

FS UPDATE

FOODSERVICE INITIATIVE UPDATE/FEBRUARY 2009

Trends in Foodservice 2009

2009 will be a year of contrasts: local and global, value and quality, fast and slow, comfort and health, small and large.

LOCAL AND GLOBAL

Locally grown produce was the top trend identified in the National Restaurant Association (NRA) Chef survey of what is hot for 2009. Customers want products that are not transported over long distances and support local communities and businesses. This includes beverages like micro-distilled and artisan liquors, and regional coffee roasters.

Global flavours will continue to influence menu offerings. While Thai was the flavour of 2008, look for more Peruvian influences in 2009.

Mediterranean is quite popular in North America and in 2009 it will continue to be, stretching to more specific country of origin, such as

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Conscious but Irrational

The Hartman Group has long said (before it was trendy to do so) that consumers are predictably irrational in their behaviour. We buy with our hearts and rationalize with our minds later. According to Euromonitor, nowhere is this more true than in Canada, particularly when it comes to the balance

between wellness and indulgence. We want healthy foods but we also want rich indulgences. However, that does not mean the two ends of the spectrum should be combined. Consumers don't want to find green tea/pomegranate soda at their favourite burger place. Context matters!



WHOLE GRAINS Starbucks and Jamba Juice now offer oatmeal. Healthy and "just for you" wins again with the halo of wellness—enhanced by customizable topping selections.



DISTINCT AND DESIGNATED As consumers redefine what quality means to them, giving products a sense of place elicits feelings of authenticity.



INDULGENCE is of particular relevance to quick service restaurants, as consumers redefine what quality means to them.

Spanish olives, Greek cheeses and Middle Eastern yogurt sauces. You will see more Mediterranean dishes in fast casual restaurants.

More Asian-themed noodle bars will be popping up with offerings such as Pho, Ramen and Laksa.

VALUE AND QUALITY

While there will be more watchful eyes on personal spending this year, people still want high quality food that gives them a sense of indulgence. However, “wanton indulgence” is now considered bad manners according to Joseph Baum and Michael Whiteman Co. Inc.

Chefs are going to be experimenting with new ways to make that food cost stretch and still offer their patrons a high quality product. National Restaurant Association predicts there will be new fabricated cuts of meat such as Denver steak, pork flat iron and bone-in Tuscan veal chop. And yes, even offal, won't seem so awful. Baum and Whiteman predict there will be a “great upswing in the use of innards and odd parts.”

Kids menus will be upscaled to reflect the restaurant's brand and will include items like specialty drinks,

ON THE MENU



Leveraging more adventurous culinary flavour profiles can unlock a competitive advantage.

Surging consumer interest in street food in major metropolitan areas is not even on many food company's radar, according to the Hartman Group.

smoothies and more adult-like entrées.

FAST AND SLOW

Consumers will be as busy as ever in 2009 and want quick and convenient meal solutions. On the flip side, there is a need to socially connect with people and food.

Consumers want restaurant quality for home consumption. They are more likely to trade down from a higher end restaurant to a casual dining restaurant, or to a retail foodservice counter than to cook from scratch at home. Grab-and-go, take-and-bake, heat-and-eat and other home solutions will continue to grow.

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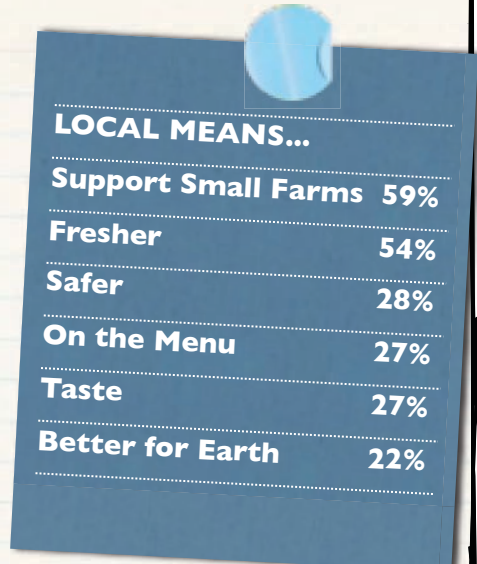
LOCAL: NOT THE SAME TO ALL CUSTOMERS



Experience value: Slow Food's goal is to reconnect people with the heritage of food and the tradition and culture of the pleasure of eating.



Consumers will demand more transparency from companies around where and how ingredients were sourced—especially how the people who made them fared.



Flavours and concepts to watch for



There is an underground movement happening in certain culinary circles, where foodies are gathering in pockets of major cities to...eat. Underground restaurants are popping up around North America. The appeal of these anti-restaurants is they offer a sense of adventure and community (in some cases, guests can help prepare the food).

There will be more storytelling in 2009. Restaurants will try to make diners feel good about the food they are eating by telling stories about how the food is prepared, where it comes from and its health benefits. Stories will be focused on positive messaging.

COMFORT AND HEALTH

Casseroles, meatloaf and mac-and-cheese in various forms will be comforting to customers who are feeling down. Restaurants will be increasing the amount of braising, slow baking, slow cooking—especially when they are using less expensive

cuts of meats. You will be seeing the word “rustic” a lot on menus this year. It is really about getting back to the basics. Breakfast at anytime of the day is the new comfort food.

Health is going to continue to be a dominant theme in restaurants this year. The National Restaurant Association Chef survey ranked #11 nutrition/health (low fat, reduced sodium, antioxidants, high fibre), and within the top ten were: #3 organic produce, #4 nutritionally balanced kids dishes, #6 fruit and vegetable children’s sides, and #7 super fruits(açai, goji, mangosteen)—underscoring the growing trends of consumer’s interest in healthy living.

SMALL AND LARGE

In the wake of 2008, restaurants will be making a smaller footprint in 2009. You will see more bistros, gastro pubs, underground restaurants and other alternatives to the traditional restaurant.

While the footprint is getting smaller, so are portions sizes. Expect more small plates, tapas, mezze, dim sum, mini desserts, and customized portions to be offered at many restaurants.

On the quick service restaurant side of the industry, there is a waning in

Yucatan

British gastro pub

Neopolitan

Thali

Izakaya

Peruvian

Spanish

Indian

the “better for you” choices and customers are looking for more indulgence. You will see offerings such as the Wendy’s Baconator, BK Enormous Omelet Sandwich and Triple Whopper, or the Hardy’s Monster Thick burger grow in popularity.

Aussi disponible en français



The Agricultural Policy Framework (APF)
A FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL-TERRITORIAL INITIATIVE



FOODSERVICE INITIATIVE

- Promoting Alberta’s food processing sector to the foodservice industry.
- Providing targeted resources, tools and training for food processors to enable them to enter the foodservice market.
- Facilitating food processing companies to strategically target foodservice operators to get new products to market.

- Gather a team of professionals to advance the foodservice market for Alberta food processors.

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Sources:
The Hartman Group
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