

CONFIDENCE  
IN EVERY CASE.



*Layer leftover beet pieces with unused soft cheeses, then chill and slice. Voila! A gorgeous salad topper or appetizer made from scraps.*

## SUMMER 2017 TRENDS AT A GLANCE

- Casual eateries are offering fine-dining level techniques & ingredients.
- The sunny Baja peninsula is the source of new Mexican inspiration.
- Using leftover and unused products to create new and delicious dishes saves money and the environment.
- Old school takes on new meaning with ancient Nordic cooking techniques.
- Move over vegetables...it's fruit's turn to shine.
- Customers want it all: experiential dining.

# Trends

SUMMER 2017

## Fine Casual?

More and more technically trained chefs are taking their skills to the casual sector, offering a fine dining experience in a casual environment at affordable prices. The goal is to create more regular customers that dine at the location multiple times per week instead of attracting one-time bucket list patrons that only visit on special occasions.

- Take more obscure retro recipes and rework with new ingredients/flavors/ethnic techniques.
- Focus on approachability, affordability, health, customization, efficiency, and great presentation.
- More and more upscale spots are installing to-go windows.

## Baja Cuisine

The produce, seafood, and wines of Baja, Mexico are finally getting their due respect. Yes, Tijuana is famous for the very best tacos and other street foods, but the peninsula also offers unique takes on ingredients like abalone, oysters, pineapples, and nopales.

- Chef Javier Plascencia has taken the concept of surf and turf and turned it on its head by serving combos such as wood-grilled octopus with beef short ribs, sea scallops with chicharonnes, ahi tuna with Sonora beef machaca, and shrimp with bone marrow sopes. Of course all of these combos are accented with produce like heirloom corn, Chiltepin peppers, and pickled radishes.
- Right-out-of-the water seafood is a key ingredient in the fresh aguachiles and ceviches of the region; chefs flavor them with intense lime, fiery chile peppers, and local varieties of seaweed.
- Drawing from the Baja heritage of Japanese immigrants during the 1920s, the tempura-fried fish taco has now become the most famed dish of the region. Top with shredded cabbage, white onions, diced tomatoes, lime juice, and creamy guacamole.

## Recycled Recipes

Increasingly, foodservice operators are using by-products and scraps to create masterpieces that save money and prevent waste. From vegetable peelings to milk curds to coffee grounds, using "leftover" ingredients can spur creativity and lead to the invention of new dishes.



- Vegetable scraps (think broccoli stalks and leaves, onion extras, and beet pieces) work well in soups, omelets, and terrines (see photo at left).
- Beet and carrot tops make great pesto, perfectly balancing the salty cheese and earthy garlic.
- Before ditching tomato bits, squeeze the juice through a sieve; use the tomato water for super fresh Bloody Marys.
- Add wilted herbs to compound butters and creamy sauces or freeze in olive oil.

## Ancient Cooking Techniques

Modern chefs are taking a page from the history books and rethinking how they cook their ingredients. From Peru to Sweden to the U.S., ancestral methods are proving that we should listen to our elders.

- Wrapping fish and/or vegetables in corn husks, banana leaves, or chaya leaves dates back to pre-Columbian Mexico. The process steams the inner ingredients so they remain tender and succulent (see photo above).
- Open-flame cooking, baking in embers, and charring have all made a comeback. Although time-consuming, chefs are using these techniques to build robust flavors in both meats and vegetables.
- Cooking in hay or other grasses infuses smoky, herbaceous notes.
- Remember that your hands are your best tool, when using ancient (or any other) methods.

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# Trends

SUMMER 2017

## The Hot List

- Grapefruit Drinks
- Cold-Smoked Crudos
- Next-Level Toasts
- “Blended” Burgers
- Seaweed Garnishes
- Bagna Cauda
- Strip Mall Culture
- Rye Flour
- Sophisticated Jewish Foods
- Black Wine
- Kitschy Glassware
- Aguachiles
- Blistered Okra
- Seafood Pizzas
- Beignets
- Cooking in Hay
- Summer Tomatoes
- Historical References
- Mezcal
- Fermented Lettuces
- Tartines
- Authentic Mole
- Toasted Rice
- Peruvian Influences
- Pickled Stone Fruits
- Cast Iron
- On-Tap Kombucha
- Vinegar
- Abalone
- Fruit Lassis
- Fried Corn
- Asian Desserts

## 360° Experiences

Today’s restaurants are competing with Netflix, HBO, and social media more than other restaurants. Foodservice operators need to make craveable foods for which people are willing to leave their cocoon-like homes. They must strive to bring the sights, smells, and sounds of authentic experience to the menu.

- The first rule is that the food must be fresh and delicious. Remember that you cannot eat a screen, so as enticing as your website or social media photos may look, the recipes must satisfy the guests.
- Food is the great unifier. By offering communal dishes, diners can share and compare flavors, build camaraderie, and create a bonding experience.
- What does your brand stand for—and does your guest’s experience match it? Millennials and other foodies can sniff out unauthentic foods faster than a bloodhound, so be sure your menu reflects your core mission.
- Hand-held options like tacos, spring rolls, gyros, empanadas, and house-made fruit pop tarts are not only portable; they give a more tactile experience to the meal.
- Build-your-own menu items allow diners to customize their orders and get exactly what they want—reducing ingredient waste and customer dissatisfaction.
- Slurping is half the fun when eating soups like ramen, pho, laksa, and udon; guests get the full aroma of intense herbs and spices when leaning over the bowl for a big scoop of noodles and broth.

### Resources:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Eater                    | Pinterest              |
| Fine Dining Lovers       | PlateOnline            |
| Flavor & the Menu        | ProChef Smart Brief    |
| Food Business            | QSRWeb.com             |
| FoodBytes                | Restaurant Hospitality |
| Food & Wine              | SmartBrief             |
| Food Navigator-USA       | Tasting Table          |
| Food Republic            | Technomic              |
| FSR Magazine             | The Guardian           |
| Nation’s Restaurant News | New York Times         |
| New York Magazine        | The Washington Post    |

## Spotlight: Fruit

The vegcentric movement has been strongly leading trends for several years. Now it’s time for fruit to get into the action.

- Summer is a great time to grill fruits of all types, especially pineapple spears. Pair with sustainable seafood or use in desserts.
- Breakfast continues to be a top-selling daypart. Add preservative-free/extended shelf-life fruit like grapes, melons, and mangoes to granola, oatmeal, pancakes, and waffles.
- Lend healthy vitamins and increase fiber in desserts like shortcakes, trifles, house-made popsicles, and custard-filled tarts with sliced mango, bite-size melons, and tangy-sweet pineapple.
- Fruits, especially citrus like oranges and grapefruits, give summer cocktail menus bright flavor and vibrant color.
- Raw is great, but try experimenting with different preparation techniques such as charring, grilling, pickling, and sous vide to add dimension and balance.

## Get Connected!

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- **Specialty Produce**—a twice-monthly information piece about the fast-paced specialty market; what’s in, what’s out...what is it?
- **In Season**—a quarterly look at what’s fresh now and how to use it
- **Trends**—forecasts what is on the culinary horizon four times per year

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