ingredient," "To create an exclusive, one-of-a-kind dining experience.")
- **Target Audience:**
 - (e.g., Food Adventurers, Local Influencers, Fine Dining Enthusiasts, Followers of the Chef)
- **Price Point & Model:**
 - (e.g., \$\$\$ - Prix Fixe Ticketed, \$\$ - A la Cart Pop-Up, \$\$\$\$ - Charity Gala)
- **Unique Selling Proposition (USP):**
 - *(The core of the pop-up. e.g., "A 5-course dinner served in a secret rooftop garden," "The first local showcase of a specific regional cuisine," "An immersive theatrical dining experience.")*

B. Venue Strategy & Negotiation

1. Venue Selection Criteria

Venue Type	Pros	Cons	Key Considerations
Existing Restaurant (Dark Kitchen/Night)	Full kitchen, permits, seating	Limited to off-hours, may have rules	Negotiate a flat fee or percentage of sales.
Unconventional Space (Gallery, Loft, Studio)	Unique ambiance, high "wow" factor	May lack infrastructure (kitchen, HVAC)	Check zoning and health department rules for temporary events.

Venue Type	Pros	Cons	Key Considerations
Brewery/Distillery/Winery	Built-in audience, liquor license	May have food truck partnerships already	Propose a collaborative menu pairing.
Outdoor/Public Space (Park, Rooftop)	Scenic, high demand	Weather-dependent, complex permits	Always have a solid weather contingency plan.

- **Non-Negotiable Checklist:**

- Health Department Compliance for temporary food service
- Adequate Power (for cooking equipment)
- Ventilation (or ability to bring it in)
- Access to Water & Gray Water Disposal
- Adequate Restrooms for guests
- Liability Insurance requirements

2. Venue Negotiation Guide

- **Offer Value:** Propose a win-win (e.g., "We'll handle all marketing and bring our followers to your space on a slow night.").
- **Compensation Models:**
 - **Flat Fee:** You pay the venue \$[Amount] for the night. You keep all revenue.
 - **Percentage of Sales:** You give the venue [e.g., 15-30%] of gross food & beverage sales.
 - **Hybrid Model:** Lower flat fee (\$[Amount]) + smaller percentage ([e.g., 10%]).
- **Key Contract Clauses:**
 - **Term:** Clearly define dates/times for load-in, service, and breakdown.
 - **Liability & Insurance:** Specify who holds what insurance. You will likely need a one-day event policy.
 - **Cancellation Policy:** Terms for both parties.
 - **Profit Split:** Clearly state how and when the venue gets paid.

C. Timeline for a Temporary Operation

(Example for a 4-week pop-up series)

- **T-12 Weeks: Concept & Planning**
 - Finalize concept, menu, and budget.
 - Begin scouting and negotiating with venues.
- **T-8 Weeks: Venue & Legal**
 - Sign venue contract.
 - Secure one-day event insurance.
 - Apply for any necessary temporary food permits.
- **T-6 Weeks: Marketing & Pre-Sales**
 - Launch social media accounts and website/landing page.
 - Announce dates and release ticket/pre-sale link.
 - Begin influencer/PR outreach.
- **T-2 Weeks: Operations Finalization**
 - Finalize staff (hire if necessary).
 - Place final orders with food suppliers.
 - Confirm equipment rental order.
- **T-1 Week: The Final Push**
 - Final menu run-through and staff briefing.
 - Post daily "sneak peek" content on social media.
 - Send reminder email to ticket holders.
- **Pop-Up Week: Execution**
 - Load-in and setup.
 - **Execute Service.**
 - Breakdown and load-out.
- **T+1 Week: Post-Mortem & Follow-Up**
 - Send thank-you emails to guests and staff.

- Analyze financial and customer feedback.
- Plan next steps (new series? brick-and-mortar?).

D. Equipment Sourcing: Rent vs. Buy Analysis

Equipment	Rent (Good for...)	Buy (Good for...)	Decision Matrix
Major Cooking (Range, Oven)	One-off events; no storage	Long pop-up series; future use	Rent if: Single event. Buy if: 10+ events planned.
Refrigeration (Low-Boy, Freezer)	Any event without on-site units	A long-term pop-up project	Almost always Rent for convenience.
Smallwares (Pans, Utensils)	Filling gaps in your kit	Building a permanent kit	Buy basics, rent specialty items.
Service Items (Plates, Glassware)	Themed events; no dishwasher	Consistent branding; many events	Rent for elegance and ease. Buy compostable for casual.
POS System	Any event	A long series or permanent move	Rent/Use Mobile POS (Square, Toast Go).

- **Total Rental Cost Estimate:** \$[Amount] per event.
- **Total Purchase Cost Estimate:** \$[Amount] (one-time).

E. Social Media & Marketing Strategy

1. Phased Marketing Rollout

- **Phase 1: The Tease (T-6 Weeks)**
 - **Action:** Create Instagram/TikTok account. Post cryptic, high-quality visuals (ingredients, mood boards, chef prepping) without revealing the full concept.
 - **Goal:** Build curiosity and initial followers.

- **Phase 2: The Reveal (T-4 Weeks)**
 - **Action:** Announce the pop-up name, dates, and venue. Launch a simple landing page for an email list.
 - **Goal:** Drive email sign-ups and concrete interest.
 - **Phase 3: The Launch (T-2 Weeks)**
 - **Action:** Release the menu and open ticket sales/registrations. Collaborate with local food influencers for "takeovers" or giveaways.
 - **Goal:** Sell out the event.
 - **Phase 4: The Hype (T-1 Week)**
 - **Action:** Post "behind-the-scenes" stories of prep, introduce the team, share countdowns.
 - **Goal:** Maintain excitement and minimize no-shows.
 - **Phase 5: The Experience (Event Week)**
 - **Action:** Encourage guests to share their experience with a dedicated hashtag (e.g., #MidnightNoodleCo). Reshare user-generated content.
 - **Goal:** Create social proof and FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) for the next event.
-

F. Path to Permanence Planning

1. Success Metrics for a Permanent Move

- **Financial Viability:**
 - Consistent sell-out of [e.g., 80%] of seats across [e.g., 10+] events.
 - Average customer spend of >\${Amount}.
 - Positive net profit after all costs.
- **Customer Demand:**
 - Waitlist consistently [e.g., 2x] the number of available seats.
 - Strong, positive reviews on social media and Google.
 - Growing, engaged email list (>[e.g., 1,000] subscribers).
- **Operational Execution:**
 - Smooth service with minimal operational hiccups.

- Proven, reliable team in place.
- Streamlined supply chain and vendor relationships.

2. Steps to Brick-and-Mortar

- **Validate Concept:** Use pop-up revenue and customer data to secure investors or loans.
 - **Develop Business Plan:** Create a full plan based on pop-up learnings (use the Full-Service Restaurant Template).
 - **Secure Funding:** Use pop-up success stories (media clips, financials) in your pitch.
 - **Location Scouting:** Leverage the community you built to find the perfect permanent home.
-

G. Critical Path to Pop-Up Launch

- **Phase 1: The Big Idea** (Complete this template)
- **Phase 2: Venue & Legal**
 - Secure Venue & Sign Contract
 - Obtain Temporary Food Permit & Event Insurance
- **Phase 3: Financials & Marketing**
 - Create Detailed Budget & Set Ticket Prices
 - Build Social Media Presence & Launch Marketing Phases
 - Open Ticket Sales/Reservations
- **Phase 4: Operations & Sourcing**
 - Finalize Menu & Source Suppliers
 - Hire & Brief Staff (Chefs, Servers)
 - Place Equipment Rental Order
- **Phase 5: Execution**
 - Conduct Soft Opening for Friends/Media
 - Execute the Pop-Up Event(s)
 - Gather Feedback & Analyze Performance