



MARKON<sup>®</sup>

# TRENDS

SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

**NEXT-GEN EUROPEAN**

**YEAR OF THE SNACK**

**WELLNESS 2.0**

**ALL HAIL CAESAR!**

**SPRING 2024**

# AT A GLANCE



## EURO EVOLUTION

The classic cuisines of France, Spain, and Italy are evolving with global ingredients and techniques.



## MIX & MATCH

Sharable, small bites allow diners to maximize their culinary experiences.



## TASTES GREAT, GOOD FOR YOU

Customers want dishes full of flavor, texture, color, and nutrients!



## TWISTED CAESAR SALADS

Look beyond romaine for delicious alternatives.



MODERN CROSTINI GIVE CHEFS  
MYRIAD OPTIONS

# THE NEW EURO CUISINE

## THE CLASSICS REIMAGINED

Traditional European menus were all about order and structure with rare deviations from a set of strict rules. Today, the cuisines of France, Italy, Spain, and Greece have been broadened by global influences and ingredients from Asia, Africa, the Americas, and plant-based alternatives creating delicious mashups that are less formal and social media-friendly.



- Chefs are boosting French soups and stews like seafood-rich bouillabaisse with Thai flavors such as coconut milk, red curry, lemongrass, and cilantro. Beef bourguignon remains nostalgic yet new with the additions of Korean gochujang paste and fresh ginger.
- Wafu—or Japanese style—pasta combines Italian spaghetti noodles with ingredients such as nori, spicy fish roe, miso butter, broccolini, and Shiitake mushrooms.
- Meat-heavy Euro dishes have been updated to use proteins as condiments or perhaps not at all—making fresh vegetables the focus.
- African and Middle Eastern spice blends such as ras el hanout, berbere, suya, za'atar, and harissa can update the flavor profile dishes like Greek spanakopita and Spanish patatas bravas.

**FAMILIAR YET  
NEW!**

### TAPAS

The Spanish got it right when they created these bite-size, small dishes like olives, garlicky shrimp, and crispy, fried potatoes meant to be eaten and enjoyed with wine and friends.

### BOARDS

Today's menus run the gamut from traditional cheese and antipasti boards to wacky make-your-own salad cup set ups and cheffed up dips & chips.

### SKEWERS

Grilled meats drizzled with herbaceous sauces, charred asparagus wrapped in prosciutto, halloumi cheese cubes, and vibrant berries draped in hot honey all make exciting sharables.

### PLANT-BASED

Ensure your restaurant doesn't get the veto vote—make sure you have plant-based alternatives for the growing number of vegetarians and vegans.

### PRICE POINTS

With budgets top of mind, offering a wide range of smaller dishes at lower prices can ultimately increase overall bills. Diners want the variety and experience that come with ordering different flavors.

### ADVENTURE

Customers want to be taken on a journey through their meal. Add appeal and excitement to small bites in the form of finger lime caviar, frizzled shallots, shiny pomegranate seeds, and edible flower garnishes.

# QUICK BITES

Snacking is at an all-time high, blurring the need for daypart menus and allowing for anytime eating and sharing.

# WELLNESS REIGNS

Healthy, delicious foods are just the starting point for the trend with the most staying power: wellness. Diners expect and deserve more—and will reward chefs that find creative ways to serve fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins with vibrant colors, bold flavors, and exciting textures packed with vitamins, minerals, and fiber.



- **Super greens:** Dark leafy vegetables top the list for healthy ingredients. Ideal in salads, rice bowls, stews, egg dishes, and smoothies, items like spinach, collards, beet greens, arugula, kale, romaine, and bok choy signify wellness to customers.
- **High protein:** A large percentage of consumers want to increase their protein intake without adding more meat. Look to alternatives like broccoli, lentils, mushrooms, quinoa, nuts, spinach, and beans to naturally pump it up!
- **Gut health:** Probiotics are big, especially when they are foods, not pills. Add fermented foods across your menus via kimchi, sauerkraut, pickled onions and cucumbers, and fruity kombucha drinks to deliciously aid digestion.
- **Fiber:** Important to blood sugar levels, weight management, heart health, cholesterol levels, and more, fiber-rich foods also add texture and keep us full longer. Consider ingredients such as sweet potatoes, collard greens, avocados, and Brussels sprouts in dishes across all day parts.

## CRAVEABLE MEDICINE

Help diners get their proper nutrition while eating foods that they want and love.

# ALT-CAESARS

Twist this classic salad starter or entrée by introducing different hearty greens or nutrient-dense vegetables topped with flavor bombs.

## LEAFY GREENS

KALE  
COLLARD GREENS  
BUTTER LETTUCE  
LITTLE GEMS  
WILD ARUGULA

## VEGETABLES

SHAVED ASPARAGUS  
BRUSSELS SPROUTS  
NAPA CABBAGE  
BROCCOLINI  
ZUCCHINI SQUASH

## ALTERNATIVE TOPPINGS

GARBANZO BEANS  
GRILLED HALLOUMI  
SPICY RANCH  
GARLICKY ARTICHOKE  
HEARTS  
WATERMELON RADISHES



# THE HOT LIST



- Funnel cake fries
- Makhana
- Aguachile
- Seamless take-out
- Kitchen robots
- Sophisticated ranch dressing
- Fast-casual Indian food
- White lamb
- Salmiak salt
- Polarizing flavors
- Asian pear-kimchi salsa
- Mocktail ubiquity
- Pickleball cafes
- Advanced customer service
- Premium ingredients
- Teh halia/Singaporean tea
- Portabella mushroom rings
- Black lime
- Physical menus

- Service fee explanations
- Creative cabbage
- Guisados
- Drinkable desserts
- Cold ramen
- Peach fuzz—color of the year
- Terrines
- Buckwheat noodles
- Affordable nostalgia
- Black garlic
- Swicy foods
- Ponzu sauce
- Umami cocktails
- Dry-aged vegetables
- Fermented everything
- Tamarind
- Cheffed-up dips
- Solo diners
- Ube



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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:

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Whole Foods

