



# How to set up an Experience on OpenTable



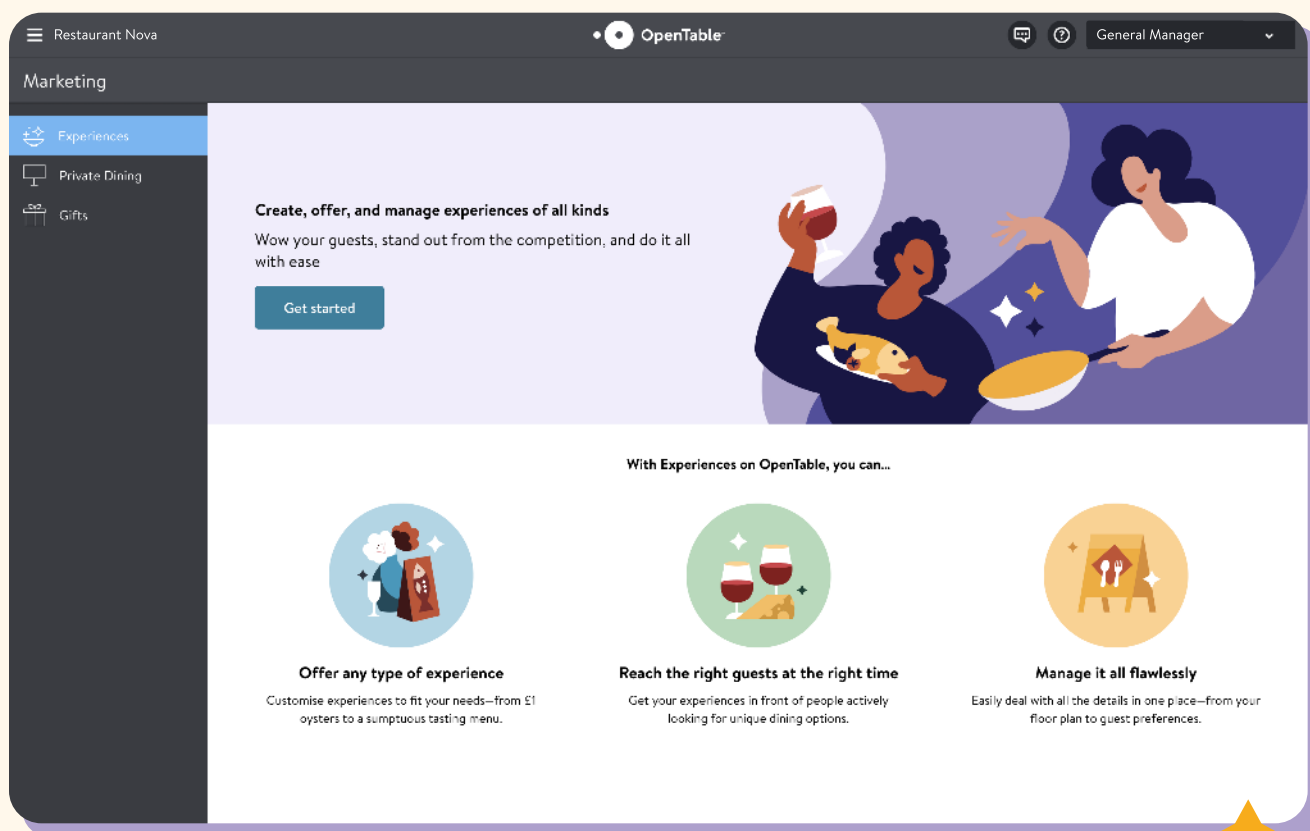
**OpenTable Experiences are bookable events you can easily customise to showcase your restaurant's offerings. They help you promote everything from laid-back happy hours to elaborate tasting menus; you can offer them as prepaid events to generate revenue upfront and streamline service or have guests pay at the restaurant—it's totally up to you.**

**Best of all, you can set up an Experience in five super simple steps. See how to get started in no time flat.**

# Let's start with the basic nuts and bolts of setting up any experience:

## 1. Start here

When it's time to set up the Experience, visit the “Marketing” section in OpenTable web. Choose “Get started” or “Create an experience” to find a drop-down menu that lists possible types of experiences: happy hour, special menu, or complimentary item. Pick the option that most closely matches the Experience you're planning.



## 2. Name the Experience

You'll be prompted to give the newly created Experience a title. This will be the first thing people see, so make it attention-grabbing. Choose something short but specific. Instead of "special menu," say what makes it special, such as "crab boil" or "Italian wine pairing dinner." Perhaps you're offering a "happy hour," but if it's a "prosecco happy hour" or a "\$1 oyster happy hour," say so.

The screenshot shows a modal window titled 'Experiences' with a progress bar at the top indicating four steps: 1. Details (active), 2. Add photos, 3. Schedule, and 4. Review. The main heading is 'Let guests know the key details'. Below this, there is a 'Select type' section with a dropdown menu currently set to 'Special menu' and a link that says 'What Experience type should I choose?'. The next section is 'Create title', featuring a text input field with the placeholder 'Add your experience title'. At the bottom, a light blue box contains a lightbulb icon and three bullet points: 'Personality is a plus, this is your chance to attract guests', 'Pro tip: Use 5 words max and no need to include restaurant name', and 'Special offers on alcoholic beverages may be restricted by state law'.

## 3. Choose when guests pay and set the price


One of the biggest benefits of Experiences is the ability to charge guests at the time of booking, which can help with cash flow and reduce no-shows. (You'll need to [activate your Stripe account](#) to accept pre-payments.) You can opt to include a gratuity in the price, ensuring servers' payment for the night and freeing guests from dealing with that detail later. Upfront payment may not be right for every Experience though, so you can also choose to have guests pay at the restaurant or even offer a free Experience—such as live music. Simply indicate if you require prepayment at booking, payment due at the restaurant, or no additional cost. If your Experience has a specific price, add it. If it's not prepaid, you'll need to include all taxes, fees, and service charges.

The screenshot shows a modal window titled 'Set price per guest' with the instruction 'Include VAT, all fees, and service charges.' Below this, there is a text input field containing '0.00' and a dropdown menu set to 'Require prepayment at booking'. A checkbox labeled 'Include optional tip' is currently unchecked, with a note below it stating 'By selecting this box, guests will see a default tip of 20% and will have the option to change it.' At the bottom, a light blue box contains a wallet icon and a message: 'OpenTable is waiving the service fee on prepaid Experiences for now. Cover fees and Stripe fees for prepaid Experiences will apply.' This is followed by two bullet points: 'Restaurants collect money faster and reduce no-shows by requiring prepayment at booking.' and 'Guests can't make any changes after pre-paying, but you can modify things on your end if needed.'

## 4. Write a description

You'll need to spell out the Experience for guests. This is your chance to sell the event—take advantage of it. Keeping it short and to the point is often best. Don't forget to add the details guests want to know, such as menu or entertainment information. If you want to, you can also add tags to the Experience, such as “Tasting menu” or “Good for couples” that will help guests discover the Experience when they search. Finally, adding photos to show off what you're offering is another effective way to entice guests.

**Add additional details (optional)**  
Select tags and an occasion to help users discover the experience

 **Select tags**  
Tags selected: 0 of 5

Afternoon tea

Beer dinner

Brunch menu

Chef's table

Good for couples

Live music

Omakase

Seasonal

Tasting menu

Post theatre menu


Pre theatre menu

Experience Tag 1

Experience Tag 1

Experience Tag 1

Experience Tag 1

 **Select occasion**  

No occasion selected ▼

## 5. Schedule the Experience

Pick the day or days your Experience will be offered. All experiences are assigned to shifts, so if you want to host an Experience on a day or time you're typically closed, you'll need to change your shift settings first. After your days are selected, you'll specify during which shifts the experience will be offered. (You can also exclude days from an experience by blocking off days when it won't be available.)


**Plan your experience**  
Set booking dates  
Specify when your experience is available at the restaurant

12 February 2022 ▼

 to 

16 February 2022 ▼

**Select a shift**  
Specify the times your experience is available, [view](#) or [add shifts](#) in Availability Planning

 **Weekly shifts**  

☐ Lunch (Sun, Mon, Tue, Fri, Sat) 11:00 - 14:15

☒ Dinner (Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, Fri, Sat) 17:30 - 22:00

**Now you're ready to click “publish” and make your Experience live.**



## Here are some optional ways to use Experiences and customise them to your needs:



### Use Experiences to promote what you're already doing

You can create Experiences that guests don't need to select during the booking flow to highlight special events or regular happenings. These Experiences function more as announcements that raise awareness of something that will be going on at the restaurant during the guest's visit, such as a recurring happy hour or a promotion, such as \$1 oysters or half-price drafts. Guests will see this information with their reservation details under "What you need to know before you go."

### Make the Experience mandatory

This is completely optional, but if you don't want to offer your a la carte menu while an Experience is happening, you can require all guests to opt for the Experience at specific times. Head to the Experience section on the Availability Planning tab in the admin bar and click "Disable regular reservations" for the shift and time you desire.



### Fine-tune availability

By default, an Experience will be offered for all tables across the entire shift it's been scheduled for. For many restaurants, nothing further needs to be done. But if you want the flexibility to use a special floor plan, offer the Experience at select tables only, or make the Experience available during different hours than usual, you can. Once you've created and published your Experience, head to Shift Settings and Availability Planning to adjust the finer details. Make sure to click "save and publish" again to make sure these updates are made.

**Setting up an Experience will be intuitive once you get going.**

**However, if snags come up along the way, we've got your back.**

**Check out the detailed Experiences information on OpenTable Restaurant Support, or contact our support team.**

