



TRENDS

WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

**INGREDIENT
OF THE YEAR**

**DROP IT LIKE
IT'S HOT**

MELTY REMIXES

REEL 'EM IN!



WINTER 2024

AT A GLANCE



YOU SAY TO-MAY-TO...

Tomato-girl summer may be over, but this kitchen workhorse will keep on giving throughout 2024.



DO BELIEVE THE HYPE

Gen Z is driving drop culture—the creation of anticipation and excitement over something new and limited that causes a buying frenzy.



SO CHEESY

Gen Z is combining comfort food favorites, creating incredibly ooey-gooney, decadent mashups.



SAY HELLO TO THE NEW FOOD CRITICS

The days of professional, serious restaurant reviews are fading into the distance, replaced by online influencers.



KOREAN TTEOKBOKKI COMBINES
THE TOMATO & MELTY TRENDS

PLUMP & JUICY:

THE YEAR OF THE TOMATO

From fashion, to decor, to Tik Tok, trend forecasters predict this kitchen workhorse will be the darling of 2024 menus—and in new, unusual applications and dayparts. Tomato ice cream, anyone?

- Italian red sauce will hold its popularity, but global versions will make inroads as well. Look out for tomato curry, tomato-chile broth, Korean tteokbokki and Japanese yum yum sauces, as well as Filipino sarsiado that highlights fish with tomatoes.
- Look for tomatoes in unexpected places, like tomato-ham scones, savory cheesecakes, shaved ices and granitas, and tarte tatins.
- Skip commercial condiments and serve a savory tomato jam accented with ginger or horseradish for a pop of brightness. Add colorful appeal with green tomatoes.
- Tomato-centric cocktails like Caprese martinis and Chavelas are the latest bar menu stars. Bloody Mary's are getting a makeover too—with fresh juice and crystallized slices to garnish.

Renew your love for this versatile, year-round ingredient.



"DAY OF" DROPS

Choose your star ingredient and create buzz by offering one-time only specials announced the day before on social media or offered through contests. Even offer merch for the lucky winners to show off.

"CREATE YOUR OWN"

Gen Z loves to customize. Give diners multiple options to make their own dishes or create their own special recipe. Market celeb collabs featuring their favorite combos.

SEASONAL

Debut soups, sandwiches, tacos, pizzas... anything that can be marketed with seasonal produce. Think MFC Pears, MFC Potatoes, and orange squashes for winter!

HOLIDAYS

Schedule your greatest hits to coincide with celebrations like Christmas, the Super Bowl, or Black History Month. Tailor ingredients to reflect events throughout the year.

BEVERAGES

Drop unique cocktails and wellness drinks made in bright colors with trendy flavors (think turmeric, cranberry, or dragon fruit) that crowds anticipate. Pumpkin spice, anyone?

INDULGENT VS WELLNESS

Cater to those customers that want to spoil themselves as well as those that want to eat clean. Connect these themes with relevant holidays or events such as New Year's diets or berry sweet Valentine's Day.

FEEDING FRENZY

When Beyoncé or Taylor Swift "drop" their latest music, the world jumps to listen. Now the hype has spread to menus, where people line up for the debut of must-eat dishes.

GA-GA FOR GOOEY!

Melted mashups check several boxes including craveability, innovation, and nostalgia. Chefs are mixing and matching favorites like pizza, burgers, quesadillas, and sandwiches to create deliciously chaotic foods.



- **Cheeseburger quesadilla:** Place a cooked hamburger patty or chopped burger bits in between two tortillas and shredded cheese. Customize with burger toppers like sliced MFC Tomatoes, RSS Sliced Onions, and pickles. Grill until melted and oozing.
- **French onion grilled cheese:** Kick up this sammy by adding in caramelized RSS Sliced Onions. Their umami hit marries with the soft cheese for a decadent home run.
- **Pizza pot pie:** Reminiscent of the Chicago deep dish, this amazing amalgam can be customized with a wide variety of vegetable and meat toppings.
- **Carbonara ramen:** Japanese-Italian fusion remains an unexpected, yet top genre. This recipe puts the pork, egg, and cheese of classic carbonara into a soothing bowl of ramen noodles and broth. Top with the crunch and color of RSS Collard Greens or RSS Baby Spinach before serving.

COMFORT COMBOS

Pizza pot pies combine the best of two nostalgic faves.

TIKTOK- 'FLUENCERS

Revered restaurant critics of the past are losing clout to fun-and-fast IG reels and TikToks starring young, in-the-know social media mavens. Diners want to see what to order, how's the vibe, and who's going—all in quick mini videos that speak their language.



SHORT & SWEET

One thing all the viral posts have in common is speed. Busy customers want the main bullet points fast and easy to digest. Be sure to include what, where, when, and why while showing craveable dishes that attract diners.

WOW FACTOR

Hype sells, especially on social media. Whether it's through humor, saturated colors that pop, or food that looks so good you can almost taste it, keep it exciting. Nobody wants to watch (or eat!) boring.

GOING VIRAL

Collabs with influencers that have millions of followers can increase your customer base and generate sales. Who are your most famous fans?

THE HOT LIST



- Retail-restaurant hybrids
- Roti john
- Breakfast for dessert
- Clear cocktails
- Buckwheat
- Pavlovas
- Sea urchin
- Celeriac
- Doenjang
- Pearl sugar
- Movie menu collabs
- Mortadella
- Cheese curds
- Visual AI
- Black sesame
- Ingredient callouts
- Pickled everything
- Spam redux
- Restaurant swag

- Dragon fruit
- Botanical beverages
- Veg Wellington
- Cacao pulp
- Sweet & spicy
- Single serve desserts
- Women's health
- Water stewardship
- Solo dining
- Nostalgic 90s brands
- Halloumi cheese
- Creste di gallo pasta
- K-food
- Camel milk
- Tahini
- Wedge salads
- Calabrian chile peppers
- Spritzes
- Evolving ramen



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FRESH CROP

A weekly rundown of the fresh produce market including prices, supply levels, and quality.

TRENDS

Forecasts what is on the culinary horizon four times per year.

SOURCES:

Axios
Bon Appetit
Datassential
Flavor & The Menu
Food & Wine
National Restaurant Association
Nation's Restaurant News
Perishable News

Pinterest
QSR Magazine
Restaurant Business
Southern Living
Technomic
The Daily Meal
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