



Get More Quiet Days Busy

Simple ways for hospitality businesses in Norfolk and Suffolk to increase trade in quieter periods without relying on heavy discounting.

Many cafés, pubs and restaurants are busy at weekends, during school holidays and in peak visitor periods, but quieter midweek, in the daytime and outside the main season. This guide gives practical ways to attract more customers, make better use of quieter hours and improve profit across the week.

Why Quiet Periods Matter

Quiet periods still come with the same overheads. Rent, rates, energy, insurance and staffing costs do not fall just because fewer customers come through the door. In hospitality, even a modest increase in off-peak trade can improve profit because you are making better use of the space, stock and team you already have.

Four Ways to Fill Quiet Periods

1. Build offers around local routines

Think about when people are most likely to visit. In market towns, lunchtime offers may appeal to local workers and small business owners. In coastal areas, early evening offers may help capture day visitors before they travel home. In villages, a regular weekly food night can become part of local routine.

2. Focus on local customers, not just visitors

Visitors matter, but local customers often keep trade steady outside the main season. Create simple reasons for residents to visit more often, such as coffee clubs, pensioner lunches, after-school offers or loyalty rewards.

3. Keep quiet time offers simple

The best offers are easy to explain and easy to run. A set lunch, coffee-and-cake morning, steak night, locals' supper club or work-from-here offer can all work well if they are consistent and practical for the team to deliver.

4. Link offers to what is happening nearby

Use local footfall to your advantage. Markets, theatre performances, community events, business networking sessions, walking routes and visitor attractions can all help shape an offer that feels timely and relevant.

Ideas You Can Use

- Midweek set lunches for local workers.
- Coffee mornings for parents, older residents or community groups.
- Early evening small-plates offers in market towns.
- Supper clubs built around local produce or seasonal themes.



- Daytime work-from-here offers with coffee, Wi-Fi and charging points.
- Tie-ins with local events, theatre nights, festivals or market days.
- Off-peak breakfast deals for tradespeople and shift workers.
- Sunday evening offers for weekend visitors before they head home.

Protect Your Profit Margins

Filling quiet periods should not mean giving away profit. Heavy discounting can damage margins and train customers to wait for deals. Focus instead on offers that feel good value while still making commercial sense.

- Use bundles, such as a main and a drink, rather than deep discounts.
- Build set menus around dishes with strong margins.
- Encourage add-ons such as desserts, hot drinks or another round.
- Limit offers to quieter periods where they fill spare capacity.
- Make sure stock, portions and staffing all support the offer.

Promote Your Quiet Day Offers

A good offer will only work if people know about it. For hospitality businesses in Norfolk and Suffolk, promotion needs to happen both online and in person.

- Use clear signs outside so people can spot the offer quickly.
- Post regularly on social media using real images of the venue, food and drink.
- Add the offer to your website, booking page or pinned post.
- Share it through local Facebook groups, community pages or town newsletters where appropriate.
- Ask staff to mention it to customers before they leave.
- Work with nearby shops, attractions, offices or accommodation providers to spread the word.

Actions You Can Take This Week

- Identify one quiet time slot with spare capacity.
- Choose one simple offer that fits your customers and team.
- Price it to add value without harming margin.
- Promote it in the venue, online and through local word of mouth.
- Run it consistently for at least three to four weeks.
- Track covers, average spend and your strongest trading days.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Copying another venue's offer without checking whether it fits your customers.
- Changing the offer too quickly before people have noticed it.



- Discounting too heavily and losing money on each sale.
- Making the offer too complicated for staff to explain or deliver.
- Focusing only on visitors and ignoring local repeat trade.
- Failing to measure whether the offer brings in extra spend.

Take Action

Choose one quiet period, create one offer that suits your customers and location, and test it properly. Small, well-targeted changes can build steadier trade and ease the pressure of quieter days.