

Trends in Seafood

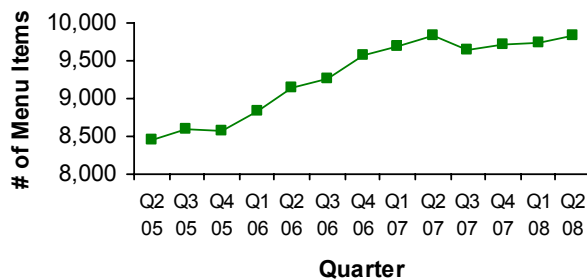
Seafood (fish and shellfish) has a lot to bring to the table. Not only is it extremely versatile in the kitchen, it also packs a nutritional punch, has a variety of texture, and is full of flavor. The potential for seafood menu items is limitless. The menu is housing more seafood varieties than ever—635 varieties to be exact, and is the fourth most popular protein on the menu. Consumers are eating it up because of its health and culinary potential.

While consumers are eating a lot of seafood, they are not eating it very frequently. According to *Mintel Reports*, only one in five households reported eating seafood more than once a week. The reason for such low consumption is that seafood is seen as a special occasion food. This is good news for restaurants because 62% of consumers surveyed by Mintel eat at restaurants because they were celebrating a special occasion. This is a perfect opportunity for restaurants to market seafood as a special occasion food—or flip the table and present their seafood offerings as an everyday food. Regardless of whether the occasion is special or everyday, the menu presents the consumer with several new seafood trends.

Seafood on the Menu

As consumer interest in seafood increases, so does the number of menu items on the menu—seafood menu items increased 17% over the last three years. The increase is due to healthier menu items developed with seafood, seafood appetizers, seafood salad options, and seafood side dishes.

Incidence of Seafood Ingredients over Time



Growth of Seafood in Selected Menu Sections

Menu Section	Growth
Soup	83%
Specialties	65%
Sides	55%
Salad	23%
Entrée	16%
Appetizer	8%
Sandwich	<1%

Understandably, Fine Dining and Casual Restaurants have the highest share of seafood menu items, with 44% and 33% shares, respectively—and way ahead of Family/Midscale (16%), Quick Service Restaurants (4%), and Fast Casual (2%).



Top 10 Shellfish Varieties

1. Shrimp
2. Crab
3. Scallop
4. Lobster
5. Clam
6. King Crab
7. Oyster
8. Mussel
9. Gulf Shrimp
10. Prawn

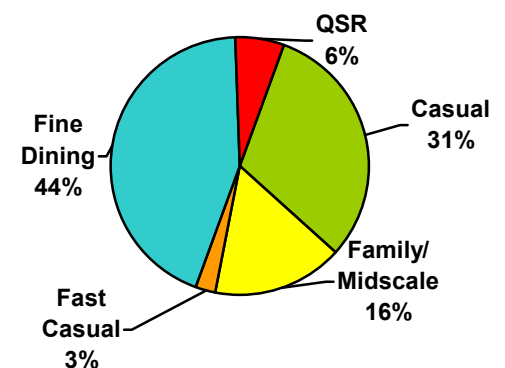
Top 10 Shellfish Cooking Preparations

1. Fried
2. Grilled
3. Sautéed
4. Steamed
5. Pan-Fried
6. Baked
7. Tempura
8. Stir-Fried
9. Deep-Fried
10. Broiled

Top 10 Flavors Associated with Shellfish Menu Items

1. Garlic
2. Cajun
3. Lime
4. BBQ
5. Hot & Spicy
6. Herb
7. Lemon
8. Pepper
9. Buffalo
10. Coconut

Seafood Ingredients by Dining Type



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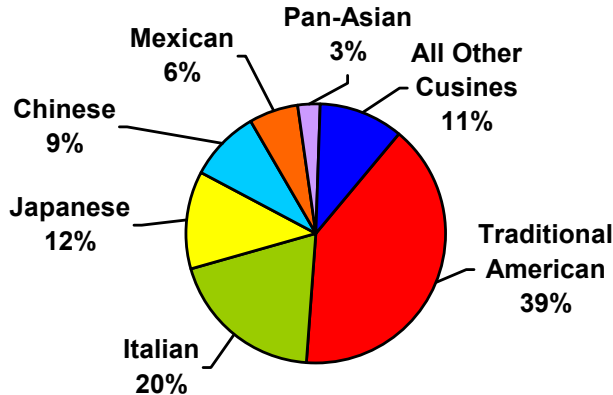
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Culinary Trends

Around the World

Traditional American cuisine has a 39% share of the cuisine pie, twice as much as the next cuisine. Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Mexican and Pan-Asian follow with 20%, 12%, 9%, 6%, and 3% shares, respectively. All other cuisines account for the remaining 11%. Japanese cuisine rose 10% from a year ago (due to increase in sushi and sushi like menu items.)

Seafood Share by Cuisine Type



Just Claim It

Menu descriptions have evolved from simple explanations of the menu item to intricate stories with cues that set meal expectations. Menu descriptions set the tone for the meal, provide flavor expectations and caloric content, and often encourage repatronage. Messaging on menus has taken a positive turn. Positive messages describe the menu item to facilitate making the consumer feel good about what they are eating and drinking.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Fresh is the leading ingredient claim. Up and coming ingredient claims include Gluten-Free, Wild Caught, Local, Natural and Classic. The top nutritional claims are Organic, Natural, Light (Nutritional) and Pesticide-Free.

Seafood Ingredient Claims

Top	Texture	Regional	Other
Fresh	Crispy/Crisp	Italian	Classic
Seasonal	Tender	Hawaiian	Natural
Farm-Raised	Golden	Thai	Wild
Premium	Juicy	Cajun	Farm
Local	Flakey	Southwest	Sashimi-Grade

Menu Direction: Sustainable Seafood

There is a lot of focus on all things green. As consumers become more aware of overfishing and the impact it is having on the environment, the issue of sustainable seafood will come to the forefront. There are many organizations, such as The Monterey Aquarium, that have campaigns and information that targets consumers with the hope of teaching them the benefits of sustainable seafood. We are also seeing some restaurants already offering items that claim to be helping in this fight. This is an area that will continue to expand as the issue gains momentum. Ultimately, it is good for the environment and for the restaurants' image.

Top 10 Fin Fish Varieties

1. Salmon
2. Anchovy (on Pizza of course)
3. Tuna
4. Fish (unspecified)
5. Ahi Tuna
6. Mahi Mahi
7. Cod
8. Catfish
9. Tilapia
10. Yellowtail

Top 10 Fin Fish Cooking Preparations

1. Grilled
2. Raw
3. Fried
4. Seared
5. Crusted
6. Blackened
7. Broiled
8. Sauteed
9. Pan-Seared
10. Tartar

Top 10 Flavors Associated with Fin Fish Menu Items

1. Smoked
2. Cajun
3. Lemon
4. Teriyaki
5. Sesame Seed
6. Pepper (spice)
7. BBQ
8. Bourbon
9. Garlic
10. Wasabi



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