

What's HOT in 2015

Introduction

Like a good recipe, industry trends take time to develop. In this issue, we gathered information from top research companies to give you a deeper look into what's cooking in 2015. Taking the time to understand what may be the next big thing can give Operators inspiration on how to approach their business now and in the future.



Top 2015 Trends Breakdown

2015 Trends

- LOCALLY SOURCED/GROWN, HYPER-LOCAL:**

The hottest food trends remain around locally sourced meat and seafood, locally grown produce and hyper-local sourcing. The stay-close-to-home spirit heightens interest in everything from house-purified water to regional seafood to locally manufactured products like beers and liquors. As

the local sourcing trend continues at full speed in 2015, so does the hyper-local sub-trend. Beyond restaurant gardens, hyper-local is extending more fully into house-made, farm-branded and artisan items. From ice cream to cheese, pickles to bacon, lemonade to beer, restaurants are producing their own signature menu items from scratch.

- WASTE NOT, WANT NOT:**

Environmental Sustainability remains among the top menu trends. In 2015, food waste reduction and management is at the forefront of restaurant operations. Composting, recycling and donating are all tactics of food waste strategies tying into both sustainability and social responsibility. There is also a perception amongst consumers that if their food has not traveled miles to get to their plate, it will just taste better.

- GOING (MORE) GLOBAL:**

Ethnic cuisine continues its inroads into mainstream menus. As American palates become more sophisticated and adventurous, so do restaurant offerings. Today's chefs are creating "cuisine-less" restaurants that defy traditional definitions. Today's modern, innovative chefs are expected to travel the world, incorporating the flavors and inspirations they discover into their cooking. Specifically, Asian foods have been trending for years, but the continent always delivers something new. In 2015, look for the breakout of Korean, mainstreaming of Vietnamese and upscaling of spicy ramen noodles.



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Top 5 Trends by Category

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- Breakfast/Brunch
- Appetizers
- Main Dish/
Center of the Plate
- Desserts
- Kids' Meals

Culinary Trends



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- **MINI GOURMET/CHANNELING GENERATION Z:**

Children’s menus are drawing more attention from chefs and restaurant operators. This is the era of gourmet kids’ dishes adapted from adult menu items with more adventurous flavor profiles than traditional children’s options. Growing in parallel are healthy versions of those gourmet kids’ items, featuring whole grains, vegetables, oven-baked items and entrée salads. The challenge of appealing to all ages intensifies as younger diners step up demands for speedy high-tech service, heightened experiences, louder music and kinetic visuals.

- **DIY HEALTH:**

The definition of “healthy” continues to evolve on restaurant menus. At first, “healthy” was focused on nutrition – low calorie, low fat, high fiber content, cutting out trans fats, etc. Then the discussion shifted to “feel good” terms like natural, organic, sustainable, local and fresh. And now the concept of “healthy” is evolving once again, now focusing on functional foods and ingredients such as energy, protein and superfoods, and how the foods are produced. Menus increasingly display pick-and-choose options for everyone from gluten-free eaters to vegans to paleo-diet partisans; offerings are switched out as nutrition fads come and go.

- **SMALL-MINDED:**

Small is in this year with food and operations. Shareable plates are popular on today’s menus and will be in the New Year. The focus on breakfast in recent years has led to a number of innovations. Small and shareable plates can now be found on breakfast and brunch menus. Diners are also demanding petite plates and flexible portions to support their AM snacking habits which are starting to replace daily meals. Restaurant units are smaller with shrunken, laser-focused menus, multi-use equipment and expanded hours to leverage fixed costs; labor pressures mean leaner staffing and more technology.

- **SIGNATURE BEVERAGES:**

The microdistillery boom and continued craft beer experimentation are boosting the popularity of craft beers and spirits, and they are transforming the drink menu. Whiskey and bourbon sales are booming in the U.S., creating a market for innovative new products, such as flavored whiskeys on the shelf. Distillers are also creating new hybrid spirits like Vodquila, Jinzu (a combination of gin and sake), and Grey Goose VX (vodka with a hint of cognac). Lighter flavors, lower proofs and bitter flavors will be more prominent on the cocktail menu in 2015. In addition to trends in alcohol, operators are increasingly differentiating themselves with non-alcohol drinks as well – from handcrafted or small-batch sodas to pressed juices to health-halo teas.

Carrot & Tomato Curry Soup

Ingredients

Carrots, peeled, diced	3 ½ lbs.
Yellow onions, peeled, diced	3 ½ cups
Butter, cubed	6 tbsp.
Garlic, minced	6 tbsp.
Curry powder	5 tbsp.
Cumin, ground	4 tbsp.
Coriander, ground	4 tbsp.
Ginger, ground	4 tbsp.
Angela Mia® No Salt Added Diced Tomatoes, drained (27000-38067)	3 ½ lbs.
Low-sodium vegetable stock	3 quarts
Heavy cream	2 pints
Hunt's No Salt Added Tomato Sauce (27000-42205)	1 ½ cups
Crème fraîche	½ cup
Sunflower Seeds	2 tbsp.

Preparation

DIRECTIONS:

1. In large stockpot over medium heat, sauté carrots and onions in butter until they begin to turn golden brown, about 8-10 minutes.
2. Reduce heat to low and add garlic, curry powder, cumin, coriander and ginger. Cook for 1 minute or until seasonings are toasty and fragrant.
3. Add tomatoes and stock. Bring to simmer over medium-high heat, and cook until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes.
4. Using blender, puree soup until smooth.
5. Return soup to stockpot, and stir in heavy cream and tomato sauce. Cook over medium-low heat until soup is heated through.

To Make On Plates:
Serve 1 cup (8 ounces) of soup, garnished with 1 teaspoon crème fraîche and ¼ teaspoon toasted sunflower seeds.

Serves 24

Culinary Trends TREND SPOT
This recipe focuses on two top trends for 2015, ethnic cuisine and healthy, clean ingredients.
Datassential, FoodBytes Dec 2014

Angela Mia Hunt's ConAgra Foodservice
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[Click Here for the Recipe](#)

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

Dining is no longer just a personal experience, but a staged event that imparts bragging rights. Plating and lighting are increasingly designed with phone snapshots and social-media sharing in mind. Customers collaborate to put on the show; menus, marketing, even charitable efforts are crowd sourced.

For more information about ConAgra Foodservice, please call 1-800-357-6543 or visit www.conagrafoodservice.com

Sources: NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION, TECHNOMIC Experience • Vision • Impact, DATASENTIAL