



## **12 HOTTEST FOOD & BEVERAGE TRENDS FOR RESTAURANTS AND HOTEL DINING FOR 2014 + 30 BUZZWORDS**

Consultants [Baum+Whiteman](#) say that concepts of luxury thread through top dining trends: tasting menus running \$1,000 for two, haute chicken priced like steak, upscale food halls, bespoke spices ... even theatrical and sci-fi effects changing the global dining scene by bombarding customers' senses.

Department stores jumping back into the restaurant biz. Hipster Asian and Jewish fusion getting traction. Smart money placing bets on better-for-you dining. Tasting menus trickling into mid-price markets.

Flocks of beverage trends from fast food to cocktail lounges.

Taking another look at Mid-East food trends.

[Baum+Whiteman](#) creates high-profile restaurants around the world for hotels, restaurant companies, museums and other consumer destinations. Based in New York, their projects include the late Windows on the World and the magical Rainbow Room, and the world's first food courts. Their annual hospitality predictions follow ...

### **1 ... RESTAURANTS IN RETAIL STORES**

Thirty years ago, American department stores kicked out their restaurants ("too messy; unproductive"). Big mistake. Now retailers, large and tiny, are mainlining food ... discovering the magic of "dwell time": Keep hungry customers on the premises longer and they buy much more.

The restaurant in Tommy Bahama's New York flagship sells hamachi crudo, coffee-crusted ribeye with marrow butter, and fish tacos with Asian slaw. The café in Urban

Outfitters' Terrain home-and-garden shop in Westport Ct. offers scallops with preserved lemon, and duck with bruleed strawberries.

In Chicago, Saks is opening its first Sophie's global-American restaurant ... others coming to Sarasota, San Juan and New York.

Brooks Brothers will build a 15,000 sq.ft. steakhouse prototype in New York called Makers and Merchants ... so have a martini, buy a ninety-dollar tie.

In Bellevue, Washington, Nordstrom's inserted Habitant, an upscale bar-cafe with blueberry lavender martinis and watermelon-jalapeno margaritas ... smack in the middle of its women's department (*photo right*). Forlorn husbands cry in their beer while women shop. Restoration Hardware's trying to open a wine bar in its Boston store.



*Photo Stefanie Knowlton*

At the other extreme, bicycle sales and rental shops are adding cafes, bars, juiceries and yogurt counters to build traffic. Perhaps 12% have coffee bars, 5% serve beer. And Checkers drive-ins are opening in Wal-Mart stores.

Numbers tell the story: Terrain's shops with food can double customers' dwell times. Tommy Bahama's stores with restaurants generate two-and-a-half times the sales per square foot. Two restaurants and a retail market designed by ABC Carpet & Home in New York ... run by Jean-Georges Vongerichten ... bring hoards of customers daily.

Finally ... the mega-million dollar 10,000 sq.ft. Italian restaurant Stella on Macy's 6<sup>th</sup> floor in New York. Run by Patina Restaurant Group, with 250 seats and three wood-

burning ovens, it is busy all the time ...a priced as an upscale restaurant.

It all is part of a larger trend of restaurants ... with high sales per square foot and repeat customers ... becoming “anchors” not just in shopping malls and department stores, but in hotels, airports and museums (The Museum of Sex in New York has a 160-seat bar called “Play” serving Loose Women and Crush Porn cocktails).

## **2 ... PROLIFERATION OF TASTING-ONLY MENUS**

A three-year bull-market is fueling a proliferation of tasting menus around the country. Great for restaurants’ economics, guaranteeing a specific average check along with pre-costed, highly controlled inventory.

As five-percenters wallow in capital gains, no one cares about cost ... \$270 at French Laundry with \$175 supplement for white truffle pasta ... \$208 for the Grazing, Pecking, Rooting menu at Blue Hill at Stone Barns ... \$185 for the all-veg menu at Grace in Chicago ... \$155 at Menton in Boston ... \$248 at Saison in San Fran ... \$225 at 11 Madison Park ... some shoot-the-moon dinners run \$1000 for two with wines. Ramshackle Roberta’s, in the wilds of Brooklyn, famous for artisan pizzas, carved out a dining counter called Blanca, where \$180 gets you a multi-course dinner. Many are using custom



*Photo, Thrillist*

tabletops to emphasize the ceremony and the occasion. All these are booked weeks ahead. Operators say prayers every night for Wall Street.

Now there will be “trickle-downs” ... less elite restaurants with tasting options to a la carte menus, costing the same as filling up your SUV ... following the leads of Sanford in Milwaukee offering 7 courses for \$85 (sturgeon on crab hash) ... La Belle Vie in Minneapolis, 8 courses for \$85 (poussin with pumpkin and foie gras tart) ... \$68 gets you six courses at The Firehouse in Sacramento (mulligatawny scallops) ... \$85 for six courses at Luca d’Italia in Denver (tuna puttanesca) ... \$90 for five courses at Restaurant Eve in Alexandria (brown butter rockfish, yogurt, pickled sultanas, curry). No word from Red Lobster or Bennigan’s.

### **3 ... CHICKEN: NO LONGER HUMBLE**

The humble bird is going *haute*. Rôtisserie Georgette, a new upscale chicken-focused restaurant in Manhattan, is no mere takeout joint. Run by Georgette Farkas, Daniel Boulud’s former right hand, it has grand space, two rotisseries and a French-accented menu with occasional fried chicken specialties ... A multi-starred restaurant in Greenwich Village is planning a no-seat fried chicken shop ... The \$79 roast chicken for two with foie gras at Nomad that arrives looking like Christmas



(*photo, right*) and is the restaurant’s best seller by far ... An equally great one, for \$29 at Betony, comes with a side of leg meat, mushrooms, dandelions, farro, and a quail egg.

If this were just a New York thing, we wouldn’t much care. But chefs around the country

are ramping up prices as they play flavor one-upmanship. Poulet vert (\$24) at Marlow in San Fran is marinated in an anchovy-green sauce. In Boston, Craigie on Main's roast chicken for two (\$74) is cooked sous vide in chicken fat and spices, then finished with butter and togarashi (see trend #11) salt. Chicken for two with chanterelles and black mission figs at the Peninsula Hotel, Chicago, is \$54.

McDonald's Mighty Wings may have fizzled ... too spicy, they said ... but starred chefs are spicing up the low end of the market. Shaun Doty of Bantam & Bidy opened 2500 sq.ft. Chick-a-Biddy in Atlanta with, among other items, Thai chili and grilled piri piri wings with cilantro-garlic sauce ... Brad Ogden will bring fast-cas Funky Chicken, 70+ seats, beer and wine, to Houston ... Ludo Lefebvre opened Ludo Bird at Staples Center with buttermilk-fried chicken with béarnaise and piquillo pepper sauces. Want to know how hot is hot? Nashville is ground-zero for ultra-spicy birds ... bring Chapstick. Don't tell McD.

#### **4 ... GOODBYE FOOD COURTS, HELLO FOOD HALLS**

Cookie-cutter mall food courts serving repetitive same-old chain food are on the downslide. Enter upscale "food halls" ... "artisan" food staffed by local, name-brand restaurants. Best of these combine on-premises manufacturing, eating, takeaway and retail. In New York, see animated basement of The Plaza Hotel. Or the 50,000 sq. ft. Eataly ... so successful it raised all rents nearby ... and Chicago's about to get one, too. East End Market in a former church in Orlando features a dozen central Florida artisans.



Rebalancing their portfolios, real estate developers want attractions like The Plaza's food hall ... drawing enormous crowds ... where food is better, fresher, memorable, pricey ... perfect for today's customers seeking products they can trust. Downtown Anaheim has a 42,000 square footer ... New York getting at least three more biggies ... Cleveland has a resurrected West Side Market with 100+ vendors ... Chicago has 15,000 sq.ft. French Market.

The Irving Spectrum closed its food court ... other shopping centers considering *second* food courts with elite vendors and more razzmatazz. In the burbs, food draws more people than department stores. You're seeing upper-crust consumers ... nicely recovered from the recession ... driving the dining agenda not just in malls but museums, stadiums, public attractions.

## 5 ... FISHY FISH

The no-no of Caesar salads has become respectable ... people are ordering anchovies ... especially Spanish salt-packed ones called *boquerones*, and even fresh ones. You'll find them on Nicoise salads and fresh mozzarella, or tossed with breadcrumbs atop pasta. They're ordering fresh sardines, too ... warm ones. Herring hasn't hit the big-time but Americans are beginning to give mackerel ... another oily fish ... a second look. Who knows, maybe the moment has come to re-menu bluefish.



## 6 ... BUBBLING, FIZZING BEVERAGE TRENDS

- **Tea:** With Starbucks committed to converting America to tea, look for others to amplify the attention.

Teavanna opened a tea bar/cafe in Manhattan ... with more to come ... discovering people are more likely to buy food with tea than with coffee. Smart bartenders will look at



Teavanna's and competitors' multi-flavored fruit and herbal blends as convenience bases for boozy cocktails ... chefs may use them for basting.

- **Vermouth:** Latest fixation of artisan bartenders ...making bespoke vermouths and stocking dozens of branded items ... mostly obscure. Go to Spain to see the real action.
- **Sodas:** SodaStream contraptions have consumers experimenting with sodas at home ... even making carbonated cocktails. Restaurants also crafting sodas using house-made fruit syrups and infusions ... some bottled, some on-tap. The craft beer movement spawns craft sodas ... same mantra: local, natural, artisan. And Starbucks (they're onto every trend) has customer soda machines ... called Fizio ... on test in stores carbonating teas, sodas, coffee, lemonade.

- **Sour Beer:** Inoculating beers with wild yeasts and aging them in wood, craft brewers are turning out fragrant but sour ... really sour ... beers. Not for everyone, but catching on among sophisticates. With the acidity of pinot noir, they're great with bbq.
- **Pressed Juices:** Juice bars are no longer for health nuts and body cleansers. Lots of investors pouring into cold-pressed juiceterias now that millions of people ... too busy to eat an apple or carrot but willing to pay someone to juice it for them ... are demanding fresh fruit and vegetables in profuse combinations. Just-made is best, four-hour juice is next-best, and then there's high-pressure sterilization that keeps bottled juices in the fridge for days or week. All lack fiber but they're selling. Jamba Juice repositioning from a smoothie chain and Starbuck's Evolution Fresh becoming a lifestyle brand. Pressed juices plus booze make super-premium cocktails.
- **Bar Culture Trendlets:** Mixologists, mostly in hotels, bottling their own small-batch carbonated cocktails. Flavored ice cubes. Misting flavored essences over finished cocktails. Gin connoisseurship ... gin and tonic bars ... Oceana in New York stocks 38 types of gin. Hard cider will take off next as beer brewers enter the market to protect their businesses ... food-friendly, low-alcohol, gluten-free ... even seducing non-drinkers. Dispensed highbrow slushy cocktails with house-made ingredients ... faster service, unique, hand-crafted. Locally made rye and bourbon; there are





more than 300 small-batch distillers in the US. Farm-to-shaker cocktail merchandising. Non-sugar sweeteners. More beer and wine in fast-casual chains.

## **7 ... WHEN BUTTER'S NOT ENOUGH**

Last year we talked about upcharges for bread baskets. EVOO and balsamic vinegar are too old-hat. Now the ante is upped as chefs litter your table with creative spreads. At The Pass, Houston, you get black garlic mostarda, vanilla tapenade, tomato jam, salted butter. Other places offer whipped lardo, rosemary hummus, roasted garlic butter, smoked ricotta, whipped beet butter, porcini oil, jalapeno oil, smoked eggplant dip, salsa butter, whipped chicken liver butter. Look for more chef-driven spreads to enliven a meal ... and seduce you into another cocktail.

## **8 ... GREEN IS THE COLOR**

Green is the color of “lettuce” ... as in money. Healthy food investments finally are paying off as a niche market rolls into the mainstream. More than one factor propels this profound market change: the gluten-rejecters, Paleo people, diabetics, weight challenged, vegetarians, vegans ... and two decades of hectoring by nutritionists, food Nazis, and perhaps the first lady. Sweetgreen, a 20-unit chain based in Washington, established beachheads in Boston and



Manhattan, where lunchtime lines snake out the door until mid afternoon. Using a Chipotle service format ... with heart-tugging core values that touch every good-for-the-planet trend ... the chain specializes in salads and wraps heavy on greens and grains

with modest quantities of animal protein, cold-pressed juices, and frozen yogurt. A bevy of private investors accelerates this company's growth.

Chipotle itself can't be left behind ... and is expanding its tests of vegan Sofritas ... tofu braised in chilies and spices. Fast feeders are sure to follow ... if they can figure out how to make healthy fit their formats.

Veggie Grill, with 20+ units up and down the west coast, has an enormous vegetarian menu ... including lots of plant-based faux food ... and waiter service. After a big capital infusion, the franchisor is ramping up expansion. Chop't, with two dozen stores in DC and New York, turns its immense roster of good-for-you ingredients into chopped salad bowls and sandwiches. Tossed, based in New York, is expanding across the country with its 50-item toss-in options. Tender Greens, with 16 units in California has pricier farm-to-fork ethos and is heavier on animal protein.

At the other end of the price spectrum, bold-face chefs are adding vegetarian tasting menus to their offerings. Restaurant Daniel has three courses for \$116 ... \$185 for the all-veg menu at Grace in Chicago ... \$125 at Melissa's in Santa Monica ... and for good measure, there's a \$10 carrot served at American Cut steakhouse not very far from Wall Street, and a \$20 veggie burger at ABC Kitchen.

## **9 ... POPUPS, FOOD FAIRS, AND THE SINGLE-ITEM RESTAURANT**

Weekend popup markets (Smorgasburg, Brooklyn; Ferry Terminal, San Fran, food truck fairs) make room for wacky food creations ... that often graduate to brick-and-mortar restaurants. Meatball shops around the country ... Mexi-sandwiches ... waffle shops ... dumplings ... Belgian frites ... cross-cultural eggrolls.

Best example may be the by-now over-copied ramen burger (*photo right*). Cupcakes may be passé but here are some recent one-item restaurants: a baked potato shop ... oatmeal only ... churros ... Greek yogurt ... Nutella Bar coming to Eataly, Chicago ... ice pops ... hummus ... arancini ... artisan cannolis ... biscuits. Of course, if they catch on, these usually are gobbled up by big chains (croissants, for example).



Wise operators prowl around farmers markets, night markets and truck rodeos to see what's selling. Wiser ones fly to Europe and Singapore for ideas.

## **10 ... I LOST MY DINNER IN THE FUNHOUSE**

Food is not enough ... restaurants are enhancing the dining experience by fiddling with our senses ... redefining “eatertainment.” Avant garde restaurant Ultraviolet, in Shanghai, shanghai's ten high-spending diners nightly to a secret room that radically shifts moods with each course ... uplights in the floor, 360-degree high-def projectors, swings in air temperature, four smell diffusers, 22 speakers, LEDs, waiters changing customers to suit the food. Chef-owner Paul Pairet calls it “psychotasting” ... you go from Zen to hell in 20 courses over four hours in a night of sensory integration. Oh, yes, the food's pretty good.

At the Casino de Madrid building, star chef Paco Roncero built a 9-seat invitation-only techno-dining room ... experimenting with relationships between food and perception. Diffusers control temperature and humidity, occasionally wafting aromas of mushrooms or grassy wetness ... a ceramic table heats or cools plates and vibrates on cue, and the audio-visual environment is tightly scripted.

David Bouley's private dining room, called The Pass, contains a giant screen ... and guests in New York converse *in real time* with growers and vintners whose products are on the table ... even if the supplier is in Japan.

At Dutch Design Week this year, Michelin starred restaurant Treeswijkhoeve collaborated with designer Junhyun Jeon in a five-course sensory menu served with tactile tableware focusing on the tongue-lips-mouth interface ... cups with nipples, ball-shaped spoons, and irritatingly spiky tasting surfaces (see photo) aimed at flipping or modifying perceptions of salty, sour, sweet, and bitter. Recent research reveals that people perceive round shapes as sweeter and jagged shapes as bitter.



In Spain, the Roca brothers of Can Roca have projected images onto their dishes of food to heighten the experience ... and they've created *Il Somni*, a 12-act, 12-course banquet-opera based culinary history, memory, landscape and poetry. In Barcelona, Adria's 41 Degrees plunges guests into an art installation ... music is cued to 41 globetrotting courses, images projected on to hanging glass shards.

In Brooklyn, a restaurant serves meals in utter silence. And dining in the dark ... stimulating the remaining four senses ... spreads to cities around the world. This isn't just intellectual vapor ... beside the here-and-now experiences, these operators are exploring how combined sensory stimuli create powerful, emotional and memorable ties between consumers and restaurants. One more thing you can't get at home.

## 11 ... NEW WAVE OF ASIAN FLAVORS

Friday's offers sriracha aioli and kimchee's gone mass market ... on pizza, burgers and oysters, in grits and tacos. A new wave of Asian flavors (and menu items) is upon us. Better learn about gochujang ... a sweet-spicy Korean amalgam of fermented hot chili paste and soy ... jumping from bibimbap to bbq. Shichimi togarashi ... Japanese seven-spice of sesame seeds, ginger, nori and hot peppers ... is sprinkled on chicken wings, salads, grilled fish; it's a new salt-and-pepper.

Parilla isn't a Spanish condiment ... it's a large shiso leaf, shiso being the green thingee that comes with sashimi ... fragrant in a geranium way (*photo right*). Thai and Vietnamese fish sauce ... foul-smelling fermented stuff ... is being snuck into Western dishes that need an umami boost, from roasted chicken to grilled meat sauces. Shisito peppers will mainstream as snacks and garniture. Sansho is a slightly milder Japanese version of Szechuan pepper.



Suggest you research okonomiyaki. Korean dumplings (mandoo) will cross the ethnic divide, as will twice-fried Korean chicken. Ramen popping up everywhere ... will trigger a new connoisseurship and multi-culti variations.

## 12 ... LOOK AGAIN AT MIDEAST COOKING

Forget Spain and Greece ... the south side of the Mediterranean and the Levant are where new tastes and dishes are coming from: Turkey, Israel, Morocco, Iraq, Iran. Israel exports not just high tech but its innovative "New Israeli" cross-cultural cuisine ... absorbing ideas and techniques from all over the region. Families fleeing turmoil in Tunisia, Egypt, Iran and Iraq are bringing their splendid food here. Syria's displaced

people may provide another wave of culinary excitement. Explore Turkish street food for ideas. The cookbook “Jerusalem” is flying out of bookstores and you need to read it.

Zaatar and pomegranate molasses already have made it to kitchens here ... and shakshuka (*photo, right*) will appear on America’s breakfast and brunch menus. Global riffs being added to falafel and hummus.

A few more drone attacks and shug or shuk ... an incendiary Yemenite dip spiked with coriander, cumin and red or green chilies ... could be the next harissa as people emigrate. Muhammara ... a fiery-sweet dip from Aleppo, Syria, with tahina, peppers, walnuts and tomato paste ... deserves a look.



*Photo: Shiksa in the Kitchen*

Freekeh, toasted green wheat, is catching on with trendinistas looking to stay ahead of the quinoa curve. Lior Lev Sercarz, an Israeli spice monger running New York’s La Boîte à Epice, sells secret custom spice blends with Middle Eastern flavors to chefs like Eric Ripert, Daniel Boulud, Michael Solomonov, Marc Forgione, who swear by them.

## **BUZZWORDS FOR 2014:**

Boneless lamb neck. Filipino food. High-proof spirits. Sweetbreads make a comeback. Buckwheat is grain of the year ... even if it’s not a grain. Fluke is fish of the year ... octopus second ... trout third. Kale still rules but cauliflower’s working forward. Consumers’ newfound protein obsessions. House-made fruit vinegars for vinaigrettes and cocktails. Teres major (look it up). High-priced vegetarian tasting menus. More

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beer and wine in fast-casual chains. House-fermented food. New uses for pretzels. Banh mi makes it onto Western menus. Chicken skin. Crackdown on food waste. Rose wines all year long. Hipster Asian restaurants. Drinkers rediscover gin ... gin bars and gin-tonic bars. Jewish fusion. Coconut everything. Mexican sandwiches ... tortas and cemitas. Sweetened and flavored whiskeys ... smoked, mapled, honeyed ... prove most Americans don't like the real taste of booze. Made-to-order liquid nitro ice cream. Jerusalem artichokes. Paleo dieters add to gluten-free demand. Delivery, high-priced and fast food. Smart phones, tablet computers speed ordering and payment, cut service staff. Shakshuka (look that up, too) will appear on breakfast and brunch menus. Sorghum becomes a trendy sweetener.

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