

2019 ETHNIC FLAVOR TRENDS

 **CUSTOM
CULINARY**
BE TRUE TO THE FOOD.

AND HOW TO ADAPT THEM TO YOUR MENU

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1



CUSTOMCULINARY.COM


BY CUSTOM CULINARY™
WHERE INSIGHTS BECOME INSPIRATION™

87% OF CONSUMERS ARE ORDERING FOOD WITH ETHNIC FLAVORS. WHAT WILL YOU DO TO EMBRACE THE TREND?



A third of people eat ethnic food at least once a week and 32% are willing to pay extra for authentic ethnic fare.

2018 Ethnic Food & Beverage Consumer Trend Report, Technomic

The majority of consumers have an affinity for trying new foods and flavors--75% of U.S. adults, in fact. NPD Group confirmed this number in a recent study and went on to share that young adults especially continue to show interest for ethnic flavors and dishes. This love has fueled a growing number of ethnic foods and flavors, many of which we see on today's trends lists.

With tacos, Chinese takeout and plates of pasta firmly entrenched in the American meal plan, diners are looking beyond to regional corners of Asia, the diversity of South America, and to a list of European delights. Add in an increasingly diverse population, the growing number of specialty ethnic chains, and the technology to help us discover local spots, and the opportunities to sample less traditional cuisines instantly multiply.

1 in 3

new food & beverage launches feature an ethnic flavor

Source: Innova

YOUNGER GENERATIONS HAVE GROWN UP EATING ETHNIC FOODS, AND ARE QUICK TO EMBRACE NEW ONES.

Millennials are driving much of the away-from-home consumption of ethnic foods. Now Gen Z is coming of age and poised to push flavors further. These groups will continue trying new foods, seeking share-worthy food experiences, and looking for lesser-known, specialty ingredients.

As younger and diverse generations move into adulthood, their eating preferences have met them there. In fact, 66% of operators say they are menuing more ethnic dishes than they were 2 years ago, according to Technomic. And nearly half of non-commercial operators are embracing ethnic and regional trends when developing new menu items. With immigration, students studying abroad, and the diversity of younger consumers, it's important to offer a mix of menu options that balance authenticity and global awareness.



Millennials are purchasing 1.2 billion ethnic meals per year

Technomic's 2017 Flavor Consumer Trend Report.

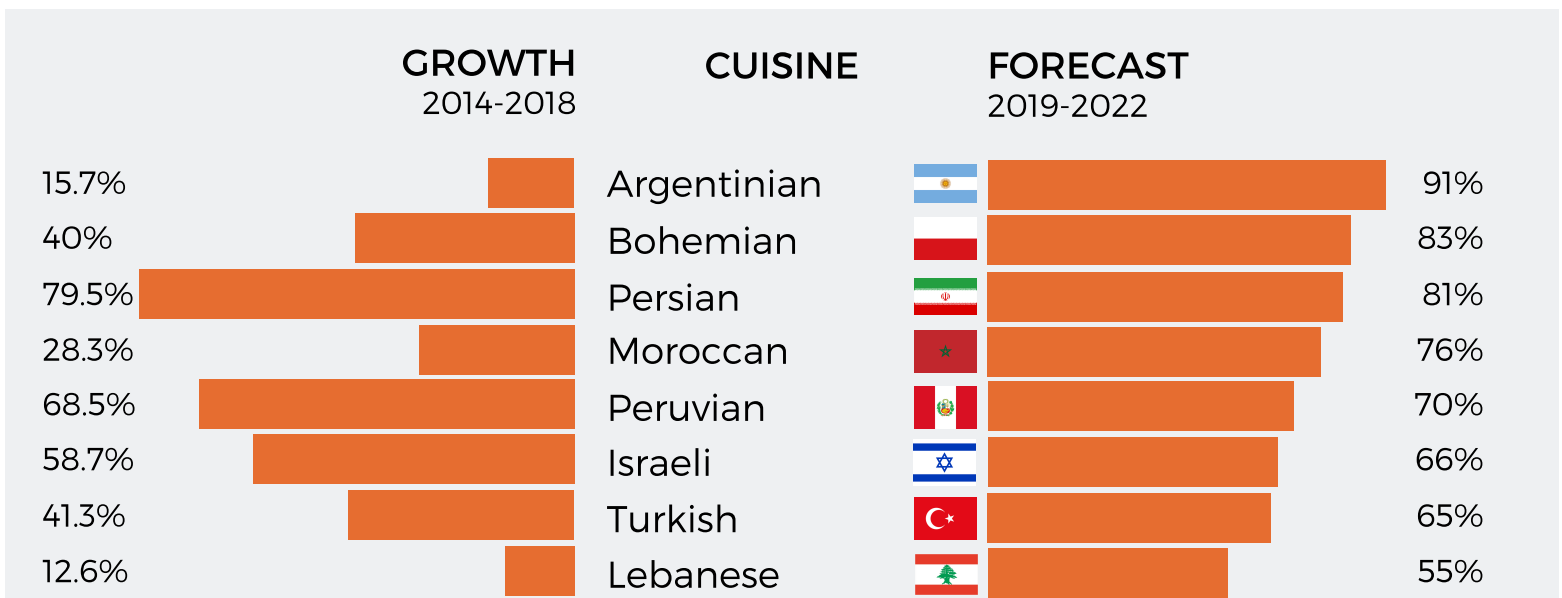


1 IN 3 CONSUMERS EXPECT RESTAURANTS TO FREQUENTLY INTRODUCE NEW FLAVORS.

Luckily, there are many trending flavors to consider. Technomic, a foodservice consultancy firm, points to Levantine cuisine as a growing opportunity. Mexican is positioned to see widespread growth, and the specialties from maritime Southeast Asia will be making their mark. And consumers are giving us permission to push even further by showing interest in buzzing cuisines such as Syrian, Oaxacan, and classic cuisines, like French, that may benefit from a refresh.

Looking for more? Japanese, Middle Eastern, Jamaican, Spanish, Hawaiian, Indian, French, German, and British cuisines are also making their way across menus and are worth keeping an eye on this year.

2019 Fastest Growing Cuisines



Highest Growth Ethnic Cuisines/Emerging (4 Year Growth) Source: Datassential MenuTrends, Haiku
 Forecast indicates the cuisine is on track to outperform xx% of all other foods in the next 4 years.

GROWING CUISINES FOR 2019 MENU EXPLORATION



KOREAN

Intensely flavored, savory, bold, spicy, pickled, fermented

Growth: 50% **Outlook:** 94%



THAI

Fresh, balance of sweet, salty, sour, bitter

Growth: 14.7% **Outlook:** 93%

● TRY THESE DISHES ●

Japchae: A traditional Korean noodle dish made of stir-fried sweet potato, thinly shredded vegetables, beef, and a splash of soy sauce and sugar

Hoeddeok: A sweeter version of the U.S. pancake filled with cinnamon, honey, brown sugar, and peanuts

Tod Mun Pla: A Thai fish cake that could offer an entry into something sweet, savory, and new

Kai Jeow Moo Sab: A wok-fried omelet stuffed with a variety of ingredients like garlicky, peppery ground pork or fermented Thai sausage

Outlook: On track to outperform xx% of all other foods in the next 4 years. Source: Datassential Haiku



GROWING CUISINES FOR 2019 MENU EXPLORATION



OAXACAN

Smoky, savory, fragrant herbs & chilies, complex

Growth: 66.1% **Outlook:** 90%



VIETNAMESE

Balance, fresh herbs, bold spices, umami-rich, bright

Growth: 25.3% **Outlook:** 83%

● TRY THESE DISHES ●

Antojitos: Translated as “little whims” or small plates and include options like memelas, tlayudas, and empanadas

Goat Barbacoa Enchilada: Spicy Oaxacan goat barbecue served with hand-pressed tortillas blandas

Outlook: On track to outperform xx% of all other foods in the next 4 years. Source: Datassential Haiku

Banh Khot: Bite-size pancake made of coconut milk and filled with shrimp, mung beans, and spring onions

Bot Chien: A crispy fried rice flour snack with slices of papaya, shallots, green onions, pickled chili sauce, and rice vinegar

OFFER AUTHENTIC DISHES AND SHOWCASE MORE UNIQUE INGREDIENTS TO GET CONSUMERS EXCITED.

Consumers are ready to explore, with 36% looking to regional varieties of mainstream ethnic cuisines to try new foods and flavors. In a recent Technomic survey, respondents expressed an interest in trying Yucatan, Taiwanese, and Fujian fare. Even the cuisines that consumers are most unfamiliar with, such as Filipino, Indonesian, and Vietnamese, are of interest.

A well-trained staff ready to describe the menu items is an effective approach to conveying authentic cues. Utilizing menu descriptors to highlight traditional preparations and ingredients is a smart play, too. Other clues that consumers watch for include the chef's training, the presentation of the fare, and the boldness of the flavors. Plus, consumers have the tools at their fingertips to see what an authentic version of a dish should be.



Bing Bing, St. Louis, gets its name from the Chinese Jianbing, a savory pancake filled with eggs, scallions, veggies or meat.

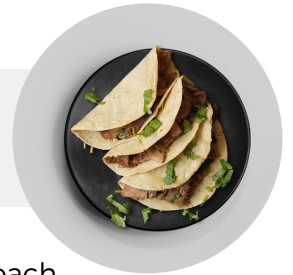
Cassava, San Francisco, serves Koshihikari rice with miso soup, pickled cabbage, bean sprouts kimchi, shio koji-marinated market fish, local wakame, carrots and sesame, white miso-marinated corn and tomatoes, and a poached egg.

60% of consumers say authenticity is important when deciding where to eat

Source: Technomic

EMBRACE THE TRENDS WITH THESE IDEAS & TIPS.

TIP#1: BUILD FROM THE FAMILIAR



Taking a form that is already recognized and accepted by consumers is a proven approach to menu innovation. A taco or a sandwich, for instance, can become new and fresh with your unique spin. While 32% of consumers are hesitant to eat ethnic flavors when the ingredients are unfamiliar, another 31% of consumers enjoy the ethnic dishes that feature a twist on the traditional recipe. It's often the small twists that offer the most delight.

- Pick a familiar base.
- Top with a balance of textures.
- Add trending ingredients like plantains, Korean BBQ, peanut sauce, seaweed, kimchee, or achiote.



Vietnamese Style Tacos on Roti Canai (Malaysian flatbread), topped with cilantro, pickled carrots & daikon, and sriracha lime mayo

TIP#2: PLAN IN PLATFORMS

Identify insight-driven categories to organize your new ideas. Challenge yourself to change it up when developing menus and be open to multiple sources of inspiration to keep it fresh. Here are some ideas to get you started:



SAUCES

- Gochujang, an earthy, spicy chili paste, is essential to Korean cooking, and a delicious entry point.
 - Doenjang, a soybean paste, and chunjang, a black bean paste, already have a following.
 - Chamoy, a Latin American flavor is an intensely fruity, salty, sweet, sour, spicy condiment.
- Kimchi, pickled vegetables, and hard-boiled eggs simmered in soy sauce are often included in a banchan offering.
 - Nam phrik num, a northern Thai-style dip of grilled chilies, shallots and garlic is a pungent dip for savory fried chicken.



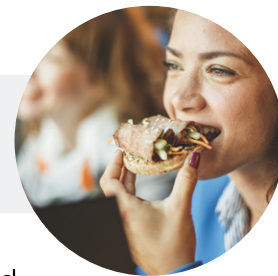
SIDES



HANDHELDS

- Jianbing is a large, thin savory pancake wrap filled and folded into an easy-to-carry pocket.
- Bahn Mi variations are all over the place and bringing Vietnamese to the masses.
- Samosas bring bite-sized appeal, especially when filled with the flavors of India and South Asia.

TIP#3: TELL YOUR FLAVOR STORY



The most powerful menus are those that tell a thoughtful story about foods, flavors, and the methods that bring it all to life. When crafting your story, consider the following:

- For the consumers seeking authentic experiences, take the extra steps to educate guests on the inspiration, methods, preparation styles, and ingredient origins. Even if it's only "authentic" to you, the story matters.
- Tell your customers what you're doing! For example, talk about the chefs that are native to the featured cuisine, share the stories of the trips taken to the origin country, or offer your personal knowledge of a spice, region, or cuisine. Social media platforms are an easy way to share this information with guests.
- A tempting menu description has the most influence on diners' decisions to try an ethnic dish, according to 49% of consumers overall and 53% of older consumers in a recent Technomic study. Take the time to craft the message and include the ingredients that make the dish special, and unique.
- Add a photo to encourage the cautious consumer to give it a try. Younger consumers are most motivated by visuals, with 40% in favor of photos and 31% adding social media as an influence, according to Technomic.
- Connect lesser-known cuisines to mainstream trends to encourage trial. For instance, Thai dishes may appeal to consumers seeking something spicy, while Greek and Mediterranean options may be appealing for the health-conscious. Offering a sample to alleviate concern may be another tactic to consider.

CONSUMERS LOVE ETHNIC FLAVORS. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO MAKE THEM WORK FOR YOU. GATHERING INSPIRATION, DIGGING DEEP INTO THE INSIGHTS AND TRENDS, AND APPLYING THESE TIPS WILL SET YOU UP TO TELL YOUR FLAVOR STORY AND GRAB MORE CUSTOMERS IN 2019. WE'RE PREDICTING AT LEAST 30% MORE. IT'S HOW WE BUILT OUR OWN PROPRIETARY PROCESS TO CREATE ON-TREND MENU CONCEPTS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS. AND WE CAN HELP YOU DO THE SAME.



At Custom Culinary®, we're dedicated to perfecting the art of flavorful food. Our team of industry experts combine culinary arts with food science, manufacturing technology, and menu insights to create authentic flavor systems and unique menu concepts that meet your bottom-line goals.

Bo Chhay / Sr. Manager, Brand and Insight Development
bchhay@customculinary.com / 630.928.4878
2505 S. Finley Rd., Ste. 100 Lombard, IL 60148

