

20 TREND INSIGHT 17 REPORT



Dining Out

5 Trends to Translate to the Grocery Aisle

Often times the inspiration for finished products can come straight from the kitchen. With 24% of consumers wanting to dine out more in 2017, restaurants have the attention of diners. Quite often, hit trends for the CPG space start out as dining innovations. Watching the success of current restaurant trends can inspire new products and flavors for grocery store shelves. We've dived into dining out. Let's take a look at five trends in dining that might help get you to YOUR "what's next."

Taste the Magic

From the Unicorn Frappuccino to mermaid toast to galaxy donuts, restaurants are making (and diners are flocking to) foods laced with fantasy. The concept of magical food is going well beyond Lucky Charms, and is something easily translated to the grocery aisle.

One of the trends highlighted at this year's National Restaurant Association annual show was experiential desserts. While rainbow or unicorn foods were not mentioned specifically, this is a niche where brightly hued treats find their sweet spot. The experience of eating a brightly colored treat whilst enjoying varying layers of flavor offers a fun, memorable moment.

Spotted

- We spotted some Instagram-worthy lattes in Bon Appétit's July issue including NYC's The Good Sort lattes featuring beet, turmeric, and black sesame and the Unicorn Latte from The End Brooklyn.
- Similarly, Las Vegas's Sambalatte has created a signature "Rainbow Latte" that can "make your day bright and ramp up your mood to new heights".
- Another restaurant to feature rainbow unicorn inspired fare? Dek Sen in Queens that features a rainbow stacked crepe cake with 20 rainbow layers.

Healthy Gets Colorful

Incredibly, a lot of these "magical" hues are backed with health. Pearl Butter sells adaptogenic, pastel-colored coconut butters that claim to boost brain function, support digestion, or reduce stress. Alison Wu & So Beautifully Real both feature healthy smoothies, donuts, and cheesecakes in imaginative colors. Health's July/August issue featured a spotlight on purple-colored foods, claiming they are high in antioxidants called anthocyanins which linked to a decrease in heart disease and higher brain function. Turmeric is another color-enhancing spice that grew 154% in the last four years (according to Restauranthospitality.com) and is said to be an anti-inflammatory.



<https://news.starbucks.com/news/starbucks-unicorn-frappuccino>

Savory Where You Least Expect It

Savory twists are popping up in unexpected places, keeping diners on their toes — and keeping restaurants constantly innovating. One of the 2017 Top 20 Food Trends identified by the NRA is savory desserts, so this opportunity is primed and ready for innovation.

Numerous restaurants have been revolutionizing traditionally sweet dishes with some savory flair. Pancakes, a usually sweet breakfast item, have been trending in the savory category for a bit longer, with flavors like cheese, smoke, and vegetable. Pancakes aren't the only item getting a savory makeover. Check out these other savory-spun items.

Spotted

- Chef Jordan Khan at the Destroyer in LA introduced savory breakfast and brunch bowls packed with herbs, grains, and vegetables where sweet oatmeal or smoothie offerings tend to reign.
- San Francisco based ice creamery Humphrey Slocombe has ice cream flavors featuring bacon, mushrooms, or prosciutto, and one of their summer flavors "Elotes" is comprised of corn ice cream with sour cream, ancho paste, and lime.
- Donut forget the pastries: New York's Doughnut Plant is mixing it up with savory-filled yeast donuts, in flavors like Avocado Toast and Samosa. And Canada's Tim Hortons offered up poutine-flavored donuts to celebrate the country's 150th birthday in July.

Surprising savory twists is not totally new to the CPG market, and we've seen some products launch in the space, like Fage's savory yogurt crossovers or Pierre's Ice Cream Company's Holé Molé Ice Cream (cinnamon ice cream with chili chocolate chips and a mole fudge swirl). Incorporating savory flavors to unlikely products adds an element of surprise for consumers, and just might appeal to their craving for savory-sweet flavors.



Korean Kraze

About 38% of diners want to see more authentic international restaurants on the scene in 2017. They are waiting and ready for unique and, most importantly, authentic international flavors. One area of growth is the surge in Korean-inspired menu items and flavors. Bon Appétit's 2016 Dish of the Year was Baroo's Kimchi Fried Rice. With the popularity of fermented food and global spices on the rise, Korea's fermented kimchi and spicy sauce gochujang are popping up in restaurants across the US.

Spotted

- Rook in Indianapolis offers a gourmet hot dog featuring Korean flavors: the hot dog is braised with Sapporo and topped with kewpie mayo, mustard, bonito flakes and pickled mustard seeds.
- Culinary innovation served in a bowl has become a mainstay for some restaurants, and now we're spotting a rise in bibimbap dishes with a twist. For example, at LA's Baroo we see a "bimbim salad" with oats, quinoa, fennel, asparagus dressed in gochujang Marzano dressing and passion fruit powder.

It's not just restaurants that are having success with Korean inspired dishes. We've spotted some products on the shelves utilizing Korean flavors like kimchi flavored tortilla chips and frozen kimchi veggie

burgers, and lots of products featuring Korean barbeque from beef jerky to potato chips. The key to introducing a new foreign flavor profile to consumers, according to Mintel, is using the basic ingredients to describe the flavor. These familiarizing ingredients resonate with consumers and may coax them to try the product. For example, Lorissa's Korean Barbeque Steak Strips are described as the "perfect blend of caramelized brown sugar, soy sauce, earthy white onion and hints of garlic."



Kids' Meals, Health-ified

Chicken fingers aren't the only thing on the kids' menu anymore. One of the NRA's Top 20 Food Trends for 2017 is healthful kids' meals. According to Mintel, 80% of moms and 76% of dads want restaurants to offer healthy choices for their kids on the menu. And with 73% of parents saying that dining out is less stressful than cooking at home, combining convenience with healthy kids' menu choices is a massive opportunity on which the restaurant sector is capitalizing.

The National Restaurant Association's Kids LiveWell Program is a collaboration with over 40,000 restaurants dedicated to offering healthy menu options for kids. The LiveWell program has different health-focused kid menu requirements for a restaurant, like offering an entrée under 600 calories with two or more servings of fruits or veggies, and reducing sugar, sodium, and fats.

More and more restaurants are joining the movement and providing fresh, fun menu items for kids to promote healthier options. These items can teach kids what to look for when trying to eat healthy (whole grains, vegetables, lean meat) and show kids that healthy food doesn't necessarily have to be bland or taste bad. The Hard Rock Café offers a kids cavatappi pasta with a side of broccoli and apple juice for under 600 calories, and UNO Pizzeria & Grill has baked chicken nuggets on their kids menu which meets 40% of a child's daily need of iron.

With restaurants featuring healthy kids' menu items, there are ripe opportunities for CPG products to meet the convenience and health expectations parents have for the items they buy their children. Dr. Praeger's launched a nut-free grape and sunflower seed butter sandwich that is convenient for school lunches and has 17g of whole grains per serving. Plum Organics launched beef bites made with USDA organic beef, sweet potato and quinoa and offers 12g of serving of protein and is a fully cooked microwavable snack or entrée. Both products combine health for kids and convenience for parents.



Flexitarian Flourishing

A less restrictive and more accessible way for consumers to eat less meat and eat more veggies, the flexitarian lifestyle is more popular than ever. And restaurants have taken note. According to MMI data, vegetarian menus have grown 22% from Q3 2015 – Q3 2016 and vegan/vegetarian menu items have gone up 17%. Incorporating veggie-friendly menu items appeals across an array of consumer demands: the pursuit of health, promoting environmental sustainability, increased food safety, and in some cases, animal welfare.

Mixing Meat and Mushroom

A truly flexitarian inspired movement is mushroom-meat burgers, promoting the balance between meat and plant-based ingredients. Reducing meat quantity doesn't mean reducing taste. In fact, in a sensory study conducted by the Mushroom Council, consumers preferred meat-mushroom blended tacos over meat-only tacos in terms of flavor, moisture, and aroma. In addition, replacing a quarter of meat with mushrooms reduces calories, fat, and sodium by nearly one third. Sonic Drive-In announced the launch of the Slinger, a burger featuring a mushroom-meat patty and is one of the first fast food chains to incorporate a meat-mushroom burger on its menus. Both Cheesecake Factory and Seasons 52 have also added meat-mushroom burgers to their menus, giving consumers a healthy, flexitarian option that doesn't compromise taste.

The Impossible Burger and Jackfruit

Restaurants have long since tried to spice up their burgers with various sauces, toppings, and cheese, but now they can set themselves apart by specializing the patty itself. Swapping a meat patty for one made of beans, grains, or sweet potato changes the overall flavor of the burger while altering its nutritional

profile and reducing its carbon foot print. Launched in 2016, the Impossible Burger is made of various plant proteins and even "bleeds" like a regular hamburger.

Another newly popular replacer for meat is jackfruit; when shredded it has a keen resemblance to pulled pork. At Toad Style in NYC, jackfruit is shredded and smoked over hickory wood before it is smothered in house barbeque sauce and placed on a potato bun.

Vegetables at the Center

Not to be outdone or solely focus on replacing meat, many restaurants have simply turned their spotlight to vegetable-centered dishes. There is a creative advantage when it comes to preparing veggie-based entrees; methods like blanching, pickling, grilling, and roasting create ways for chefs to impart unique flavors on some commonly disliked veggies like brussels sprouts, lima beans, and beets. St. Louis restaurant Vicia recently opened in June 2017 with a vegetable-forward menu; recent items included grilled cucumber bites with white asparagus and cucumber-peel ash and purple top turnip tacos – using thinly sliced turnip top as a taco shell.

"Meatless Mondays", had over 8,600 Twitter mentions this summer – it's clear that consumers are seeking the balance and health a flexitarian lifestyle offers. Whether it's launching a new veggie-meat burger found in the frozen section or innovating a pasta made of edamame, there's plenty of new and exciting ways to translate the idea of flexitarian dining to the grocery aisles.

FONA CAN HELP!

Let FONA's market insight and research experts translate these trends into product category ideas for your brand. They can help you with concept and flavor pipeline development, ideation, consumer studies and white space analysis to pinpoint opportunities in the market. Our flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend. We understand how to mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution.

CONTACT OUR SALES SERVICE DEPARTMENT

at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or visit www.fona.com.

SOURCES

- Mintel Reports
- Mintel Food and Drink
- Mintel GNPD
- Trendfire
- Social Studio
- Health Magazine
- Bon Appétit Magazine
- <https://www.instagram.com/sobeautifullyreal/?hl=en>
- https://www.instagram.com/alison__wu/?hl=en
- <https://www.pearlbutter.com/collections/butters>
- <http://sambalatte.com/arts-crafts/>
- <http://www.humphryslcombe.com/now-scooping/>
- <http://www.restaurant-hospitality.com>
- <http://www.bonappetit.com/story/baroo-rice-bowl-dish-of-the-year-2016>
- <http://www.restaurant-hospitality.com/food-trends/new-breed-hot-dog>
- <http://www.restaurant.org/Industry-Impact/Food-Healthy-Living/Kids-LiveWell/About>
- <https://www.allbusiness.com/restaurants-eat-up-healthy-kids-menu-campaign-15914740-1.html>
- <http://www.restaurant.org/Industry-Impact/Food-Healthy-Living/Kids-LiveWell/About>
- <https://www.fastcompany.com/40435050/the-newest-burger-at-sonic-will-be-part-beef-part-mushrooms>
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/the-meat-mushroom-blend-makes-sense/2014/08/01/769884e6-0e9b-11e4-b8e5-d0de80767fc2_story.html?utm_term=.3d9be8ad0e6b