

2024 FOOD & BEVERAGE TREND REPORT



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Contents



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Flavor, Food & Beverage Trends for 2024

1

Savory flavor profiles are becoming more influential in non-traditional categories, which speaks to the fundamental shift in U.S. consumer preferences towards savory flavors in traditionally sweet categories such as baked goods, desserts and cocktails, all of which are incorporating more savory herbs, spices, sauces, and produce including peppers. This is likely to continue, with savory flavors becoming more diverse and more prevalent in the coming years.

2

Japanese fusion cuisines and flavor plays are on the rise with Wafu, Itameshi and Nikkei all becoming more common. Wafu means “in the style of Japanese,” and encompasses Itameshi (Italian food in the style of Japanese) and Nikkei (a Peruvian/ Japanese fusion developed in Peru). The potential for these cuisines and applications is significant given they incorporate many familiar elements not only from Japanese cuisine but from other common cuisines such as Italian and American. Nikkei – the combination of Japanese and Peruvian cuisines – has the longest runway and is a longer-term opportunity. As Asian flavors continue to be extremely influential in both retail and foodservice, look for these fusion cuisines to become more popular.



Flavor, Food & Beverage Trends for 2024 (cont.)

3

While comfort foods have faded as a key category post pandemic, nostalgic foods and flavors remain relevant and appealing. Nostalgia speaks more to a positive emotional connection to a period of time or a state of being that the foods and flavors represent. Furthermore, nostalgia differs by generation, but the overall trend speaks to a more emotional engagement. To keep nostalgia from skewing toward kitsch, modern ingredients and formats can increase relevance to a broader audience.

4

Oaxacan cuisine is, once again, on the rise as an influential regional Mexican cuisine. The focus on fresh, whole ingredients and simple but impactful preparation techniques makes this cuisine both relevant and appealing to a wide array of consumers and commercial operators. Moles, hot/spicy flavors and fresh herbs stand out as key elements to Oaxacan cuisine.

5

In addition to the Japanese trends mentioned above, **Vietnamese cuisine is on the rise driven largely by the growth of Vietnamese café culture in the U.S.** These new Vietnamese café operators are leveraging America's love of coffee, breakfast, and café cuisine, creating dishes that range from authentically Vietnamese to unique blends of Vietnamese flavors and sensibilities with that of familiar American, French or Italian dishes.





6

Once a highly divisive ingredient, mushrooms have become the celebrity ingredient in everything from coffees and teas to mushroom jerky. Mushrooms serve many functions for both operators and manufacturers, and the functional benefits associated with mushrooms are making this an extremely attractive ingredient. In part, the availability of a far wider array of mushrooms from cremini and shiitake to lion's mane and cordyceps are allowing for new uses and intriguing flavor profiles. It is unlikely the mushroom boom will be fading any time in the near future.

7

It's not often that a TV show can be credited with boosting food trends, but it's arguably the case with Nigerian cuisine broadly and suya specifically. After featuring heavily in season three of Ted Lasso, the awareness of and interest in Nigerian cuisine and suya (smoked spiced meat skewers from Northern Nigeria) spiked. This interest paralleled the rise of several high-profile chefs, such as Kwame Onwuachi, also celebrating the unique foods and flavors of this country and suya specifically. With satay, kofta, and yakitori having trended over the past few years, suya seems an inevitable and natural progression.



Flavor, Food & Beverage Trends for 2024 (cont.)

8

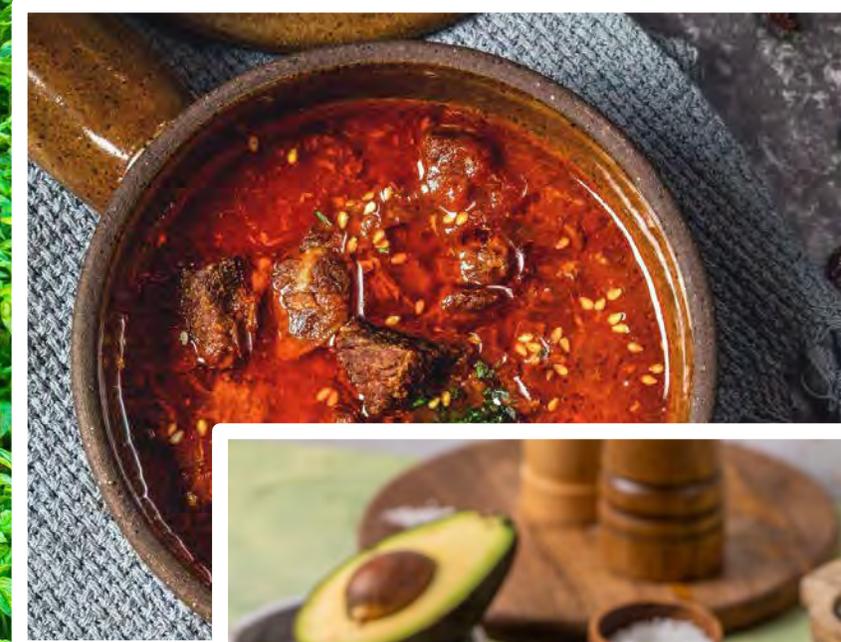
North African cuisine is once again coming to the fore. After dipping a bit during the pandemic period, flavors and foods typical of North African countries are growing again and impacting both authentic dishes and more familiar American and European platforms. Harissa, chermoula, and shito are on the rise, while more familiar spice blends including za'atar, berbere, duqqa/ dukkha and ras el hanout offer flavor solutions across all menu parts and product categories.

9

Swicy, or sweet and spicy profiles, remains popular and the experimentation with sweet and spicy elements continues. Though the concept of swicy (sweet and spicy) is not new – sweet heat being a popular flavor platform for years, its ongoing growth and continued impact is notable. While Americans love spicy foods, this “swicy” combination expands the appeal and approachability of hotter flavors. Hot honey, mango habanero, and other combinations are helping to create more complex, nuanced, and broadly appealing flavors across a range of applications.

10

Sauces have an elevated role in the post-pandemic kitchen allowing for maximum versatility, cost savings, low labor requirements, and easy dish elevation. Sambal, hoisin, s'chug (zhug), and Thai chili sauce as well as the countless iterations of aioli and ranch are all solidly on-trend and continue to evolve offering ongoing engagement and innovation potential.



Other Trends of Note

1

While consumers may prefer working at home, they do not want to sacrifice the quality, innovation and variety available to them at restaurants. Work from home continues, though at a slightly lower rate, and with that consumers are engaging with restaurants less frequently than when they were in the office regularly. As a result, there is a tremendous amount of innovation in the retail space across all areas of the store – prepared foods, shelf stable, refrigerated and frozen – and across all categories including snacks, breakfast, and entrées. Though employers are increasingly mandating workers return to the office, consumers are unlikely to stop looking for convenient retail solutions that provide restaurant-level quality and uniqueness at home.

2

Mood-focused functional foods are the focus for consumers seeking solutions that help them manage stress, anxiety and depression. The U.S. and the world continue to be in a state of permacrisis. Though CBD falls within this category, it is hardly the only ingredient or option for consumers looking for a non-medicinal solution. Nuts, healthy oils, fruits, vegetables, herbs and spices as well as nootropics are being used in retail products to create flavorful items that meet consumers' need for mood solutions.



3

Sustainability has never been more important to a wide range of consumers,

especially given the last few years of significant and more extreme weather events. Though consumers have been challenged to spend the same amount of money on sustainable products in the face of inflation in 2023, there's no question that sustainability is now elevated in many consumers' minds and that they will begin to seriously seek out sustainable options once inflation begins to subside. Sustainability will impact food ingredients, packaging, delivery, and manufacturer and operator in-house behavior. Here, it's important to note that "sustainability" now encompasses social justice, workers' rights, animal welfare, and community involvement as well as environmental-specific issues such as water, air and soil quality and protection.

4

Labor and supply challenges have continued to impact restaurant quality and availability, increasing the interest for more at-home options that allow for greater consumer engagement.

Though consumers are still not engaging in extensive from scratch preparation behavior, skills and knowledge picked up during pandemic-driven experimentation are allowing consumers to more effectively replace restaurant experiences with meals at home. Kits and other partially prepared solutions offered at retail are creating management preparation engagement without sacrificing quality, variety or innovation for at home occasions, and similar products are offering foodservice operations solutions to improve quality and consistency.

5

Micro trends or food fads are offering both innovation opportunities and challenges for foodservice and retail.

Born out of social media, these micro trends and fads speak to broader consumer interest and preferences. But the speed with which these micro trends rise and fall create significant challenges for larger operators and manufacturers seeking to leverage their popularity. Trying to leverage a fad or fast-moving niche trend can be impossible for many organizations but considering the drivers behind these trends – such as textures, flavors, formats, convenience, engagement/interaction, variety or functionality – can inform innovation that is more ownable by either the manufacturer or foodservice operator.



1

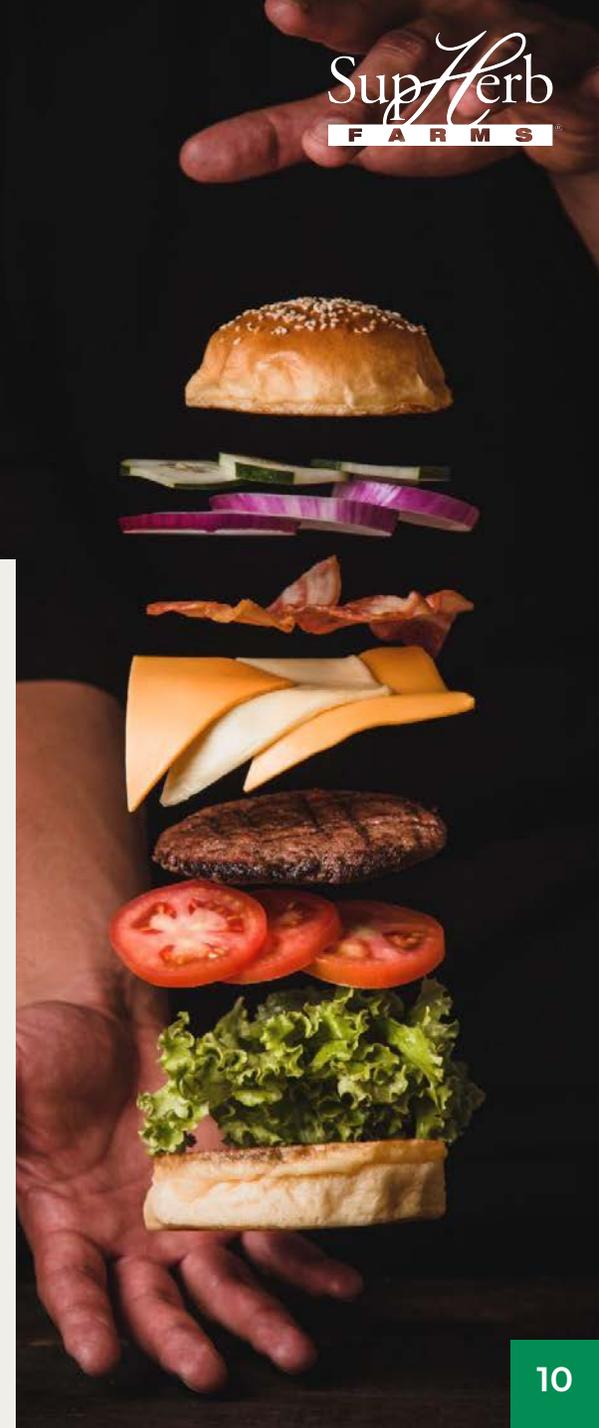
Edible packaging is emerging as an area of significant innovation and experimentation for both operators and manufacturers looking for more sustainable packaging options. At both foodservice and retail, edible packaging or packaging made from food products such as mycelian-based packaging, are becoming viable options. In some cases, this packaging enhances the consumption experience or creates a completely new experience while in others it elevates the emotional and morale connection for consumers, providing a strong reason to buy.

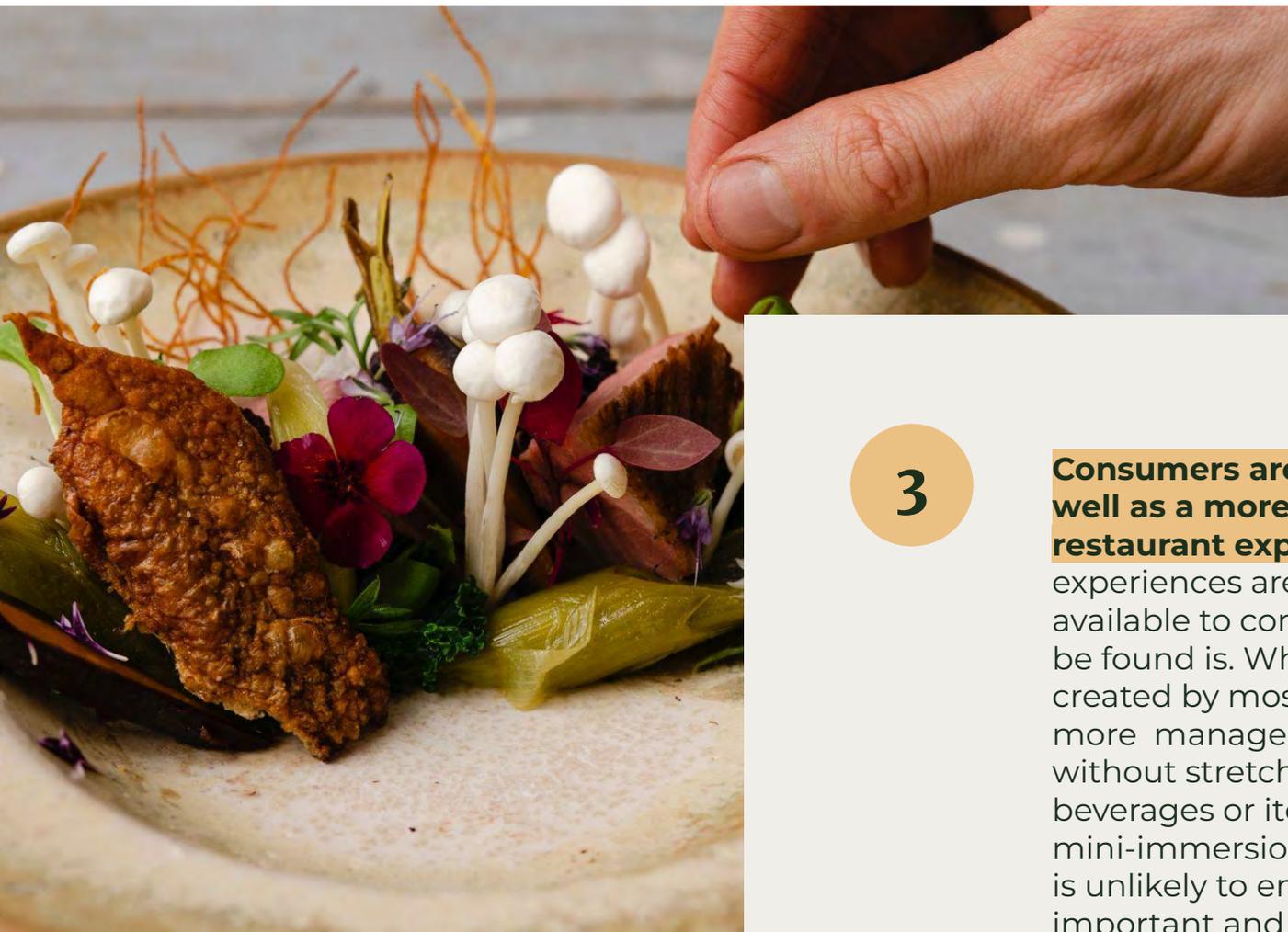


2

Artificial intelligence (AI) is emerging as a key tool for manufacturers and operators across a range of tasks.

Already, both manufacturers and operators have released products that were entirely designed by AI programs. Manufacturers are leaning on AI to help fill product innovation pipelines to ensure a steady stream of new product introductions, while foodservice operators are leveraging AI to help manage complex menu schedules across a range of units or operation concepts. Though AI is far from its full potential, it's clear that the food industry will find countless tasks and uses for this emerging technology. It's important to note that, today, AI is not effective at predicting new trends or unique innovation but is well designed to react to current and emerging preferences, flavors, and formats. As the technology evolves and improves, its ability to better predict truly new trends, products and other food/ beverage-related opportunities can better direct and inform long-term innovation and behavior models. Until then, AI can support near-term innovation and specific business/ operation issues such as stock management, menu management, sales forecasting, etc.





3

Consumers are seeking immersive experiences to provide escape as well as a more significant value proposition at a time when restaurant experiences are unpredictable at best.

Immersive experiences are, perhaps, not new but the breadth of experiences now available to consumers and the venues in which these experiences can be found is. While the most significant immersive experiences cannot be created by most operators or retailers, finding ways to create smaller, more manageable immersive experiences still meet consumer needs without stretching capabilities. At-table preparation, interactive dishes/ beverages or items that require some prep can help create mini-immersions for consumers. Given domestic and international chaos is unlikely to end before 2025, these types of experiences will remain important and relevant to consumers for some time.



2024 Trending Sauces & Condiments



- Sharper, tangy flavors are growing as evidenced by the rise in mustard and vinegar-based options.
- Heat exists on a broad spectrum now, ranging from the sweet heat of hot honey and mango habanero to bolder options such as gochujang.
- Consumers and operators are once again rediscovering BBQ.
- Salsa innovation is moving this condiment to the fore with several iterations growing on menus.
- Familiar sauce bases such as mayo, aioli, ranch and honey variations create intriguing new options.

+++ indicates growth over 200%

Datassential MenuTrends 2023 Q3, **PENETRATION:** Among restaurants serving appetizers/entrees/sides, % that offer...

MENU PENETRATION

4-YEAR GROWTH

Nashville Hot	4.0%	+++
Mango Habanero	4.1%	+119%
Hot Honey	5.1%	+98%
Rose Syrup	1.2%	+63%
Gochujang	2.6%	+54%
Honey Garlic	1.7%	+53%
White BBQ	1.2%	+51%
Chicken Bacon Ranch	4.8%	+50%
Chili Garlic	2.3%	+49%
Garlic Parmesan	8.1%	+49%
Green Salsa	1.5%	+47%
Salsa Roja	2.2%	+36%
Spicy Ranch	2.0%	+34%
Red Salsa	3.4%	+34%
Salt & Vinegar	3.0%	+33%
Hot Mustard	1.3%	+32%
Truffle Aioli	1.7%	+32%
Berry Compote	1.2%	+31%
Korean BBQ	2.7%	+30%
Lemon Oil	1.3%	+29%

2024 Trending Herbs & Spices



- Spice blends are becoming more significant pantry staples for operators, allowing for fast, off-the-shelf customization at a time when labor continues to present challenges.
- Asian blends including furikake and togarashi continue to grow.
- Floral profiles are becoming more prevalent as evidenced by the growth of lavender, hibiscus, and elderflower.
- Hotter spices including chili powder, red pepper flakes, dried chili, Thai chili and Aleppo pepper are moving into a more prominent position on the menu.
- Thai basil, lemongrass and Anaheim peppers are in the Adoption Phase of herbs and spices which positions them for broader availability and increased familiarity with consumers. Look for these items to become more popular in the years to come.



MENU PENETRATION 4-YEAR GROWTH

Tajin	4.7%	+++
Chili Powder	1.3%	+56%
Lavender	7.3%	+48%
Furikake	1.6%	+46%
Hibiscus	9.9%	+45%
Kosher Salt	1.5%	+43%
Turmeric	5.1%	+27%
Red Pepper Flakes	2.3%	+26%
Togarashi	2.2%	+21%
Dried Chili	1.0%	+19%
Black Garlic	2.2%	+16%
Elderflower	7.9%	+14%
Za'atar	1.9%	+14%
Thai Chili	5.3%	+13%
Pink Peppercorn	1.1%	+13%
Aleppo Pepper	1.1%	+12%
Sea Salt	14.9%	+12%
Italian Seasoning	2.2%	+7%

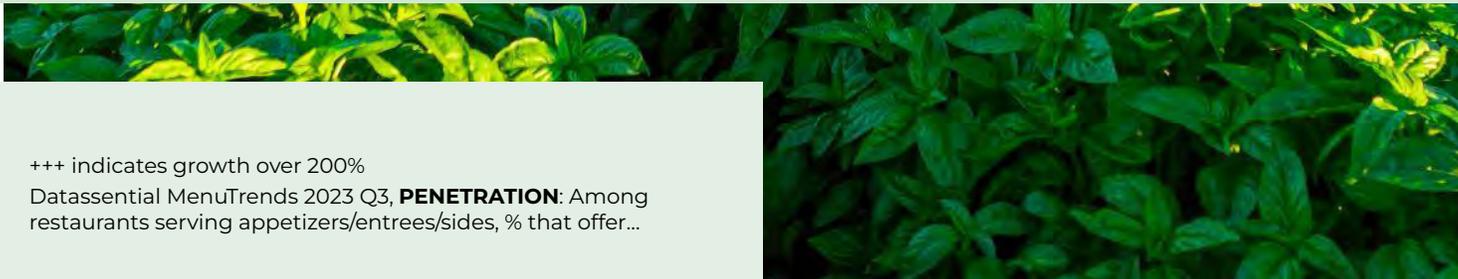
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2024 Trending Spicy Flavors & Sauces



- Chili continues to be a popular heat call out, appearing in a range of flavors and sauces from chili oil and dried chili powder as well as complex flavors such as chili garlic.
- Pickling is being used to create new heat sensations and experiences, with pickled fresno peppers and pickled jalapeños leading the way.
- Nashville hot continues to grow, expanding its presence on the menu though it remains far from ubiquitous with plenty of additional room to grow.
- Peppers continue to appeal to both operators and consumers with several – habanero, fresno, ghost, jalapeño and hatch – enjoying strong growth.
- As we’ve seen in the past, operators continue to use familiar sauce bases such as mayo, aioli, ranch and honey to create intriguing new options. Given the importance of sauces back of house, expect operators and manufacturers to increasingly blend on-trend ingredients (peppers, spice blends, herbs, etc.) into popular base sauces.



+++ indicates growth over 200%
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MENU PENETRATION 4-YEAR GROWTH

Nashville Hot	4.0%	+++
Mango Habanero	4.1%	+119%
Hot Honey	5.1%	+98%
Chili Powder	1.3%	+56%
Pickled Fresno Pepper	1.0%	+55%
Gochujang	2.6%	+54%
Chili Garlic	2.3%	+49%
Hot Mustard	1.3%	+32%
Ghost Pepper	1.5%	+32%
Pickled Jalapeno	5.5%	+31%
Habanero Pepper	10.6%	+28%
Red Pepper Flakes	2.3%	+26%
Spicy Mayo	6.1%	+26%
Jalapeno Ranch	2.4%	+26%
Chipotle Aioli	5.3%	+25%
Habanero Salsa	1.0%	+24%
Hatch Chile	1.6%	+24%
Chili Oil	3.8%	+22%
Dried Chili	1.0%	+19%
Sriracha Aioli	2.8%	+19%

Trends Impacting the Menu Now



Produce		Preparations	
Dragon Fruit	+113%	Macerated	+31%
Elote	+100%	Hand Tossed	+31%
Pickled Fresno	+55%	Smashed	+29%
Guava	+43%	Buttermilk Fried	+25%
Jackfruit	+34%	Clay Oven	+22%
Calabrian Chili Pepper	+34%	Brined	+22%
Ghost Pepper	+32%	Pounded	+21%
Pickled Jalapeño	+31%	Foam	+21%
Yellow Lentil	+30%	Flash Fried	+20%
Habanero Pepper	+28%	Unsweetened	+19%
Broccolini	+27%	Swirled	+18%
Castelvetrano Olive	+26%	Blistered	+18%
Yuzu	+25%	Twisted	+18%
Black Cherry	+25%	Powdered	+12%

+++ indicates growth over 200%; past 4-year growth
Datassential MenuTrends 2023 Q3

Trends Impacting the Menu Now (cont.)

Formats		World Cuisine Influences	
Plant-based Burger	+++	Tajin	+++
Birria	+++	Birria	+++
Buffalo Cauliflower	+++	Elote	+100%
Cauliflower Rice	+170%	Chicken Pad Thai 1	+92%
Elote	+100%	Rose Syrup	+63%
Avocado Toast	+94%	Matcha	+59%
Egg Fried Rice	+88%	Gochujang	+54%
Fried Cauliflower	+75%	Garlic Parmesan	+49%
Loaded Tots	+73%	Green Salsa 2	+47%
Pad Thai	+71%	Furikake	+46%
Loaded Fries	+61%	Cacio E Pepe	+41%
Salmon Chicken Salad	+51%	Salsa Roja 3	+36%
Popcorn Chicken	+49%	Korean BBQ 4	+31%
Cheese Curd	+47%	Chow Fun	+31%



1

[Sambal](#) is the perfect sidekick for Chicken Pad Thai. A bold combination of garlic & chili peppers with intense heat, tang and salty notes.



2

Latin American cuisine is steadily on the rise – and with it, unique and regional salsas. Consider upping your game and put a spin on a traditional salsa verde by using [poblano peppers](#).



3

Spicy red jalapeños, crisp green onions, fresh cilantro and aromatic garlic make up a popular, flavorful [salsa rojas](#).



4

Add serious umami flavor depth to Korean BBQ sauces with a [black garlic purée](#).

+++ indicates growth over 200%; past 4-year growth

Datassential MenuTrends 2023 Q3

Preferences Across Generations

Menu Matters, Datassential FLAVOR 2023

	Sauces		Herbs & Spices		Spicy	
	Characteristics	High Indexing Examples	Characteristics	High Indexing Examples	Characteristics	High Indexing Examples
Gen Z	Over the past year, Gen Z seems to have emerged from the pandemic doldrums and is now embracing some of the most unfamiliar but on-trend sauces though this generation still embraces some of the more familiar.	Chermoula, Sugo, Dahi, Achaar, Agrodolce, Soubise, Soda-infused Sauces, Checca, Verjus, Fry Sauce, Soda Glaze,	Gen Z , growing up with a far more diverse array of cuisines available to them, are interested in the more complex blended spices and less common herbs.	Asafoetida, Galangal, Makrut Lime Leaves, Amchur, Baharat, Marash Pepper, Pandan, Ras El Hanout, Urfa Biber	Gen Z may be skewing away from hot flavors in favor of more umami-forward options.	Baharat, Ras El Hanout, Gochugaru, Berbere, Espelette Pepper
Millennials	While Millennials certainly embrace the less common and aren't afraid to experiment, Gen Z may now be giving Millennials a run for their money as the more trend-forward generation.	Sambal, Eel Sauce, Achaar, Agrodolce, Soda-infused Sauces, Checca, Pink Sauce, Sugo, Verjus, White BBQ Sauce	Millennials index higher in individual, but unique, and far less common individual spices and herbs versus the complex blends favored by Gen Z.	Asafoetida, Papalo, Kratom, Amchur, Hyssop, Kava, Suya Spice, Grains of Paradise, Shiso, Morita Chile	Millennials love spicy and hot flavor profiles in everything from ranch to aioli and appreciate a range of hot peppers.	Mala Seasoning, Morita Chile, Szechuan Buttons, Padron Peppers
Gen X	Though more trend-forward than typically given credit for, Gen X does lean more on classic sauces and condiments while still embracing some of the newer sauces once these sauces become somewhat more mainstream.	Sambal, Panang Sauce, Piri Piri, Sherry Vinaigrette, Remoulade, Mojo, Maple Bourbon, Soda-infused Sauces	Gen X was the first generation to show greater affinity for international flavors and elements, though still appreciates classics.	Ginko Biloba, Grains of Paradise, Nepitella, Ancho Pepper, Achiote, Ginseng, Togarashi, Mustard Seed	Gen X'ers , perhaps the first generation to truly embrace heat as an experience, this generation focuses more on peppers and less extreme heat than Millennials.	Sambal, Piquillo Pepper, Ancho Pepper, Achiote, Piri Piri, Aji Amarillo
Boomers	Boomers strongly embrace the most traditional sauce and condiment varieties, which can be used as a familiar base for moderate experimentation.	Bearnaise, Russian Dressing, Mornay Sauce, Au Jus, Hollandaise, Mushroom Gravy, Demi-Glace, Red Clam Sauce	Boomers show above-average affinity for simpler flavor profiles and more traditional herbs and spices.	Sweet Basil, Caraway, Anise, Marjoram, Tarragon, Clove, Bay Leaf, Nutmeg, Sage, Ginger	Boomers typically do not find spicy or hot foods appealing, skewing more toward more mild, classic flavor profiles.	Horseradish, Brown Mustard, Dijon Mustard, Spicy Mustard



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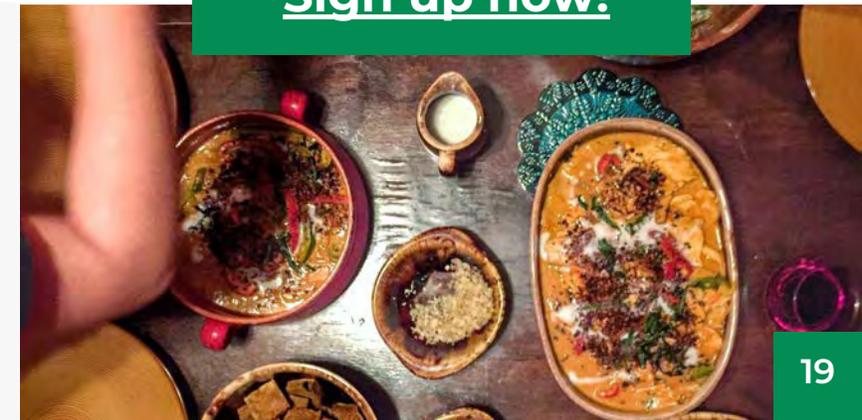
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