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CRISPY WONTON CHIPS FILLED WITH CREAMY DIPS ARE ONE OF THE FAST FIXES INCLUDED IN THE ANNUAL BUYER'S GUIDE.

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BY BARNEY WOLF

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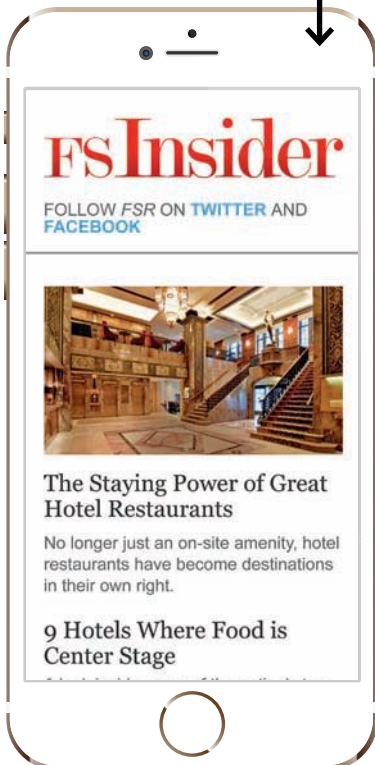
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AT SIXTY VINES, WINE ON TAP IS A MAJOR DRAW, AS IS THE SIGNATURE VINE HUGGERS LABEL.

Tapping Into the Future of Wine

Texas restaurant Sixty Vines built its concept around the once taboo notion of tap wine. The result? They're selling more, saving the planet, and appealing to every generation and price point. Take a look at how the brand's forward-thinking beverage program reaped major dividends and widened its consumer base, from millennials to even the pickiest wine connoisseurs. FSRmagazine.com/wine/tapping-future-wine

US FOODS BOOSTS SALES AND SERVICE FOR INDEPENDENTS

Looking to close the gap between single-unit operators and large chains, US Foods took aim at an obstacle facing restaurants around the country: With limited resources, is it possible to standardize training and improve service? US Foods released its latest program, The Tipping Point, in hopes of leveling the playing field.

FSRmagazine.com/us-foods

DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR RESTAURANT, RELOCATE IT

With sales lagging at their recently opened California restaurant, Ways & Means Oyster House, Jennifer and Parnell Delcham made a bold move. Instead of shuttering the concept, they decided to move to a new city. So far, the results have been even better than the pair could have imagined, and international expansion is now on the horizon.

FSRmagazine.com/means-beginning

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN', DRINKING, AND DINING

Lifestyle developments that celebrate an area's food, artisans, and craft beverages attract tourists, foodie travelers, and locals. On the heels of the rising popularity of food halls across the U.S., venues like The Barlow in Sebastopol, California, celebrate farm-to-table mantras with local freshness and varied fine-dining experiences.

FSRmagazine.com/california-dreamin

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Events

Conferences in the Full-Service Restaurant Industry

JAN. 22-24

Winter Fancy Food Show

San Francisco The 42nd edition of this event will be held at the Moscone Center, where operators can discover everything from cheese to confections to coffee to spices—displayed by an estimated 1,500 exhibitors representing the latest in specialty food and beverage from across the U.S., as well as 35 countries and regions. SpecialtyFood.com/shows-events/winter-fancy-food-show/

JAN. 24-26

Hotel, Motel & Restaurant Supply Show Of The Southeast

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina More than 6,000 industry leaders are expected to attend the show, now in its 41st year. In addition to learning about the latest innovations, operators can find ways to cut overhead and increase efficiency. Intended for companies selling products in the Southeastern hospitality industry, admission is free to industry members. HMRsss.com

JAN. 29-30

Mid-American Restaurant Expo

Columbus, Ohio The Expo centers on foodservice innovation and technology. Developed through extensive research, the event's agenda covers the latest in industry tools, tips, trends, and tastes. Competitions, tastings, coaching areas, and demonstrations are packed into two days at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. The show is replacing the North America Pizza & Ice Cream Show, and is expected to draw around 3,500 attendees. MidAmericaRestaurantExpo.com

JAN. 29-FEB. 1

International Franchise Association Convention

Las Vegas With emphasis on providing education to drive performance, growth, and sustainability of franchise brands, IFA's 57th Annual Convention will provide more than 50 educational sessions and programs across four days at Mandalay Bay, along with more than 300 supplier partners to offer tools and resources for developing a franchise. Franchise.org/ifa2017

FSR

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Sustainable Thinking

THERE'S ONLY ONE THING BETTER than eating in a farm-to-table restaurant—that would be eating on the farm itself. I was treated to this very experience when I visited Hope & Harmony Farms in eastern Virginia, on a food tour hosted by the National Peanut Board.

Before I get into what an incredible meal we had, courtesy of Chef Corey Duncan, who owns The Catering Place based in Suffolk, Virginia, you should know that my heart belongs in the country (no matter how much time I spend in the city), so farms just say *home* to me. (Isn't that sentiment one of the reasons restaurants are all about this farm-to-table movement?)

On the NPB tour, each course featured a variation of the farm's peanuts, starting with peanut hummus, then a lush kale salad with Surry-anno ham, honey goat cheese, roasted peanuts, and cornbread crouton, followed by peanut-smoked pork tenderloin and peanut-dusted Virginia quail, rounded out with peanut collard slaw and pan-fried potato salad (cooked in peanut oil, of course). And a dessert to die for: a peanut butter scone "Bananas Foster" shortcake, sprinkled with peanut brittle.

If I could share bites, I would have—but the best I can do is share details about the gourmet peanuts available from Hope & Harmony Farms, featured in our Buyer's Guide on page 46.

What I really want to share is how my perspective of sustainability was enriched by this visit to Hope & Harmony Farms. Sustainability, according to the farm's fourth-generation owners Jeffrey and Stephanie Pope, is about keeping the farm alive to see another harvest. It's about making decisions that are economically viable, that reflect their deep respect for the land and their unwavering commitment to live in harmony with the land. Simply put, Jeffrey says, "It's being able to farm another year."

To that end, the farm doesn't seek to become organic. Instead, since fungus is the biggest threat to the crops, the farm takes preventive measures and treats the soil prior to planting to ensure the integrity and health of each harvest. "If we grew organically, there would be a ton of disease—and eating diseased peanuts would be more harmful than eating peanuts that grew in soil where pesticides were used," he explained.

Nobody has a greater interest in maintaining the sustainability of their land and their crops than the Pope family—they eat the products and they have a vested attachment across generations—but they also rely on this land for their livelihood, as do the farmers around the country who are partnering with restaurant operators.

One of my hopes for the New Year is that we'll all become more committed to sustainability—but do so with a mindset that considers the many ramifications of what such a commitment truly entails. No better way to start this than time spent on a farm.

Cheers,

Connie



ENJOYING FARM-TO-TABLE FARE AT HARVEST 18 IN DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA.

Connie Gentry

EDITOR
connie@fsmagazine.com



Page 85

After-dinner drinks like this Irish Cream Coffee Liqueur are timeless, but restaurants have begun offering more savory options with bitter, dry, and citrusy notes.

Read Online

CRACKER BARREL INTRODUCES TO-GO MEALS
FSRmagazine.com/
Cracker-Barrel-Thanksgiving

On the Cover

The second-most-widely-consumed allium (onions are first), garlic is a kitchen staple—lauded for its flavor-enhancing prowess and its medicinal benefits. Garlic can be grown in a number of climates, making it easy to source on a regional—if not local—basis.

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CONNIE ROSIE HALLER / THINKSTOCK

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First Course

WHERE TO FIND MORE THAN 800 BEVERAGE DISTRIBUTORS // GROWN-UP GAMING // RARE WINES

SUSHI ART STEALS THE SHOW AT MURA, AN UPSCALE RESTAURANT OWNED BY ESCHOLON EXPERIENCES IN RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA.



PRESENTATION }

The Art of the Plate

Sushi comes to life when form follows flavor's lead and a creative chef sculpts with rice and seafood. *By Amelia Levin*

One of the most serious tasks that Chef Wol Kim does is play with his food. In fact, the success of Mura—the popular sushi restaurant in Raleigh, North Carolina's tony North Hills community—depends in large part on just how much fun Chef Kim manages to convey in his food art.

In the world of sushi, where com-

petition is fierce and creativity can sometimes become trapped in its traditional roots, the art of plating and presentation remains of utmost importance. "I personally think that even though the food can taste great, the appearance of the food has to be attractive to guests as well," says Chef Kim. "Without

the beautiful decorations, the plates aren't as fun and unique."

Chef Kim takes his sushi presentation above and beyond the norm, often creating flowers from colorful ingredients or turning lemon rind into a mouse, carving butterflies out of carrots, and transforming bits of rice, seaweed, and octopus

into fanciful characters. It's all in a regular day's work for the chef, who has even been known to craft trending characters like Pokemon or the Minions from the animated comedy "Despicable Me."

Few tools are needed to create the sushi art. Instead, Chef Kim says he mostly relies on special carving knives to decorate the sushi plates. He also uses food coloring and rice to mix and match colors and create character features. For decorative pinwheels, Kim cuts square-shaped "petals" out of whole radishes, decorating the tips with food coloring.

"I read many sushi decoration and carving books when I started working at Mura, and I continue to read these books to get more ideas for making different sushi art," Chef Kim says. "When I have free time, I try my best to go to upscale sushi restaurants around the world to see how they decorate their sushi plates.

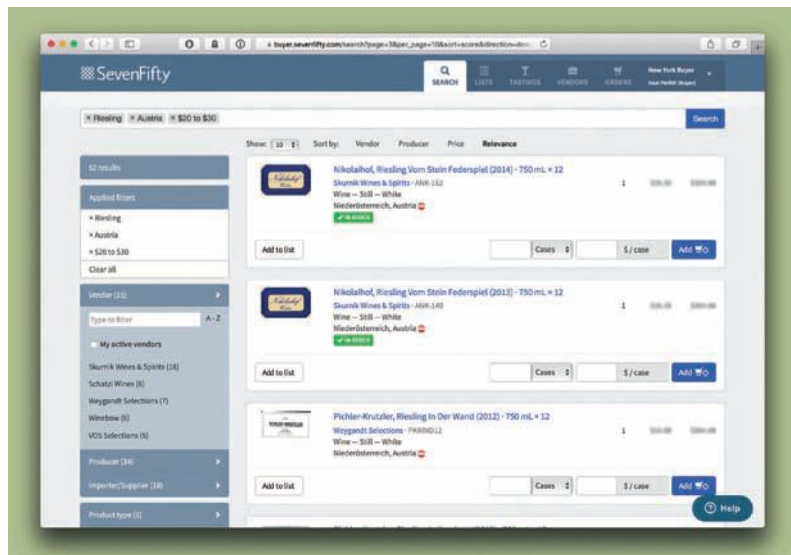


MURA SUSHI

COLOR, CUT, TEXTURE, AND POSITIONING DEFINE THE SUSHI SERVINGS AT MURA.

Looking at these different plating styles gives me motivation to challenge myself, and create something beyond the expectations of our guests."

Mura is the original concept that launched the career of restaurateur Gaurav "G" Patel, owner and founder of Eschelon Experiences, which has six restaurants in the Raleigh-Durham market. ■



SEVENTIFTY

MORE THAN 800 DISTRIBUTORS, REPRESENTING ABOUT 60 PERCENT OF THE MARKET, ARE OFFERING THEIR PRODUCT INFORMATION VIA THE ONLINE MARKETPLACE.

The Amazon of Online Beverage Options

BEVERAGE DIRECTOR Emily Molinari had two months to build the wine lists at six dining venues (plus a wine bar) inside Eataly's second New York City location. Time was not on her side.

"You end up trusting your gut," Molinari says, of the rapid-fire decisions she had to make before the August 11 opening date of Eataly Downtown in the Westfield World Trade Center. SevenFifty—launched in 2012—saved her. Using the app, it's easy to research and order wines and other alcoholic beverages, which are arranged in niche categories, including by distributor, region, varietal, and attributes like being biodynamic and organic. "It gives you a fuller picture of what's in the market," says SevenFifty co-founder Aaron Sherman.

"Once I laid the groundwork for the vision for which grapes to feature, it was easy to realize that vision," says Molinari, who searched for coastal wines for Il Pesce, organic and biodynamic picks for Orto e Mare, and a 460-bottle list for the fine-dining venue Osteria Della Pace. "SevenFifty lets me do my job in a timely and accurate manner," she says.

That quest for precision inspired Sherman to co-found SevenFifty with Neal Parikh and Gianfranco Verga. One night while Sherman was tending bar in New York City's West Village, in walked Parikh, a soon-to-be computer-science Ph.D. graduate from Stanford University. "It was total serendipity," says Sherman. Verga, like Sherman, was working in the wine-and-spirits industry. They started chatting about the nuances of ordering wine, and an online marketplace for wine buyers.

Using SevenFifty allows wine directors and sommeliers "to just do their jobs and do less busy work," Sherman says. This leaves more time to train staff, develop pairings, and educate oneself with the products.

So far, 800 distributors are using SevenFifty, representing 60 percent of the market, he says, adding that 35,000 retailers, bars, and restaurants have signed on. In September, SevenFifty launched an order-management system that breaks out orders by distributor. An archived order his-

tory makes future orders a breeze.

Calling himself an “old-guard wine director,” with a love for consulting tech sheets and other paper documents, the process of moving to digital wasn’t as difficult as JP Taylor Jr., wine director of Coperta—which opened in July in Den-

ver—expected. Those odd hours spent building the wine list—mostly from Southern Italy—used to mean a lag in waiting for an email reply from a distributor. Now he has those answers right in the app. “It’s been nice to have this in my back pocket,” he says. {BY KRISTINE HANSEN

flights

ON-DEMAND HOME DELIVERY

Consolidated Restaurant Operations, based in Dallas-Fort Worth, has begun providing door-to-door food delivery from dozens of its restaurants across the U.S. The company, which operates more than 100 full-service restaurants in 17 states, the U.K., the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt, partnered with Silicon Valley-based DoorDash to give diners on-demand delivery service from its various restaurant brands: Cantina Loreda, Ill Forks, El Chico, Silver Fox, Lucky’s, and Cool River Café. The service is available in a number of markets including Chicago; Dallas/Fort Worth; Houston; Nashville, Tennessee; Phoenix; and Ohio.

ADULTS-ONLY GAMING



JEFFREY LAMONT BROWN

WITH 24 RESTAURANTS IN ITS PORTFOLIO, COHN RESTAURANT GROUP ADDED A BEER ARCADE.

Meet Coin Haus, the latest concept from San Diego’s Cohn Restaurant Group, which has 24 restaurants in Southern California plus two in Maui, Hawaii. Located adjacent to Cohn’s upscale-polished Bo-Beau Kitchen + Garden eatery, Coin Haus is a 2,400-square-foot self-serve taproom and gaming arcade.

The craft beer-focused venue offers more than 30 video game classics such as Super Mario Brothers, Donkey Kong, and Frogger, as well as new releases like Game of Thrones and Ghostbusters pinball. Guests access the arcade games using the same prepaid wristband key fob that allows them to pull beer, wine, Boochcraft Kombucha, and cold-brew coffee from the 50 self-serve taps.



EDUCATIONAL ENTRANCE

Kizuki Ramen & Izakaya is adding a museum to its Wicker Park location in Chicago. Expected to open in late November, the restaurant plans to celebrate the opening of its Ramen Museum by giving away 300 bowls of ramen. Founded in 2003 in Japan, the parent company, Kookai Ramen, grew to more than 20 locations in Tokyo before opening in the U.S. in 2012 as Kukai Ramen & Izakaya. The name was changed to Kizuki Ramen & Izakaya in December 2015.

Treating Chicago as its test market, the company has developed the Ramen Museum to welcome guests and help inform them about the dining experience. “We hope this will be something that will elevate our diners’ experience while introducing them to the wide world of Japanese ramen,” says managing partner Kevin Yu.

The museum includes a live video of a Tokyo street, the history of ramen, and a 3-dimensional map of Japan that showcases ramen, toppings, noodles, and broth across the country’s regions. In addition to its Chicago location, the chain has units in Indiana, Oregon, and Washington. ■

THINKSTOCK



HUGO'S FROG BAR & FISH HOUSE

THE LIBRARY WINE COLLECTION AT HUGO'S FROG BAR & FISH HOUSE FEATURES VINTAGES THAT HAVE BEEN CELLARED AS FAR BACK AS THE MID-1980S.

Reading into a Rare Collection

FOR YEARS, Chicago-based Gibsons Restaurant Group has been lauded for its portfolio of concepts, serving everything from high-caliber steaks and seafood to Neapolitan-style pizza. So when Lawrence Kobesky joined the team to head its beverage program about a year ago, he looked for opportunities that would complement an already winning formula.

"I noticed our clientele and their excellent standing and interest in wine. We are, by far, one of the largest wine accounts in Chicago," says Kobesky, a classically trained chef whose career includes stints at Girl & the Goat, as well as wine wholesaler Fine Vines. Hugo's Frog Bar & Fish House, which features fresh-daily fish as well as Gibsons Prime Angus steak, quickly became his main focus. "I felt that there was a component missing for the caliber

of client we have. When I say 'iconic Chicago,' [I mean] we're really cool and old school."

With help from friends in the auction business, Kobesky uncovered wines—primarily reds—dating as far back as the mid-1980s. Many of these older vintages would pair well with Hugo's food menu, and thus the so-called Library Wines were added to its already extensive wine menu.

Ranging in price from about \$225 to \$6,000 per bottle, the Library Wines are older vintages of many contemporary labels. The wines are cellared for decades, allowing the flavors to evolve over time. Kobesky adds that the collection presents a rare opportunity to taste the past.

"If I put on a 2014 or 2015 big Napa Valley Cab like a Harlan or something, in all honesty, that wine's not ready to be drunk," he says. "That's why this library list

exists; it allows people to dive back in time to show what these wines do when they're properly aged. ... You can buy them and drink them fresh if you want, but you're cheating yourself on the beauty of what that wine really has to offer."

Just as the Library Wines are more seasoned than the typical collection, they are also less dependable in terms of supply.

Kobesky says it helps to have the right connections for procuring older vintages, but even then there's no guarantee that more will be coming down the pipeline.

"There's a finite amount of these beautiful wines, and it's exciting when they're dug up and brought to the public eye," he says. "Some of the wines I only have one or two bottles of, because that's all I could get my hands on and that's all there is. That's what makes it more special in a day and age when mass production seems to [apply to] everything."

As of now, Library Wines are only available by the bottle because, as Kobesky says, "one glass just wouldn't be enough." But that doesn't necessarily preclude such an option in the future.

He's also open to the idea of stocking even older varietals that might be 40 to 50 years old, but those wines can be trickier to pair as they are in a completely different flavor portfolio.

But whatever the age of a wine, Kobesky hopes Hugo's guests will approach their selections with a sense of adventure and fun—whether it's a \$50 contemporary or a \$5,000 Library Wine.

"I like for people not to take wine too seriously. At the end of the day we're talking about grape juice here," Kobesky says. "The important thing to impress upon people when I'm talking about [the] wine menu is not to get caught up in the price, and to get caught up in the wine." { BY NICOLE DUNCAN

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OvenBird

OPENED: October 2015

LOCATION: Birmingham, Alabama

OWNERS: Chris and Idie Hastings

AVERAGE CHECK: \$45

DESCRIPTION: Live-fire cooking, small plates, and locally sourced foods.

OVENBIRD

One Hot Bird

Veteran husband-wife restaurateurs spotlight Birmingham flavors with an international twist at their second concept, OvenBird. *By Ellen Koteff*

Ten years ago, with an already successful restaurant under his belt, Chris Hastings started envisioning a second, more casual operation—one that melded live-fire cooking, small plates, locally sourced products, and all things Alabama.

Fast-forward to October 2015 when Hastings and his wife, Idie, opened OvenBird, a casual-dining concept nestled in downtown Birmingham's Pepper

Place complex. OvenBird was the couple's second restaurant; the first, Hot and Hot Fish Club, opened in 1995 as one of the first farm-to-table restaurants in the Southeast.

"Since day one our menu has been out of the box," Chris Hastings says. "I have built a level of trust over 20 years, and if I say we're going to eat octopus or blood sausage or goat, the community says, 'We're in.'"

Mingling the rustic with the refined, OvenBird serves guests all manner of proteins, which are grilled, braised, or roasted over wood fires in everything from custom-designed cast iron ovens to wheelbarrows. The restaurant specializes in slow, delicate cooking that creates unique flavors. As Chef Hastings points out, when cooking with wood, it's imperative to take advantage of every opportunity to coax out those natural aromas.

One Year In

From the beginning, OvenBird has sought to pay tribute to Birmingham in every way possible and Hastings also takes inspiration from this Magic City. For example, Sloss Furnaces—an iron-production company turned historical landmark—created a trade publication known as *Pig Iron Rough Notes*, featuring recipes like squirrel stews, vinaigrettes, and salads, as well as correspondences from hunting and fishing trips.

“When I came across *the Pig Iron Rough Notes* and the ‘Gentleman Cooks’ section in my research for OvenBird, I was blown away,” Chef Hastings says. “The correlation between our city’s history and OvenBird—the use of cast iron in live-fire cooking worldwide and its relationship to the outdoor experience—was instinctively familiar to me and spoke to the hope of OvenBird.”

But beyond this local focus, Hastings also pulls flavors and historic cooking techniques from Spain, Uruguay, Argentina, Italy, and Portugal. In fact, Hastings named the restaurant after an inhabitant of Argentina. The Spanish word *hornero* translates to “ovenbird.”

“The naming exercise is fairly challenging because it’s hard to come up with something that fits,” he says. “I started doing research by looking at

flowers, fauna, rivers, and nature, and up comes the national bird of Argentina: the ovenbird. It builds a nest that resembles a wood-burning oven.”

As far as the pecking order at OvenBird, Chef Hastings, who was named 2012 James Beard Best Chef:South and beat out celebrity chef Bobby Flay on “Iron Chef,” says his wife is the boss. Trained as a pastry chef, Idie Hastings oversees bookkeeping and the staff for both restaurants.

“When you work with your spouse everyday, it’s important to understand your responsibilities and stay in your lane,” Hastings says. “Don’t dive into every ditch. Pick your battles.”

At OvenBird, which is open for dinner Monday through Saturday and brunch on Saturday, tickets average \$45, while Hot and Hot Fish Club posts average checks closer to \$75. The OvenBird menu showcases local and global fare with offerings including Alabama Shrimp and Clam Fideos, with aioli, chorizo, and sofrito for \$13, or Vegetable Paella served with Spanish-style bomba rice, saffron, and chorizo aioli for \$12. Bestsellers include dishes like Beef Fat Candle with sofrito, herbs, and jus for \$10; and Braised Goat accompanied by a soft-poached egg and grits for \$14.

The local connection is literally built into OvenBird as the owners worked with local metalsmiths, designers, and stonemasons to create an environment that would reflect the community and introduce out-of-towners to Birmingham. “Our relationship with craftsmen is an important [aspect] to tell the story of this place. If people are visiting from Tokyo, New York, or Paris, they are going to be informed about exactly where they are,” Chef Hastings says.

OvenBird also created its own signature beer with local craft brewer Back Forty Beer Company. Light and crisp, this IPA is served with pine needles fermented out by local foragers and sells for \$5 a glass. OvenBird’s beverages account for 30 percent of revenues. Craft cocktails range from \$6 to \$10, and the wine list includes varieties from Argentina, Chile, Italy, Spain, California, and Oregon.

The restaurant, which employs 45, can seat up to 150 people and averages 400 covers nightly. Food costs run a lean 28 percent, and Hastings explains 70 percent of a restaurant’s opportunity depends on the ability to manage food costs. “So many people fall in love with owning a restaurant, but they lose sight of the math,” he says. “You have to follow the money or you are out of business.” ■



THE CASUAL ATMOSPHERE AT IDIE AND TOM HASTINGS' SECOND CONCEPT BELIES UPSCALE CUISINE INCLUDING FLATBREAD WITH FARMERS CHEESE, SEASONAL VEGETABLES, AND HERB SALAD (TOP RIGHT) AND ALABAMA SHRIMP AND CLAM FIDEOS (BOTTOM RIGHT).

Chefs & Ingredients

PRESERVING SEASONAL HARVESTS // THREE TIPS FOR HEALTHY DESSERTS

AT FARMSPIRIT, CHEF/
OWNER AARON ADAMS
TAKES DINING IN
PORTLAND, OREGON, TO
A PLANT-CENTRIC MENU.

Vegan Comes in Vogue

It doesn't have to be a lifestyle commitment to be a popular dining-out option. *By Amelia Levin*

As the trend to reduce meat consumption gains traction with more consumers, chefs are focusing on plant-based dishes and menus that cater to vegetarian preferences. In some rare cases, the chefs have taken it a step further, eliminating all animal products, including dairy as well as the obvious proteins, to offer service as a vegan-friendly restaurant.

While the menu might be well received, the term *vegan* rarely resonates across multiple demographics. Be wary of calling everything vegan, says Aaron Adams, chef/owner of Farm Spirit in Portland, Oregon, where he's found that terms like *plant-based* or *vegetable-forward* are far more approachable. These are the adjectives he uses when describing his 14-seat, fine-dining, meatless and dairy-free restaurant.

Chefs & Ingredients



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Since opening in June 2015, Chef Adams has received numerous accolades, showing the public that you don't always need meat, butter, or other dairy products to produce a great meal. For 12 years, Adams has eaten this way himself—a decision he made after seeing slaughterhouses first-hand and learning more about commercial animal and dairy production in the U.S.

In becoming a vegan chef, he has also found an incredible creative outlet in cooking with vegetables, and—contrary to popular thinking—he has actually saved on food costs. Using vegetables exclusively from area farmers markets and farmers, Chef Adams has been able to keep his food costs at an average of just 16.5 percent, while keeping the restaurant's average check at around \$75. The restaurant serves a multi-course prix fixe menu, \$60 to \$80 per person, and requires reservations and ticket purchases in advance of the seatings, enabling the restaurant to operate with a predictable flow of revenue. In another forward-thinking move, gratuities are not accepted.

Easing Into Veggie-Forward

"I have had some pretty terrible vegan meals, with fake meat, so we like to present the restaurant as more vegetable-forward, rather than freak people out by calling things vegan," Adams says. "I'm not going to scare people or yell at people for eating meat. I just try to help our guests experience other ways to eat using completely local and seasonal produce." In fact, he sources everything from less than 100 miles away except for some sugar and spices.

Unlike some vegan restaurants, Adams also eschews the use of cashew cream, a common vegan ingredient used to re-create cheese and cream, in favor of using local hazelnuts. He takes a less traditional approach toward menu development, trying instead to imagine the time in his region of the Pacific Northwest when people ate mostly indigenous plants and vegetables.

To introduce the umami taste that meat-eaters prefer, he uses fermentation to add what he describes as depth of flavor and funk to his vegetable dishes. For

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Chefs & Ingredients



INGREDIENTS ARE SOURCED LOCALLY SO THE MENU CHANGES BASED ON AVAILABILITY.

instance, Chef Adams takes hakori turnips, splits them, and covers them with brine to ferment for a couple of weeks before making a purée for use in different dishes.

He has also fermented beets using a salt solution and spices in the same vein as kvass, a fermented beet beverage enjoyed in Eastern Europe. The kvass is used as a rich vegetable stock when combined with mirepoix or as a filtered, consommé-like liquid poured gently in a large bowl with Swiss chard leaves compressed in hazelnut oil, house-made hazelnut milk yogurt, apples, and celery.

For another umami-rich, fermented ingredient, Adams makes a rejuvelac using sprouted quinoa or sunflower seeds. He pours filtered water over the seeds, allowing them to soak at room temperature for a few days, and then makes a puréed sauce out of that, layering it out on acetate sheets. He then dehydrates and crumbles the purée to re-create a crumbled Parmesan or other aged cheese, for use atop dumplings and other dishes.

For a pre-dinner snack, Chef Adams

has made crunchy kohlrabi tacos, filling the slices with the stem that's been cooked with walnuts and topped with a cultured papita cream and cilantro flowers. For the cream, he purées pumpkin seeds with a touch of filtered water, adding a little salt and the same live yogurt culture he uses for the hazelnut milk yogurt. He brings the purée to 110 degrees and holds it there for one to two days until cultured.

Adams even uses vegetables in sweeter dishes, in the form of carrot ice cream using house-made hazelnut milk and garnished with hazelnut cookie crumble for crunch, and a swath of black garlic to inspire the taste of a dark chocolate ganache.

While *vegan* may be a difficult term for the masses to swallow, Chef Adams is optimistic about the future: "As dining becomes more vegetable-focused throughout the country, I think you're going to see more restaurants like mine gaining more prominence and chefs refining their repertoire of techniques," Adams says. "I think we're definitely the way of the future." ■



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CANNING, PICKLING, AND FERMENTING HELP CHEFS RETAIN VIBRANT COLOR AND DIVERSE FLAVOR PROFILES ACROSS THE SEASONS.

Fresh for Winter

Chefs are using canning and fermenting techniques to preserve seasonal harvests. *By Amelia Levin*

Serving seasonal foods from nearby farms comes with all sorts of benefits, but there's a drawback for restaurants located in a cold-weather region. To counter the ebb and flow of produce across growing seasons, more and more chefs these days are doing what home cooks and farmers have done for years: turning to sauce-making, freezing, pickling, and canning to preserve the peak of local spring, summer, and early fall harvests. Even fermenting—once shunned by local health departments—has become a regular go-to technique for chefs looking to retain a taste of those sunnier days.

Recognizing the need to preserve local supplies, farmers have started to sell their pickled, canned, sauced, and stored fruits, tomatoes, and fresh-picked pro-

duce to chefs during the off-season. For instance, Leaning Shed Farm in Berrien Springs, Michigan, has begun dehydrating its super-sweet onions and crushing them into powder for a shelf-stable spice.

But for DIY chefs willing to explore on-site preservation techniques, here's a look at how some chefs are handling in-restaurant canning as well as fermenting.

Canning

For starters, know the rules: Some municipalities around the country require special licensing for restaurants to can foods on-site and then sell or serve to customers. Though most health departments will allow the use of canned goods in dishes, it also helps to have a documented HACCP plan in place. (The U.S. FDA has established the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, HACCP, as a man-

agement system to address food safety.)

Paul Virant, chef/owner of Vie and Vistro outside of Chicago and a partner of Perennial Virant in the city, took this route years ago after completing a class at the University of Wisconsin on food preservation. In addition to establishing a documented HACCP plan for his canning process, Chef Virant also had a microbiologist approve his recipes and then he registered them with the FDA.

Virant does most of the canning for his restaurants at the end of the summer harvest with fruits and vegetables from local farmers. He uses a large stockpot of boiling water to sterilize the jars and lids first, and then fills them with the produce. Among his favorites are eggplant, tomatoes, and peppers, which are canned for making into relishes. Modeled after the Italian antipasti, he'll press the eggplant to release its liquid, then pack it in jars with oil, chilies, and garlic, later serving it as-is with cheeses and charcuterie for a platter.

For a smoked apple butter, Chef Virant will smoke the apples and cook them down, then can the produce, and later use the butter as the base for a gastrique, mayonnaise, or vinaigrette. The bar is also apt to steal the canned apples for a Kentucky bourbon smashed with calvados and lemon, shaken and served on ice with a twist and topping of wheat beer. Virant treats plums the same way, using a smoked plum butter for a glaze with smoked chicken or duck wings.

At Community Tavern in Chicago, executive chef/partner Joey Beato cans fruits at the peak of their harvest in the spring, summer, and early fall. A popular creation is his jam, made with blueberry nectarine and yuzu juice, with a little natural apple pectin added after about 35 minutes of cooking. To serve, he'll spread the jam on sourdough bread for a Mango grilled cheese with sea salt and kale. Chef Beato says he prefers to use the pectin to prevent overcooking the delicate farm-fresh fruits.

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Cole Ersel, the executive chef of Wolf Peach, turns to canning and fermenting to preserve



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Chefs & Ingredients

fresh produce from his on-site garden. “The end of August through mid-October is definitely the hardest time of the year because we’re getting ready for winter, pickling and preserving our harvest, but it’s worth it,” he says.

Chef Ersel has filed an HACCP plan and submitted samples to the state for his canned tomatoes—after harvesting about 1,000 pounds from the garden. To can the tomatoes, he uses an extruder from Italy, pushing the tomatoes through to release the skins and seeds, then giving them a light cook with some basil and a touch of garlic before packing them in hot washed jars rinsed with vinegar for extra sterility. He uses the sauce primarily for his Margarita pizza, and the canned supply lasts throughout the entire winter and well into the spring.

Fermenting

Fermenting has perhaps received more scrutiny than canning, but some health departments have warmed up to the idea when the preparation area is clean and recipes are well documented. At Perennial Virant and Vie, Chef Virant will fer-



AT FARM SPIRIT IN PORTLAND, OREGON, CHEF AARON ADAMS USES FERMENTATION TO ADD DEPTH OF FLAVOR.

ment carrots in a saltwater brine at room temperature for two weeks, using them as a side dish or charcuterie accompaniment. He seasons them with fresh thyme and often glazes with a bit of the fermenting brine and a touch of honey.

At Community Tavern, Chef Beato ferments savoy cabbage harvested in the early fall for kimchi, massaging the produce with salt and sugar (a cup each per 10 pounds). He then presses it down, which allows the juices to be released, and ferments at about 59 to 69 degrees Fahrenheit. After about two weeks, he adds a purée of fish sauce, red chili

paste, black sesame seeds, and ginger, and then jars and refrigerates the finished condiment. He also uses plain fermented savoy cabbage in a dish that is tossed with fried almonds and homemade San Marzano tomato sauce, served atop whole roasted fish with charred scallion and brown butter relish.

At Wolf Peach, Chef Ersel uses the green cabbage harvest in early fall to make sauerkraut, shredding the cabbage and packing it in 5-gallon buckets with salt (about 3 percent) and a bottle of distilled water. The distilled water helps add enough moisture to the ferment to prevent the cabbage from drying out and from developing unhealthy bacteria. After naturally fermenting the kraut, he cooks it to sterilize it, before packing it away in Cryovac bags for cold storage. Throughout the winter, he uses the kraut in pierogies stuffed with mashed potatoes and goat cheese, or with sausages. ■



Apples for All Seasons

Few fruits or vegetables, and especially those coming from smaller, sustainable farms, can stay fresh through winter. But apples have a unique chemical makeup that can make them actually improve with age. Farmers once used root cellars to store their apples in cool and slightly humid conditions, but now many turn to controlled-atmosphere facilities. Once reserved for large-scale commercially produced apples, increasing numbers of smaller regional farmers are now able to turn to local co-ops and other partnerships to store apples in central cooling facilities. These facilities are generally set at around 34 degrees Fahrenheit, with low oxygen and high humidity levels, which prevent one

bad apple from literally spoiling the bunch since apples spread ethylene as they “perspire.”

“Apples are the most economical produce on the shelf because they can be available for extended periods,” says Mark Nicholson, a third-generation co-owner of Red Jacket Orchards in the Finger Lakes region of New York. One of the heirloom varieties Red Jacket grows is the New Town Pippin, nicknamed during Colonial times as the “Christmas Apple” because, although it’s harvested in the fall, its starches turn to sugar producing a sweeter, deeper flavor over time. Other varieties that store well through the winter are Fuji, Gala, and Honeycrisp.

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Lessons from the CIA

BY DR. WALTER WILLETT

The 3 Pleasures Make Desserts Healthy and Enjoyable

When I go out to eat, I ask the waiter if the restaurant has a creative chef. Of course, no one ever says no, so I make a simple request: Make me a dessert using only nuts, fruit, and dark chocolate, and present it in a creative way.

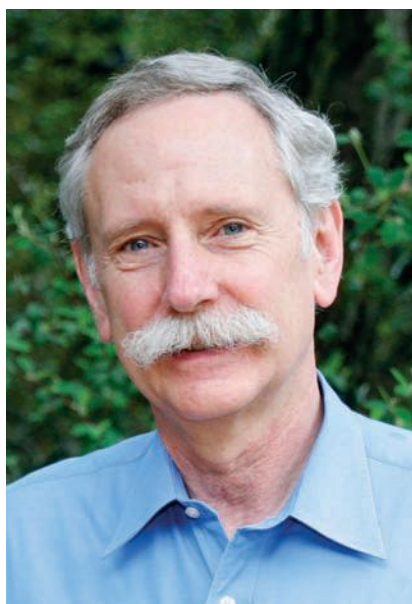
The resulting dishes have been fabulous, from simple, yet elegant bowls combining the ingredients, to beautiful works of art. The findings of this little experiment are clear: It is possible to make an elegant dessert out of three healthy items, which I call the three pleasures.

The three pleasures—nuts, fruit, and dark chocolate—were arrived at through extensive scientific research proving that these items are both healthy and enjoyable.

Fruit has long been appreciated for its nutritional value. It contains vitamins and phytochemicals, like carotenoids, which are found in large quantities in yellow and dark-orange fruits and have been related to lower risks of some cancers and dementia. Higher berry consumption has also been linked to lower risks of heart disease, diabetes, and dementia. Even in dried formats, when fresh fruit is not available, these foods are highly beneficial to consumers.

Though once considered unhealthy due to being high in fat content, research over the last 10 to 20 years has shown that almost all the fats in nuts are unsaturated, and healthy. They can reduce blood cholesterol levels and reduce heart disease risk, plus they add fiber, vitamins, and minerals to diets.

Also, higher nut consumption is not



A PROFESSOR OF NUTRITION AS WELL AS A PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, DR. WALTER WILLETT LOOKS FOR DESSERTS TO BE ELEGANT AND DELICIOUS AS WELL AS HEALTHY—NUTS, FRUITS, AND DARK CHOCOLATE ENABLE THIS GOAL.

linked to obesity. Despite the caloric content, nuts offer high satiety, meaning that consumers don't need 6 ounces to feel satisfied, but rather just a small handful.

Dark chocolate, despite popular opinion, is a healthy substance. It does contain sugar, though in low amounts, and the higher the percentage of cacao, the healthier the chocolate. Chocolate also contains phytochemicals that reduce blood pressure, and it appears to nudge down the risk of diabetes as well.

When you put all three of these foods together, the resulting dish is a combination of three healthy ingredients, especially if you're eating this instead of

what's usually on a dessert menu, which is usually made of sugar, white flour, and cream—three of the least healthy things you could eat. That tradeoff is hugely beneficial.

You want people to feel satisfied at the end of the meal, and they don't need massive amounts of sugar and white flour in their diets. People don't want to feel stuffed, but they want to feel satisfied, and they get this nice satiety with healthy foods.

Another advantage of the three pleasures is you can create an almost infinite number of ways to present them, so there is a huge amount of space and creativity for making them interesting and attractive. With many different kinds of nuts, each bringing its own flavor and texture, and so many different kinds of fruits and varieties of chocolates, possibilities for dessert options are endless.

People should not be asked to compromise their health at the end of the meal. We don't need to put them in that position. There is strong scientific evidence to support that all three ingredients are healthy choices, and when you put all three together, you've got a super healthy dessert. ■

Walter Willett, M.D., Dr. P.H., is chair of The Culinary Institute of America's Menus of Change scientific and technical advisory council. He chairs the department of nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, where he is a professor of epidemiology and nutrition. He is also a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School.

Liquid Intelligence

WINTER BREWS

From the blustery Great Lakes to temperate Southern California, winter menus call for special brews. *By Brian Yaeger*

The word *hibernate* comes from the Latin *hibernare*: to spend the winter. That's the root for the French word meaning to wish for winter, *hiver*. Hence, the French Canadian brewery Brasserie Dieu du Ciel releases its winter saison, *Solstice d'Hiver*, around the winter solstice. The same goes for *Fantome Hiver*, brewed near Liege, Belgium. Tennessee's Blackberry Farm Brewery is one of the few U.S. breweries to create a winter saison, but there's no shortage of high-ABV ales to help diners spend the winter.

Stateside you're more apt to see malty (and possibly pie-spiced) beers, known as "winter warmers." European Christmas markets and cafés sell *glühbier*—the malty, fruity cousin to *glühwein* (better known as mulled wine)—but few U.S. establishments are willing to try to sell someone some hot beer. Whatever beer styles may be dominating tap lists, there's a good chance consumers will happily trade in a bear cave for a gastropub, where warm, cozy environments are made for complementary and warming dishes and grogs. Few locales exemplify this like Milwaukee.



THINKSTOCK

Paces from the shore of Lake Michigan in the Bay View neighborhood, Goodkind is a communal hub, more a full bar with a kitchen than a restaurant with 20 taps. Co-owner William “BJ” Seidel says, “Winter fits perfectly into our self-identity. We gather together in those dark, cold months to enjoy the strong drinks, warming comfort foods, and camaraderie that we hope will keep us warm until the great thaw.”

Seidel explains that his customers—more often than not, of good German stock—come in looking to drink, and eat, heartily. They’ll find slow-cooked meats from the rotisserie alongside earthy root veggies. And, once firmly into autumn, Seidel says Belgian quadrupel ales, or “quads,” imperial stouts, and other strong ales return. Wisconsin breweries such as

Karben4 and Good City can be found, along with regional breweries Founders, Surly, and Short’s. “The warming, nutty, chocolate, caramel, and heavier malted beers tend to cast a long shadow through March. However, we always keep a handful of fat-cutting, palate-cleansing sours, saisons, and pale ales to round out our list.”

When it comes to serving such beers, Goodkind sets aside the 16-ounce nonic glasses reserved for pale ales and other highly quaffable styles and, instead, fills 11.5-ounce snifters. Drinking 7 to 12 percent ABV beers by the pint could be dangerous, and serving them in that portion could be too expensive, to say nothing of irresponsible.

One of Seidel’s favorite combos to serve is smoked pork sausage or Good-

kind’s beer-braised pork and “syrupy” bourbon-barrel-aged imperial stout. A classic example from the area is Founders’ Kentucky Breakfast Stout. He also suggests not being afraid to pair maltier, stronger ales that bring residual sugars alongside spicy curries, mole, or other saucy dishes.

Of course, a snifter or a 5-ounce sample glass of Karben4’s Deep Winter—the coffee stout brewed over in Madison—accompanying a slice of Goodkind’s chocolate stout cake is the ideal finish before guests brave the elements.

An hour and a half down shore in Chicago, Band of Bohemia is a new brewpub that delights in contrasting norms or expectations, starting with how executive chef Matt DuBois tackles hearty seasonal myths. “Here’s the deal: Even as fall turns into winter, we still have fruit available to lighten up and brighten dishes,” Chef DuBois says. “And then, as winter edges in, you get a ton of citrus and tropical fruits. ... The idea that you can’t serve fruit and lighter things in the winter, we really don’t buy into that.”

Chef DuBois points to the bounty of shellfish that also can lighten up a food menu. Although he’ll happily prepare braised meats and stews, DuBois states, “I’d like to combat the notion that you have to eat nothing but weighty stews during the winter. I’d rather serve fish and seasonal citrus to go head-to-head with the dreary weather. Winter in Chicago can be pretty depressing, so you need some bright, exciting food. ... The meat-and-potatoes notion is outdated.”

Ultimately, being Bohemian means being unconventional. And that’s what co-founder and head brewer Michael Carroll set out to create. With his background as a brewer at Half Acre Beer Co. and bread baker at vaunted Alinea, he says, “As a general rule, we really like to break the rules around here!”

As for the winter climate, Carroll says, “The weather only affects me in the sense that I wouldn’t drink a high-ABV imperial stout in mid-August. However, I can easily drink a light Tecate with lime in the dead of winter. ... But the idea that darker beers can only be relegated to



LORI HIRSCH STOKOE

NO SNOWFLAKES IN L.A., BUT BARON’S 2239 IN THE LAX AIRPORT PAIRS WINTER FARE WITH STOUTS AND BARLEY WINES FROM LOCAL BREWERIES LIKE THE BRUERY.

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winter months can be too restrictive.”

Case in point: Band of Bohemia will welcome back Honey Biscuit, an ale featuring slow-roasted persimmons and raisins. But, he's also brewing up a Sweet Potato and Honey Porter this winter.

“Beer always comes first,” says Chef DuBois. “Michael brews the beer and then I taste it in order to start the process of finding complementary dishes that best pair with them. It sets us apart in a sea of brewpubs.” Furthermore, he explains that every Band of Bohemia beer has been turned into flavored beer vinegar to incorporate into his dishes. Of particular note was the one he made using a black ale that included cocoa nibs, figs, and bay leaves along with dried chilies. Chef DuBois used that vinegar to pickle kohlrabi plated with a fried chicken dish.

“We are a more winter-focused restaurant with a cavernous space,” says Carroll. “One thing about Chicago, winters are long, so we need to go out to [avoid] cabin fever.” Adds Chef DuBois, “Hospitality doesn't waver with the seasons.”

Speaking of being unconventional, the southern half of the country spends a quarter of the year pretending that it experiences winter. In California's sunny Hermosa Beach south of LAX airport, brothers Jonathan and Jason Baran opened Baran's 2239 early this year. Their partner, Chef Tyler Gugliotta, had cooked his way across the L.A. area.

The restaurant operates with only a beer and wine license, so Chef Gugliotta realizes it's important to emphasize the best in those liquid realms. And although there's nary a snowflake in the South Bay, Gugliotta still plans on having guests sink their teeth into dishes such as coffee-braised pork shank and rack of elk.

The restaurant's beer program, a dozen taps strong, leans heavily on Southern California breweries such as Stone, The Bruery, Modern Times, and Firestone Walker. All of them bring out heavy, rib-sticking beers—barrel-aged stouts or barley wines—because even a clientele that doesn't have to endure a rough winter still likes to drink like it. ■

Pairing Wine with Asian Cuisine

Complex wines complement the intense flavor profiles and heat that define these dishes. **By Kristine Hansen**



Wine Editor **KRISTINE HANSEN** has written about wine since 2004 and is passionate about pairing food with wine.

Eating my way around Taiwan for a week in August—from bustling Taipei to serene Sun Moon Lake—I couldn't ignore that something was missing. Baskets of steamed dumplings and buns, exotic mushrooms, and dishes with green onions woven in were placed in front of me several times each day, all delicious and well thought out.

Tea was hitting my lips—but not wine. By the end of the trip, I craved a crisp Riesling or an earthy Pinot Noir, imagining how the two would work in tandem to bring out the nuanced flavors of the foods.

Asian cuisine is perhaps the farthest behind at executing food and wine pairings. One could blame the casual path this cuisine has taken across America, opting for take-out status over fine-dining settings, or that China, Taiwan, and Japan really aren't celebrated for their domestic wines. But slowly the tide is turning, with Taiwanese concepts—a mash-up of Japanese and Chinese influences—leading the trend, bringing fried chicken, Peking duck, hot pots, oyster omelets, dishes laced with tea, green-onion pancakes, and more to American palates.

Last spring the country's first Taiwanese food truck, *Bian Dang*, started rolling around New York City, selling out of its fried chicken during its first stop in Midtown. Also in spring, *Win Son*—with an American-Taiwanese twist—opened in Brooklyn's hip Williamsburg neighborhood, with dishes like marinated cucumbers, scallion pancakes and oyster omelets—proof that Taiwanese food is moving farther east, beyond



AT MILWAUKEE'S NEW ASIAN HOTSPOT DAN-DAN, THE CHEFS MARRY TAIWANESE AND CHINESE SICHUAN CUISINES—A FUSION THAT MELTS BEAUTIFULLY WITH A RANGE OF WINE SELECTIONS.

Asian-restaurant clusters in Washington, Oregon, and California. (And, yes, wine is served at *Win Son*.)

A week after returning from Taiwan, I found my bliss when I walked into the recently opened *DanDan* in Milwaukee, where the chefs marry Taiwanese and Chinese Sichuan cuisines for lunch and dinner. *Dan Van Rite* and *Dan Jacobs* have long had a love affair for Asian food, and wanted to give it the same attention they did while cooking at *Odd Duck* and *Hinterland*, two fine-dining eateries in Milwaukee.

It's where Sara Nardi, who builds the wine list and develops pairings for *Dan-*

Dan, proved the hunch I'd held all along: that wine and Taiwanese food do mix. With the veggie momo with spicy peanut sauce, she matched Navarro Vineyards and Winery's Edelzwicker, an Anderson Valley, California, blend of Gewurztraminer, Riesling, Pinot Gris, and Muscat. The wine's orange blossom and honeysuckle notes didn't compete with the spicy sauce.

Other wines I drank that night were Drouhin Pouilly-Vinzelles (Chablis, France)—the chalkiness and preserved lemons in this white wine a nice match with the salt-and-pepper squid with *Serrano* peppers—and three reds: *Domaine*

Bulliat Beaujolais (France), Cavalchina Bardolino Corvina (Veneto, Italy), and Preisinger Zweigelt (Austria). Nardi strives to find boutique producers that aren't necessarily familiar to U.S. diners. What's also unique about the wine list at DanDan is the permission to play with pairings, thanks to 21 wines being available by the glass. Nardi's choice to pair the Zweigelt with Mushroom Three Cup really brought out the mushroom's earthy layers, thanks to cherry and cigar-box notes and soft barely discernable tannins. "This ended up surprising us as a wildcard pairing with intensely savory, deep, and earthy flavors like wild mushrooms and black garlic, and even lamb," she says.

our houses to try food and pairings and put our heads together with fellow restaurant friends."

"We tried to follow the rules of pairings as we know them, and eventually threw them out the window. It was like trying wine for the first time again, which made it challenging, but also fun. There are different flavors, but also different types of spices: not just heat, but numbness, brightness, sweetness."

Many questions had to be addressed: "Do you juxtapose or make it harmonious? A bad or weird pairing could turn you off to the wine or the food and really compromise the experience," Nardi says. "If it's done right, it doesn't mess with the complexity of the cuisine. In our case,

Nardi is a huge fan of the Calvachina Bardolino Corvina. "It's just light and acidic enough to balance the richness and spice of meat dishes such as mapo tofu and even Peking duck. Italian wines, in general, have been our favorites to pair with everything Chinese. Even orange wines," Nardi says.

The spicy flavors from DanDan melding in my mouth, I was transported back to a fourth-floor apartment a few blocks from the gourmet indoor Shidong market in Taipei. This is where Ivy Chen teaches global travelers—including me a few weeks earlier—how to cook Taiwanese food through her business, Ivy's Kitchen. Before the class, we met at the market for a primer in shopping for exotic fruits and vegetables, plus meats and fishes, all of these staples in many Taiwanese dishes. This includes seemingly minor ingredients like goji berries, dragonfruit, cilantro, basil, green onions (the Taiwanese ones are longer than what are sold in the States), and short-grain rice that are chef staples in Taipei—and often the star in the dish.

That afternoon we made Three Cup Chicken, Chinese Spring Onion Pancake, spicy cucumber salad, and steamed fish with preserved Sebastan plum cordia. For Chen—a cooking-school graduate—teaching others to cook with a Taiwanese twist is a gift that keeps on giving. "The more I teach, the more I want to learn more and more," she says.

It's the same for Nardi, who is having a blast developing wine pairings with spicy Sichuan food. And she's passing that energy on to her staff in a variety of ways that go beyond formal training by consulting books, maps, quizzes, and DVDs about wine. "The only thing that really works for me is drinking (wine) and comparing it," she says. "When I see staff ordering food at the end of a shift, I put a couple of tasting pours in front of them and have them talk to me or each other about it. ... I make it interactive and give them control. I see them get excited about discovering their own palates." The biggest hurdle, she says, is to avoid being intimidated by wine. Simply explore and enjoy. ■



KEVIN MIYASAKI

AT DAN-DAN, 21 WINES ARE OFFERED BY THE GLASS—GIVING GUESTS FREEDOM TO PLAY AND EXPLORE, PERHAPS EVEN SIPPING WINE WITH THE RESTAURANT'S DOUGHNUT BITES.

To prepare for the opening of DanDan, Nardi and the two chefs visited Chinatown neighborhoods around the U.S. and also frequented restaurants with modern takes on Chinese food. "There wasn't always an option to try wine with the food, especially in Chinatown, but when we did, it was certainly eye-opening," says Nardi. "When we got home, we would have dinners at

really bold, in-your-face flavors that really work your palate." Of the Navarro wine she paired with dishes during my visit, Nardi says, "It's our go-to for spicy dishes like DanDan noodles and happy chicken (a dish with dried chilies and five spice) and even stands up to accompanying sauces. It's a complex wine with layers, much like our food."

With the Char Siu Pork Pancake,



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SIPS APPEAL

BEER EDITOR



BRIAN YAEGER combines his love of drink and passion for travel to write about beer. BeerEditor@FSRmagazine.com.

Winter calls for beer that can be bone-warming, but that doesn't mean every beer needs to be some 15% alcohol behemoth. After all, the holidays are meant to be festive, not fatigued.



Scuttlebutt Tripel

7.9% ABV When it comes to high-gravity Belgian—or Belgian-style—ales, it's easy to get bogged down with heavy malt body or sweetness from residual sugars. This tripele-style ale is big on clove phenols and honeyed aftertaste, but it goes down easily and makes for a great nightcap. Try it with a spinach salad with strawberry vinaigrette or with pound cake with fruit compote.



Flat 12 Pinko Russian Imperial Stout

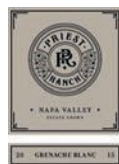
12% ABV This big beer is distributed in diminutive 8-ounce cans, which is historically accurate for imperial stouts, and that portion size still packs walloping tobacco and leather notes. Huge roast character does not detract from this winter warmer's drinkability. Enjoy with a bowl of chili, beefy stew, or hearty, slow-cooked dish.

WINE EDITOR



KRISTINE HANSEN has written about wine since 2004 and is passionate about pairing food with wine. WineEditor@FSRmagazine.com.

With a chill in the air come December, winter-white vines come into vogue and—just like with fashion—there's a seasonal shift. Oaky, full-bodied whites replace those with brightly acidic tropical-fruit notes. On the reds side, intensely concentrated options are a welcome pairing with root vegetables and braised meats.



2015 Priest Ranch Grenache Blanc

NAPA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA The wine's chalky profile—its grapes sourced from a vineyard property dating back to 1869—yields to depth and its nectarine notes provide a nice lift, as does the honeysuckle bouquet.



2015 Broccatelli Nido del Falco Montefalco Bianco D.O.C.

UMBRIA, ITALY Rich in minerals and chalk. Sour lemons and grapefruit notes are lively but also balanced with ample weight, pairing well with white meat. Chardonnay, Grechetto, and Trebbiano grapes are in the wine.

SPIRITS EDITOR



ALIA AKKAM is based in New York but travels the world experiencing and writing about spirits, food, and hospitality. SpiritsEditor@FSRmagazine.com.

Whiskey ruled in 2016, with an onslaught of imaginative bottles hitting the market. Fittingly, the year ends with a trifecta of yet more brown spirits, rounded out by two nuanced gins, an apple brandy, a contemporary Cognac, and a long-lost South African vermouth. All are welcome additions to guests' holiday fêtes.



Loch Lomond Single Grain

Indie Scottish bottler and distiller the Loch Lomond Group unveils an expansive portfolio of whiskies stateside. Among these is the Loch Lomond Single Grain, underscoring the emerging category of Scotch once synonymous with blends. Like its coveted cousin the single malt, this single-grain expression is distilled from 100 percent malted barley, but in a Coffey instead of the traditional pot still.



Four Pillars Rare Dry Gin

Four Pillars Gin, crafted in a small distillery in Australia's Yarra Valley, melds indigenous botanicals with those from Asia and the Mediterranean. New World gins are prospering right now, and spicy-citrusy Rare Dry Gin—try it in a Martini light on the vermouth—makes its mark with a recipe uniting the likes of Tasmanian peppercorn leaf, lemon myrtle, and whole oranges.

BEER



WINE



SPIRITS



SIPS APPEAL



Deschutes Hopzeit

7% ABV Whereas nonseasonal IPAs are pale and often bright and bursting with citrus notes, this autumnal crack at the hoppy style is a medium-bodied Marzen or Oktoberfest beer that is hoppily masked with modern German hops such as Herkules and Hull Melon. The richer malt body gives it a rye-like spice character. It certainly goes with schnitzel or sauerbraten.



The Bruery Autumn Maple

10% ABV Despite the name, this big copper-colored ale—infused with yams, pie spices, and, yes, maple syrup—throws more brown sugar sweetness tempered by estery Belgian yeast redolent of farmhouse ales. While the noticeably high alcohol content means it's nearly a meal in itself, this beer calls for anything from the carving station.



Epic Tart 'n Juicy

4.5% ABV Sour IPA is a burgeoning style, one that truly marries lactic tartness with bitter hoppiness. This exemplary stab at the style tastes as if it's dripping with fresh-squeezed grapefruit, but that citric character remarkably comes only from the *Lactobacillus* bacteria used for kettle souring and the citrusy hop varieties. This sour IPA would love a cheese board.



2015 19 Crimes Cabernet Sauvignon

SOUTH EAST AUSTRALIA A luscious, fruit-forward red from Down Under. Aromas of raspberry cobbler lead into a round mouthfeel accented by vanilla, and the sweet red cherry notes aren't too overpowering.



2014 Masút Vineyard & Winery Pinot Noir Estate Vineyard

MENDOCINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA Established in 2009 by Bobby Fetzer's two sons, the winery's Pinot Noir, with its cedar aromas, expresses notes of plums and black currants, with dark chocolate on the finish. The tilt toward savory is ideal for sipping with winter dishes.



2014 Ruffino Chianti

TUSCANY, ITALY Since 1877, Ruffino has been a solid choice, including its Chianti. Forest-floor aromas give way to wild strawberry notes on this light-bodied, but intensely flavored, wine.



Augier L'Oceanique

One of France's oldest Cognac houses, Cognac Augier, flaunts a decidedly modern line of spirits emphasizing distinctive terroirs. One example is Augier L'Oceanique, made with Ugni Blanc grapes that hail from Bois Ordinaires, on the island of Oléron. The result is a rich liquid layered with subtle minerality.



Miyagikyo Single Malt

Powerhouse Japanese whisky brand Nikka has two distilleries. One of them is Miyagikyo, located in a river valley largely resembling Scotland's pastoral Speyside. It is here that the slightly peated Miyagikyo Single Malt is distilled from 100 percent malted barley, embracing a mix of new American and used bourbon and sherry barrels that lead to robust fruit notes.



Floodwall

A warm jolt of honeyed apples provides much-needed comfort on a cold winter evening. Floodwall, from Louisville-based Copper & Kings American Brandy Co., is a heartening apple brandy aged in bourbon and Oloroso sherry casks for a minimum of four years. Non-chill-filtered and devoid of any infusions, it's redolent of spice and butterscotch.

NEW AND NOTABLE LABELS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE SPOTLIGHT THE BEST IN BEER, WINE, AND SPIRITS.



**Reuben's Brews
Roasted Rye IPA**

7% ABV Winter IPAs can present a challenge if you're not sure what to expect, but this one from Seattle delivers the earthy, pecan like maltiness expected in an amber beer brewed with malted rye and generous piney hops. Enjoy it with a meaty or vegetarian chili.



Pfriem Golden Coffee Ale

6% ABV Contrary to roast-forward stouts augmented with cold-brewed coffee or perhaps ground beans, this beer throws consumers for a loop by presenting a tropical hop-driven golden (or copper) ale with fruity Kenyan beans. The result is closer to an overripe or fermented passion fruit than a bitter shot of espresso.



14th Star Maple Breakfast Stout

6.8% ABV With the stout base, the addition of local maple syrup, and a partnership with a nearby roaster, this beer clocks in somewhere between full-bodied and rotund. But it's unexpectedly dry and balanced, since a light touch was used with the added ingredients. All good, since it comes in tallboy 16-ounce cans, and can start a meal rather than finish it.



2013 Alcance Vigno "Old Vines" Carignan

MAULE VALLEY, CHILE Chile's flagship grape varietal is dry-farmed for this wine, resulting in smoke and ash on the nose—ideal for matching with red meats—and a body flush with spicy, concentrated red fruits. On the lingering finish are soft tannins.



2013 Franciscan Estate Cabernet Sauvignon

NAPA VALLEY, CALIFORNIA Stemming from an estate vineyard in Napa's storied Oakville appellation, this value Cabernet Sauvignon features plum and black cherry notes mingling with black pepper and elegant, smooth tannins on the finish.



2015 Domaine Bousquet Premium Malbec

TUPUNGATO VALLEY, ARGENTINA Organically grown grapes are used for this Malbec, which brings good mouthfeel and supple notes of currants, dark chocolate, and black cherries, with leather emerging near the finish.



Cooper's Croze

The croze is a nifty tool coopers use to make the grooves into which barrelheads are positioned. Illuminating the bold impact of wood on whiskey is Cooper's Croze, the first release in Jameson's Whiskey Makers Series. The non-chill-filtered Irish whiskey melds the charred appeal of virgin American oak with the vanilla and spice yielded from one-time bourbon and Iberian sherry casks.



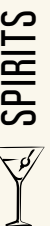
Seaside Gin

Summer might be months away, yet the most carefree of seasons is captured in Edinburgh Gin's beach-inspired Seaside. Developed in collaboration with students from the U.K.'s Heriot-Watt University, it is rife with foraged marine botanicals including scurvy grass, ground ivy, and bladderwrack seaweed. Bolstered by grains of paradise, coriander, and cardamom, it makes for an intriguing year-round Gin & Tonic.



Caperitif

During the 1900s, the South African vermouth Caperitif was sought after, popping up in such drink bibles as *The Savoy Cocktail Book*. After vanishing for decades, the fortified wine has returned. The Chenin Blanc base, flavored with Quinchona bark and native plants, adds heft to low-ABV cocktails.



Chef Chrissy Sanderson Owner, Mockingbird Kitchen



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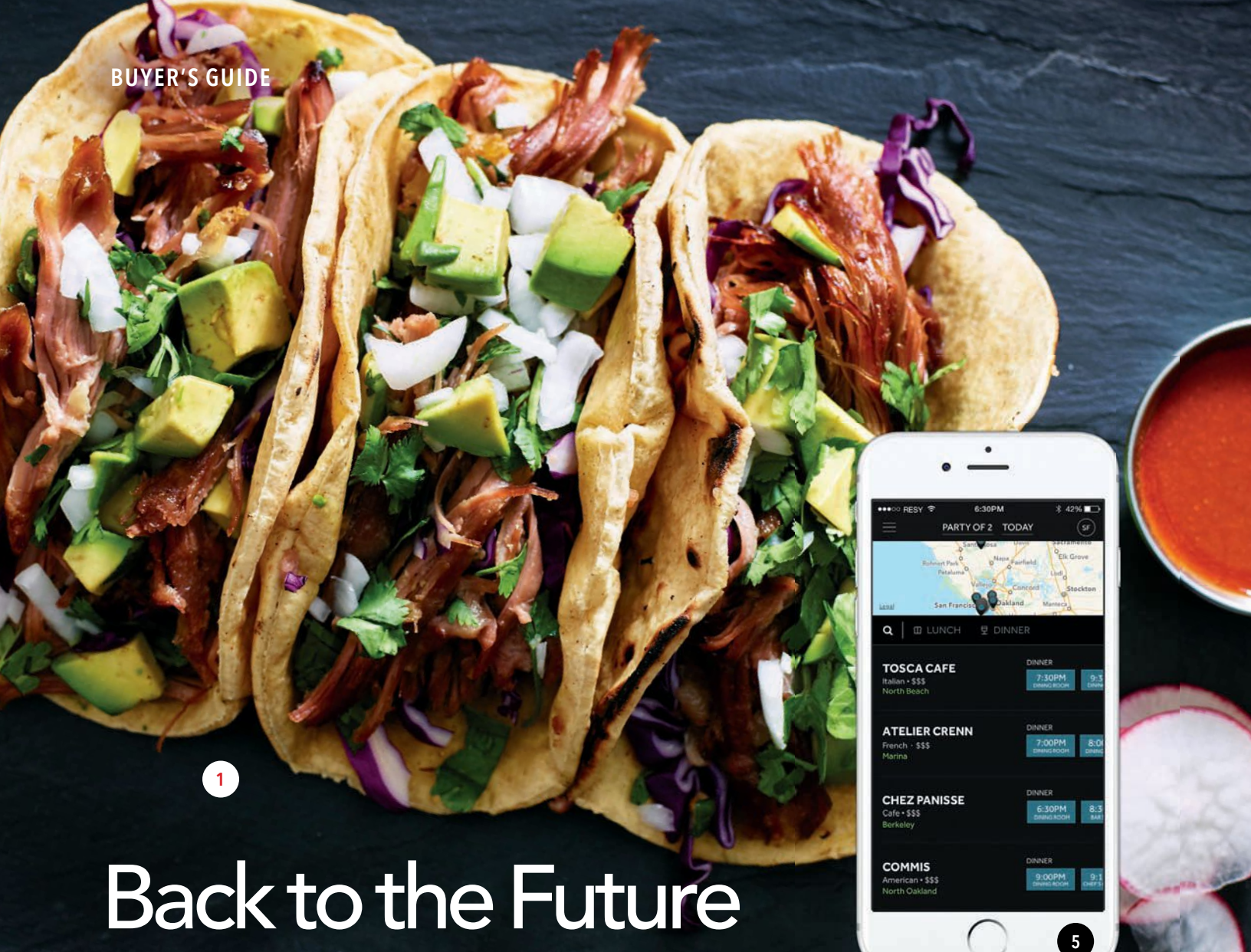
2017 BUYER'S GUIDE

Operators across all dining segments will find something of interest among the many products featured in our 2017 Buyer's Guide. From fresh harvests courtesy of multigenerational farmers to technologies that drive efficiencies to biographical cookbooks from famed chefs (and even a novelist turned vegetarian), the items included speak to improved operations for full-service restaurants. Many of the products included also reflect a growing commitment by restaurant operators to make decisions that foster sustainable rewards—whether those benefits translate to environmental improvements, business viability, or labor resources.

For this, the fourth year *FSR* has curated a compilation of recently introduced or enhanced products, nominations poured in from readers—and we evaluated them one and all. Our editorial team also tracks product announcements and industry-making headlines throughout the year in an attempt to contemplate a comprehensive selection of best new products for the annual Buyer's Guide. Enjoy browsing these pages, and flag your calendar to offer your own nominations for next year's collection, beginning in May.

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1

Back to the Future

The front of house and center of plate may be where operators make a lasting impression, but it's what happens in the back that sets the stage for the future.

1 WEIGHT OFF YOUR SHOULDER

Menuing lamb has never been this easy: Superior Farms' Precooked and Pulled Lamb Shoulder enables chefs to elevate menus with one of the hottest proteins. From pulled lamb sliders to lamb benedict, small plates to signature entrées, options abound. Fully cooked and seasoned only with salt and pepper, the product boasts a 100 percent cook yield as it reheats in the bag and retains moisture. Packed in two 5-pound vacuum-sealed bags, \$7.99 per pound.

SuperiorFarms.com

2 CAKE WALK

CAKE's POS and Guest Manager provide the perfect icing for restaurants. The software is designed for the challenges facing the foodservice industry, and it seamlessly connects front- and back-of-the-house operations. This allows owners to make data-driven decisions to increase efficiencies, track guest preferences, reduce table-turn times, and identify profitable items. Starting as low as \$69 per month for hardware and \$49 per month for software. Additional terminals are \$29 per month.

TryCake.com

3 TOAST THE TABLET

Designed to simplify wine ordering for restaurant guests and reduce administrative hours for operators, InVine's software platform creates an iPad wine list that can be automatically updated with new offerings and inventory changes as well as revised wine notes and pairing suggestions. The software is customizable, allowing operators to augment their traditional paper menus, audit inventory, and receive updated pricing in seamless communications. Plans range from \$99 to \$299 per month.

InVine.com

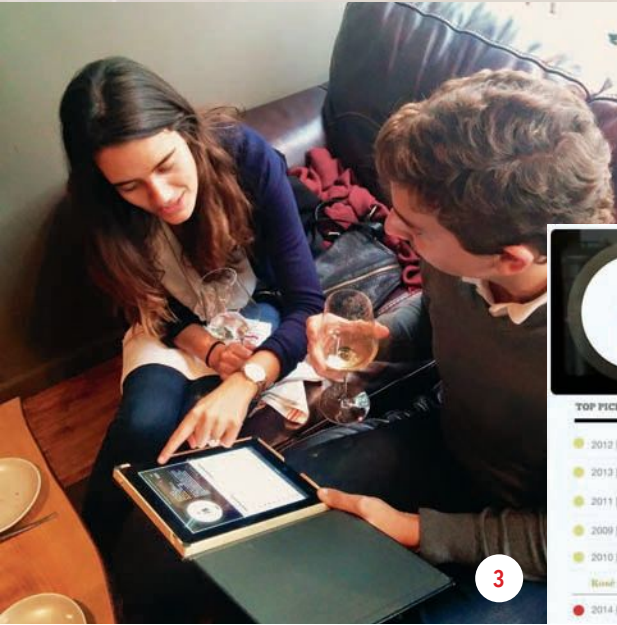
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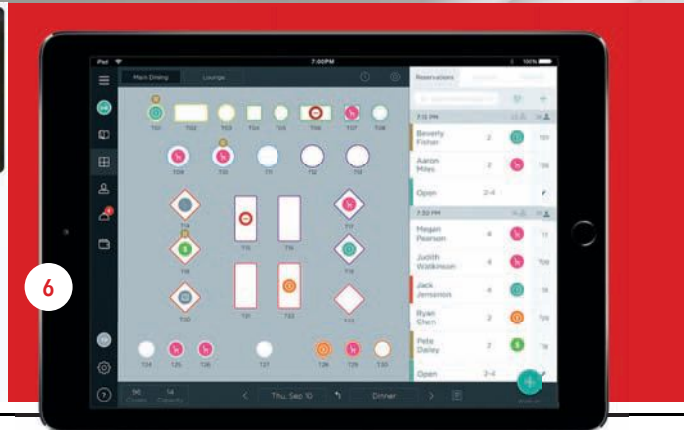
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4



3



6

4 BRIGHT WHITES

Nothing shows off food like a perfectly clean, white palette, and the Rubicon collection from Vertex China offers a super-white body and an amazingly diverse assortment of dinnerware and serving pieces. Versatile and popular shapes include three oval platter styles, coupes, rectangles, and traditional rim plates. Features include a finely polished foot and a magnesium-reinforced body for strength and pristine whiteness. The recently introduced 11.5-inch oval platter is priced \$825.88 per dozen; an 8-inch rim

plate is priced \$175.57 per dozen; and the 10.5-inch rim plate is priced \$341.07 per dozen.

VertexChina.com

Cloud Cover

Seems everyone has hopped onto cloud platforms, which make all manner of operational decisions so much easier, efficient, and economical. Featured here are two cloud solutions that are taking the full-service space in select cities by storm:

5 RESY APP

With both consumer- and restaurant-facing com-

ponents, the Resy system appeals equally to diners and operators. It streamlines operations via a front-of-house management console, and it powers reservations, supports waiting lists, and enables customer-to-restaurant communications. Consumers can download the app to make and change reservations, pay the check, and manage their dining profiles. The consumer-facing app is available in Charleston, South Carolina; Los Angeles; Miami; New York City; San Francisco; and Washington, D.C. Pricing starts at \$89 per month.

Resy.com

6 RESERVE FOR RESTAURANTS

Reserve for Restaurants is a full-service table-management system that can be used for waitlists, walk-ins, and reservation management. Within its first two months, hundreds of restaurants had begun using the intuitive system, which allows guests to be seated in "two taps" and staff to be trained easily. Available in Boston; Chicago; Los Angeles; New York City; Philadelphia; San Francisco; and Washington, D.C. Plans start at \$99 per month.

Reserve.com

(4) VERTEX CHINA / (5) RESY / (6) RESERVE



7

Farm Spread

With knife in hand over a pristine stainless prep surface or fork poised above a candlelit white tablecloth, chef and diner alike need never forget food often begins with hands that reached into the dirt.

7 GOURMET PEANUTS

These jumbo Virginia peanuts from Hope & Harmony Farm are bursting with salty flavor and crunch. Grown on a fourth-generation family farm, each batch of peanuts is cooked according to a time-honored family recipe in pure 100 percent peanut oil. The artisan product is made to order in small batches, effectively delivering the freshest product possible. Peanuts are classified a superfood and have 7 grams of protein, more than any nut. In addition to tins, ranging from 4.9 ounces to 40 ounces, the

gourmet, salted peanuts are available in 22-pound bulk boxes and have a shelf life of six to nine months. Priced to order. RoyalOakPeanuts.com

8 LAMB BAA'CON

Chefs who want the sizzle but not the pork now have a bacon alternative that delivers on flavor and works nicely in a variety of dishes. Superior Farms' Lamb Bacon is cut from the lamb breast, cured, and hardwood-smoked. It's sold in slabs and can be sliced, diced, crumbled, and combined with other menu items to form creative and crowd-

pleasing dishes. \$6.99 per pound. SuperiorFarms.com

9 POTS OF GOLD

For a dining experience that really speaks to garden fresh, serve food in these Melamine Terra Cotta Pots, which are perfectly sized to fit individual servings or shared sides. Ranging in size from 2 to 24 ounces, there's plenty of variety to meet all sorts of food-service demands, from casual dining to catering buffets, garden parties, weddings, and more. \$3.60 to \$9.40 each. Annnow.com

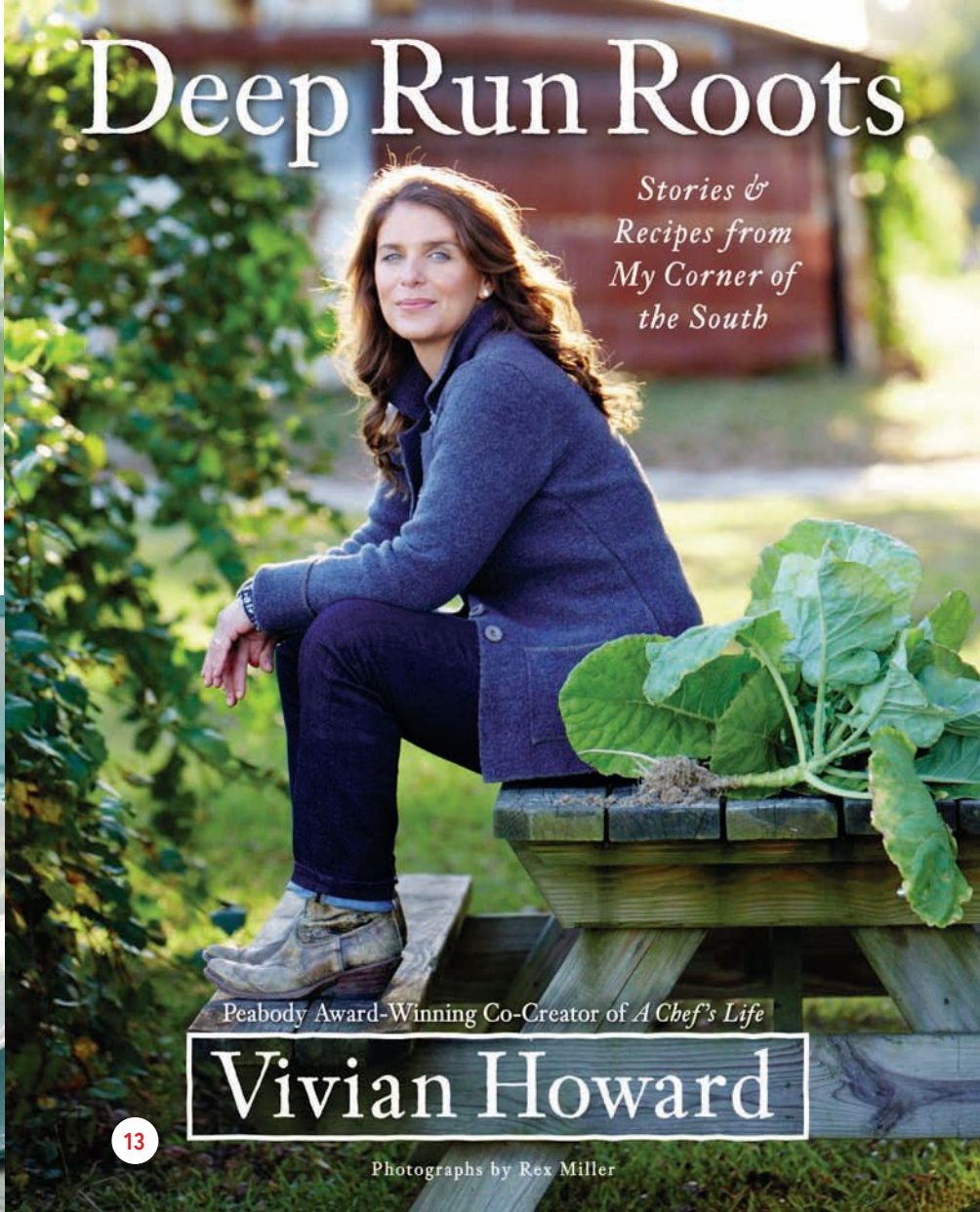




11



12



Deep Run Roots

*Stories &
Recipes from
My Corner of
the South*

Peabody Award-Winning Co-Creator of *A Chef's Life*

Vivian Howard

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Photographs by Rex Miller

10 BRINGING IN THE BACON

Combining the demand for heritage-breed pork with the seemingly ubiquitous desire for bacon, the fresh Mangalitsa by Møsefund bacon burger is coming to restaurant menus. Also called Kobe pork, the fresh (not frozen) burger patties are available in 2-, 4-, 5-, and 8-ounce portions. The Møsefund Farm takes special care with its Mangalitsa heritage-breed pigs, feeding them a wholesome diet that yields marbled meat cuts high in healthy fats. \$8.99 per pound.

Mangalitsa.com

11 PATENT-PENDING PREPPED PEPPERS

Say that one five times fast—better yet, check out the new fully cleaned, seeded, and cored Redy-Pep Bell Peppers from Church Brothers Farms. The tops and seeds are gone, but the value's added to give chefs consistent quality, uniform size, and convenient prep work. The new-to-market format reduces food waste and labor. The 18-day shelf life is longer than traditional peppers, and these babies can be stored from 34 degrees to 38 degrees. Priced to order.

ChurchBrothers.com

12 NEVER-EVER LAND

As part of its No Antibiotics Ever line, Perdue's chicken and turkey offerings are now completely free of antibiotics. The chickens and turkeys are fed an all-vegetarian diet with no animal byproducts. The antibiotic-free poultry portfolio covers more than 150 products, including roasts, sliced meats, burgers, sausages, and breakfast meats. Priced to order.

PerdueFoodservice.com/products/NAEAndOrganic

13 DEEP RUN ROOTS

Chef Vivian Howard co-owns Chef and the Farmer restaurant with

her husband, Ben Knight, and she co-created the Peabody Award-winning PBS series "A Chef's Life" with childhood friend Cynthia Hill, but this book is hers alone, and it represents a premier moment of self-expression. *Deep Run Roots: Stories and Recipes from My Corner of the South* frees the James Beard Award-winning chef and aspiring journalist to showcase her storytelling prowess while sharing more than 200 recipes. Replete with photos, the hardcover book is \$27.54; and the Kindle version is \$16.99. VivianHoward.com

(10) SUNG ANDERSEN / (11) CHURCH BROTHERS / (12) PERDUE FOODSERVICE / (13) STACEY VAN BERKEL



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Finishing Touches

From décor staples to sweet endings, the dining experience is judged by all the little details.

14 HANDCRAFTED, DURABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE FLOORING

Each plank in the Handcrafted Collection is truly crafted by hand—often by second- and third-generation craftsmen—resulting in a subtle but genuine aesthetic that mass-produced, mechanically aged processes cannot replicate. The Handcrafted Collection consists of real wood and maintains Nydree's signature acrylic-infused top layer, providing a durable, yet design-driven, flooring option for restaurants. Priced \$13 per square foot.

NydreeFlooring.com

15 TRUFFLES WITH A TWIST

No doubt that truffles are highly desirable, but the hefty price has made them cost-prohibitive for many chefs. The first-ever truffle zest from Sabatino Tartufi provides the complex, umami-filled flavors of truffles at a more palatable price. More than 40 percent of the truffle zest originates from real black truffles—a rare attribute among other truffle-themed products. \$13.99 per pound.

SabatinoTruffles.com

16 FUDGE ON!

Ghirardelli sweetens the appeal of its hot fudge

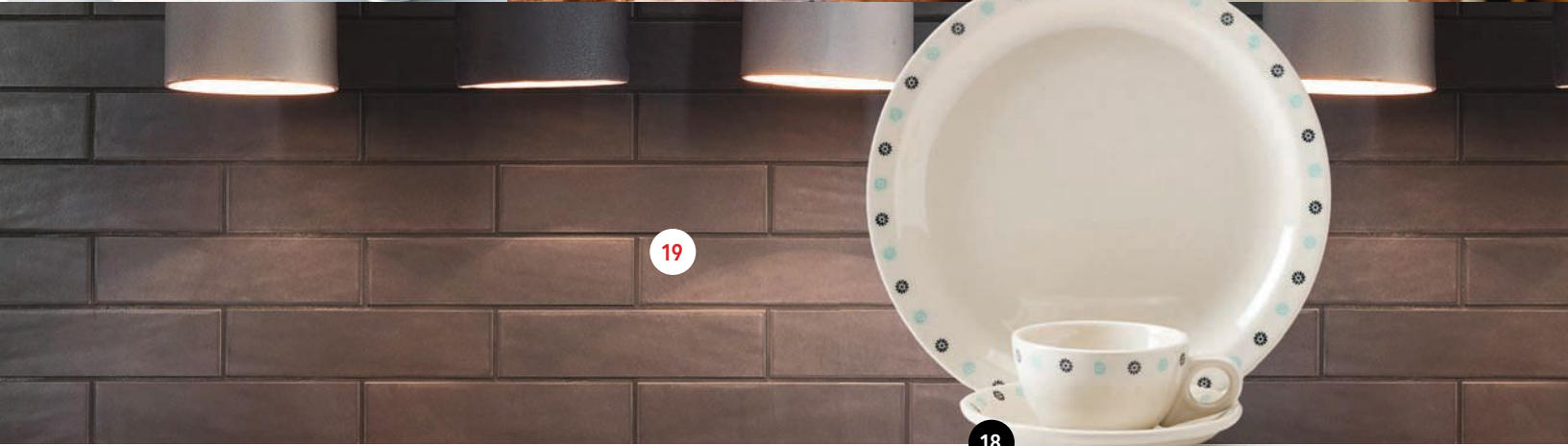
with a new recipe that contains no artificial flavors, no partially hydrogenated fats, and no corn syrup. The new Ghirardelli Hot Fudge blends premium Ghirardelli milk chocolate, real cream, butter, and vanilla together in a bold mélange that finishes with creamy caramel notes. Whether paired with milkshakes, sundaes, frozen yogurt, or luscious hot beverages, Ghirardelli Hot Fudge is the perfect dessert companion. Available in traditional cans, squeeze bottles, and space-saving pouches. Six 8-pound No.10 cans for \$112.12; one dozen



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23-ounce squeeze bottles for \$49.75; or a case of eight 4.1-pound Hot Fudge Pouches for \$73.80.

Ghirardelli.com/professional

17 WHITE CHEDDAR LIGHTENING

With its convenient heat-and-serve delivery, the ¡Que Bueno! White Cheddar Cheese Sauce is perfect for operators looking to customize signature dips and sauces in fast-paced environments. A creamy blend of 100 percent aged White Cheddar creates the perfect base for creative additives, allowing operators to customize signature dips and

sauses, and it can withstand a 4-hour hold time for maximum efficiency and limited waste. Six 106-ounce cans per case, priced to order.

ChefmateFrontBurner.com/QBWhiteCheddar

18 STORIED DISHES

Retro went live in 2015, when the Homer Laughlin China Company introduced 12 dinnerware patterns in whimsical creative designs evoking bygone days of Americana style. This year, the company added four new designs to its Retro line: Jet Spray Maroon and Jet Spray Mocha both featur-

ing a wide, colorful band around the rim, and the Pinwheels (above) and Golden Ambrosia designs, which harken down memory lane with rim motifs of dancing polka dots or geometric stamps. The durable ivory body dinnerware comes with a clear or Arctic White glaze—high-fire, lead-free glazes that offer superior heat retention—and with the company's heavy-gauge proprietary Alphalain coating that delivers resistance to scratching and chipping. Made in the U.S., all of the dinnerware is lead-free. Priced to order.

HLCdinnerware.com

19 VINTAGE VIBES

Traditional subway tile takes on a vintage appeal with the Industry collection, a porcelain stoneware series by Nemo Tile that offers versatility, durability, and urban-chic sophistication. The metropolitan-inspired color palette comes in six matte-glaze options with silky finishes and includes: Petrolio (blue), Lavagna (dark gray), Argilla (medium gray), Cemento (light gray), Gesso (white), and Sabbia (cream). Suitable for floor or wall, the standard 3-inch x 12-inch tile is \$4.85 per square foot.

NemoTile.com

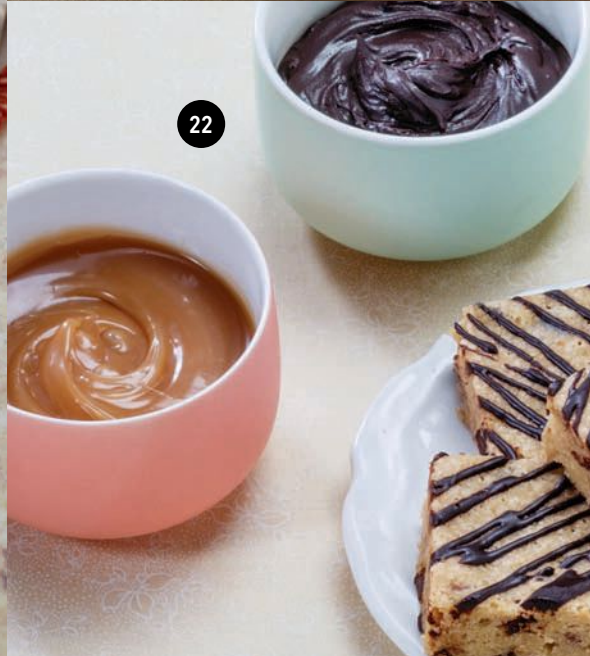
BUYER'S GUIDE



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20 STIR 'N SERVE, SANS THE SURRY

Easy finishes for signature dishes are quickly prepped with the newly reformulated Trio White Sauce and Cream-Style Soup Mix—a simple pour and stir process, no slurry required. The mix features a cleaner label, an improved flavor profile, and adds a subtle savory seasoning and a creamy texture to white sauces and soups. On the nutritious front, the mix is lacto-vegetarian, contains zero grams of trans fat, and no added MSG. Easy to store with re-closeable packaging, giving chefs the ability

to create small and large batches. Priced to order. NestleProfessional.US

21 STACKABLE SIMPLICITY

Vulnerable stacks of take-away containers have long plagued servers and customers alike, given the likelihood that these carriers will slide atop each other or become jumbled in a bag. Go To Containers solves that conundrum with a stackable product, the Sani-Stak container, which earned a silver award at the DuPont Awards for Packaging Innovation. Made of eco-friendly materials, Sani-Stak features a nesting

system that can lock multiple containers in place, preventing any slippage. Priced \$45 to \$65 per case of 200.

GoToContainers.com

22 BOURBON DECADENCE

From Bourbon-Barrel Maple Syrup to a Chocolate Bourbon Pecan Torte, the line of bourbon products from Matthews 1812 House is infused with America's rich whiskey. The bakery, which started in a Connecticut family farmhouse, produces six dessert selections in the bourbon collection. Priced from \$13 to \$37.

1812house.com/collections/bourbon

23 SE HABLA ESPAÑOL?

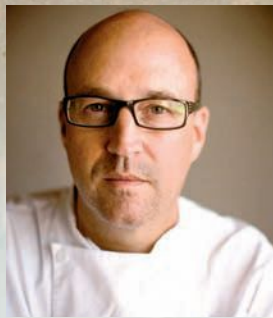
"Sí," says Homebase, which has launched a Spanish version of its services platform that provides online tools for small business operators, including mobile apps to help manage the paperwork and logistics of scheduling, payroll, and communication for hourly employees. This empowers managers to better engage with Spanish-speaking employees. The basic package is free; essential add-ons are \$9.95 per month, per location; and the deluxe package is \$29.95 per month, per location.

JoinHomebase.com

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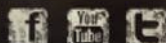
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If you are committed to featuring and serving only Wild American Shrimp in your restaurant, then become a Chef Advocate today.

To learn more, visit BIT.LY/CHEFADVOCATES



AMERICANSHRIMP.COM





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Healthy and Hearty

Why not both? Flavorful comfort foods are becoming ever so politically correct, with variations that are low in preservatives and high in natural attributes.

24 CHILI FOR THE CHOOSY CONSUMER

Operators and customers have even more reason to feel warmed by Campbell's Chili line. Seven fully prepared chili selections—including flavors like Reserve Savory Beef Chili with Spicy Pepper Trio and Signature Southwest Vegetarian Chili—are now free of artificial flavors, high-fructose corn syrup, MSG, and added preservatives. Priced to order.

CampbellsFoodservice.com/chili

25 HAVE A CHEESE BALL

Customization is the name of this cheese game. Family Fresh Pack and Sugar

Brook Farms created a line of bulk cheese ball mixes—available in 5-pound containers—in Sharp Cheddar, Port Wine Cheddar, Swiss Almond, Dessert, and Cheddar Ranch. All of the mixes are made with real Wisconsin cheese and fresh cream. The shelf life for unopened mixes is 180 days, and finished cheese balls will keep 10 to 14 days. Priced \$3.20 to \$4 per pound.

SugarBrookFarms.com

26 FALL INTO FRESH SALADS

A new generation of salads is moving beyond summertime. Freshway

Foods has introduced salads that showcase fall and winter produce: Sweet and Crunchy Couscous, Nutty Balsamic Kale Salad, Buffalo Cauliflower Salad, Ancient Grain and Garden Salad, and Pear and Broccoli Salad. Priced to order.

FreshwayFoods.com

27 PIE IN THE SKY

Few things are sweeter than homemade pies, and Tyson's reformulated Chef Pierre Hi-Pie desserts feature locally sourced fruits with no artificial flavors or colors. With more than a pound of fruit filling in every single pie, some are sweetened with sugar,



while others get all of their sweetness from the fruit. Available in assorted flavors including Caramel Apple Nut, Strawberry Rhubarb, and No-Sugar-Added Cherry. Priced to order.

ChefPierre.com

28 BONES TO PICK

Using its 100-year-old curing method, Jones Dairy Farm debuts delectable Bac'n Bones, which are naturally smoked over real cherry wood, resulting in a fully cooked slab of ribs that tastes like bacon. Operators can add their favorite dry rub, marinade, or sauce.

Approximately \$1.15 per one rib portion.

JonesDairyFarmFoodservice.com

29 FLOUR POWER

As health-minded consumers continue to eschew white flour, Pereg Gourmet expands its alternative flour line with six new varieties: almond, banana, buckwheat, chickpea, coconut, and farro. All six are natural, dairy-free, and certified kosher, and—with the exception of the farro variety—all are gluten-free. Each package includes recipes for inspiration, and, in most cases, chefs can substitute these varieties one-to-one for

whole-wheat flour. \$3.99 per 16-ounce resealable package.

Pereg-Gourmet.com

30 THE DARK SIDE

Typically priced more favorably than traditional beef and pork options, dark chicken meat offers variety as well as a healthy alternative. Per the USDA, one serving contains a third of the total saturated fat of ground beef. Tyson's dark meat line includes chicken sausage patties, chicken pepperoni, dark meat strips with teriyaki sauce, taco meat, and more. Priced to order.

TysonFoodservice.com

31 NUTRITION TRACKER

Health-conscious guests seek information, and the My Meal, My Way Nutrition Calculator delivers all the data with precision and ease. The interactive technology helps restaurants comply with FDA regulations and lets diners easily view 11 nutritional points, including calories, fat, sugar, and sodium. The calculator can be accessed on a website as well as via online ordering apps and tabletop kiosks. It will map data directly from a restaurant's own nutritional data providers. Priced to order.

TrabonGroup.com

(28) JONES DAIRY FARM / (29) PEREG GOURMET / (30) TYSON FOODSERVICE



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Fast Fixes

Even in the more polished full-service restaurants, sometimes there's a need for speed. The key, of course, is to accelerate service without compromising product.

32 CRISP 'N' CREAMY

Surprise customers with familiar flavors in a new format: These crispy wonton chips are filled with creamy dips. Anchor Chip 'n' Dippers are available in Spinach and Artichoke or Loaded Nacho. Put a new spin on classic dishes or serve alongside complementary dipping sauces to leave guests "wonton" more. \$0.36 per piece.

McCainUSAfoodservice.com

33 TOPPERS OR TIDBITS, TAKE YOUR PICK

A rich blend of Provolone and Asiago cheeses combines with diced portabella mushrooms in a gar-

lic panko shell to create a savory standalone appetizer or the finishing touch atop a salad, burger, or signature dish. Anchor's Portabella Artisan Cheese Bites taste indulgent, but the price gives operators margin to play. \$0.22 per piece.

McCainUSAfoodservice.com/Product

34 TRUE COLORS

With food safety top of mind, Rubbermaid Commercial Products has created an uncomplicated solution to prevent cross contamination in the kitchen. The Color-Coded Foodservice system of storage and prep tools comes

in seven colors to help staff quickly identify what they're looking for. The collection includes storage containers, lids, high-heat spatulas, tongs, cutting boards, and a cutting-board rack. All products can be cleaned in commercial dishwashers and are built to withstand the rigors of a commercial kitchen. Starter kits range from \$233 for a seven-piece cutting board set to \$1,881 for the comprehensive 84-piece, seven-color starter set.

RubbermaidCommercial.com

35 SPONTANEOUS PLATING

Perfect for rustic farm-to-table concepts, gour-



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met gastropubs, or polished-casual settings, these Galvanized Fry Cups are shabby-chic at its finest. Available in straight-sided, angled, and footed designs, the cups showcase appetizers and sides. Ranging in sizes from 10 to 24 ounces, and priced \$7 to \$12 each.

Amnow.com

36 MAKE IT A FRY-DAY

Whether for a tortilla bowl or a chimichanga, operators can shape the Fry-Ready Tortillas to suit their fancy and drop them in the fryer to reach the preferred color and crispness. Each tortilla will contain a

savory, buttery flavor and soft, flaky texture. Menu a Mexican-themed breakfast bowl or create a perfectly sized taquito. Available in 6-inch, 8-inch, 10-inch, and 12-inch tortillas, with a 75-day shelf life. Priced to order.

MissionFoodservice.com

37 THE YUM! FACTOR

Boost flavor in dipping sauces, aiolis, spreads, warm and cold salads, sautés, soups, dressings, and more with Minor's Ready to Flavor products that can be added into hot or cold applications without any additional cooking required. Perfect for oper-

ations of all sizes, even those with limited equipment, and for cooks with varying levels of expertise, the flavor-enhancing products are an even bigger hit with diners: According to recent consumer testing conducted by Data-sential, crispy appetizers with house-made dipping sauces ranked in the top percentile of all concepts presented to millennials. Priced to order.

FlavorMeansBusiness.com

38 PREMIUM CONDIMENTS

Answering the demand for ingredient transparency, Kraft Heinz introduced two lines of pre-

mium condiments, sauces, and dressings. The Pure Kraft and Simply Heinz products contain no artificial colors, no artificial flavors, no artificial preservatives, and no high-fructose corn syrup. In addition to classic Tomato Ketchup, the selection includes Honey Mustard, Barbecue Sauce, Mayonnaise, and Yellow Mustard. The Pure Kraft dressings include Farmhouse Ranch, Creamy Balsamic, Country Honey Mustard, Homestyle Blue Cheese, and Asiago Caesar. Priced to order.

KraftHeinz-Foodservice.com/simplypure

(35) AMERICAN METALCRAFT / (36) MISSION FOODSERVICE / (37) MINOR'S / (38) KRAFT-HEINZ FOODSERVICE



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Bar & Beverage

From tea time to toasting the midnight hour, all these little details contribute to decisions that can impact and improve beverage service.

39 RUGGED BARTENDING

Instead of a Swiss Army knife, bartenders need only grasp the Barbarian, which has nine bar tools in one handy device. As a citrus press, it's great for squeezing limes, lemons, and oranges. The tool's jigger measures 1-ounce, 1.5-ounce, and 5-ounce pours. There's a corkscrew and lever, a zester, a channel knife, a convenient can lance, a 1-inch knife, and a citrus knife. \$59.95

BarbarianBarTools.com

40 NATURAL SELECTION

As craft cocktails continue to mature in complexity and beauty, so should the

drinkware. Hence American Metalcraft turned to natural elements, like antique and shiny copper or stainless steel, available in mirror and satin finishes. The trendy mix, which includes cocktail shakers, steel jiggers, mugs, tumblers, and drink cans, is the perfect match for beverage programs in urban settings with an industrial contemporary vibe. Priced to order, the collection starts at \$3 per piece.

Amnow.com

41 BRIGHT IDEA

Voila! The PayVue Illuminated Cash Drawer takes restaurant operators out

of the dark ages—literally. Perfect for venues with a low-lit ambiance, the product improves transaction time and reduces errors. Additionally, the lit-up cash drawer greatly decreases the chance of theft—a big issue for dimly lit bars and restaurants. \$295

MMFpos.com

42 QUICK TO CONCENTRATE

A watched teapot may never boil, but a new system from BKON Craft Brewers is nearly eliminating the wait time. Featuring Reverse Atmospheric Infusion (RAIN) technology,



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the Craft Brewer uses controlled-vacuum-infusion cycles to extract the natural flavor from loose-leaf teas, coffee, and botanicals. In 90 seconds, the concentrates are ready to be poured over ice. \$24,250
BKONbrew.com

43 CHERRIES WITH 6% ABV

Putting an adult take on childhood nostalgia, Twisted Cherries are maraschino cherries infused with alcohol. Perfect toppers for cocktails or desserts, they can even be baked or eaten straight from the jar. Available in two varieties: Balls of Fire,

which are infused with cinnamon, or as the Original Cherry Bomb. Sold in 12.6-ounce jars, priced \$9.98 each, or \$17.98 for a combo pack of both flavors.
Twisted-cherries.com

44 TEMPTING TASTES

Red Diamond has imparted eight tropical flavors into its orange pekoe and pekoe cut black teas and green teas, creating an array of fresh iced-beverage options. The Tropical Temptations line includes Pink Grapefruit Black Tea, Mango-Infused Green Tea, and Toasted Coconut Tea. Available in 4-ounce open

brew packets that come in 30-count cases.

RedDiamond BevService.com/tropical-temptations/

45 COMPACT FOR COUNTERTOPS

Elaborate frozen beverages don't require a giant machine or complicated equipment. The Stoelting Mini Soft Serve Countertop Freezer is a simple plug-and-play installation with a compact footprint that saves space. Lightweight and portable, it can follow the crowd—from bar, to catered affairs, even to pop-up events or food trucks. It can use both dry and liq-

uid mixes to create everything from frozen desserts to frosty beverages. A horizontal auger gently folds the product over the freezer plate for consistent results. \$3,400
Vollrath.com

46 THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Beverages shine when poured into glasses cleaned by the Hobart Advansys LXGe glasswashers, which efficiently clean glasses without leaving any chemical residue. The new glasswashers are ENERGY STAR-qualified with one-button operation and a special "Soft Start"

(42) BKON CRAFT BREWERS / (43 & 44) THINKSTOCK / (45) VOLLRATH



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feature that helps protect glasses from chipping and breaking. The compact washers come in two heights, allowing them to fit into nearly any establishment. Priced to order. HobartCorp.com

47 LUXURY STEMWARE MADE IN AMERICA

Defined by equal parts elegance and strength, the Master Reserve collection provides an elevated dining experience and superior durability in food-service stemware. Three of the most distinctive pieces—the Prism Flute, the Renaissance Martini, and the Rivere Red Wine—

offer versatile and innovative features. The modern angles of the Flute provide a visual cue to control pour volume. The timeless Martini has an exceptionally deep vessel for reduced splash. And the statuesque Red Wine is characterized by a beadless rim, svelte stem, and unprecedented flat-footed base.

Available with 12 pieces per carton, the 8-ounce Prism Flute is priced \$109.44 per carton, the 7-ounce Renaissance Martini is \$96.84 per carton, and the 23.5-ounce Red Wine is \$138.96 per carton. Libbey.com

48 FREEZE OUT MICROBES

This new antimicrobial ice protection system puts the risk of bacteria, yeast, and mold on ice. The Franke EcO₃Ice treats water entering ice machines with a safe yet effective amount of pure ozone to reduce microbial buildup. With EcO₃Ice in place, restaurants can cut the frequency of professional, deep-cleaning services in half. \$698

FrankeAmericas.com

49 FASHIONABLE FORM AND FUNCTION

The latest fashion diva to hit the bar scene is the Ayla Seating Collec-

tion, introduced in mid-October and stunning restaurant settings with the evocative linear simplicity of its contemporary design. The frames of these side chairs, arm chairs, and barstools are made of tubular steel with a durable, powder-coated black or aluminum finish. The backs are available in either all-wood or an upholstered front and stained wood back. The seats can be upholstered in a variety of fabrics and include grooved channels that mimic the linear nature of the frame. Priced to order.

Beaufurn.com



- Works with multi-directional scores, folds and bends
- Recyclable, repulpable, compostable
- Replaces LDPE coated boards

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It can be scored and folded then **recycled and/or composted.**

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Outside the Box

Restaurants aren't Vegas! What happens in the box doesn't need to stay there. Full-service brands can deliver even better on the outside—be it al fresco patios, to-go service, or catered events.

50 A CUBIC FEAT

The Cubic Display System adds visual interest to any buffet lineup with a portable, lightweight system that includes bowls, pedestals, beverage dispensers, cutting boards, platters, and more. They are easy to combine in a wide array of options, and can be seamlessly blended into surrounding décor. Vertical height options maximize the serving area, and the easy-to-assemble system lets operators create a veritable serving skyline to showcase food and drink. Priced from \$4.70 to \$475.

Vollrath.com

51 COOL VIEWS

Built for high ambient light or direct-sunlight locations, a specialty 55-inch large-screen monitor from NEC Display sports a robust panel brightness and a 5000:1 contrast ratio, making the display ideal for applications in patios, bars, and dining rooms that transition from bright daylight to soft candles. The monitor, model X554HB, delivers optimum clarity for full readability in semi-outdoor installations, and the display's self-diagnosing real-temperature sensors link to five thermodynamic cooling fans, which serve to dissipate stand-

ing heat that can build up within the display. \$5,299
NECdisplay.com

52 FIRE AND ICE

Al fresco dining has stepped up a notch: The Alfresco Fire-N-Table is a new product to the U.S. market and brings functional convenience to outdoor entertainment. It's a pub-height table that can seat eight or accommodate 12 guests standing comfortably—and its core houses either an open-flame heating element or a stainless steel ice bucket. In cool-climate settings it offers a table-top fire pit; in warmer cli-

(50) VOLLRATH / (51) ALFRESCO FIRE N TABLE



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mates, beverages can be chilled and poured at the table. \$2,995
FireTable.us

53 JUST LIKE HOME

Served in the Home-Style Cookware Chafing Dish Collection, food has a “fresh-from-the-kitchen” ambiance often lacking from buffet lines. The collection can be displayed on top of traditional induction systems and heater stands or combined with the company’s Fusion Buffet System. Available in four sizes, in stainless steel as well as cast iron. Priced to order.

HaberSilver.com

54 DISPOSABLE DINNERWARE

Deliver your company’s green message on a plate. Bambu’s Veneerware collection is premium disposable dinnerware made from certified organic bamboo. Options include tongs, bowls, tasting and dinner plates, and more. \$12 for a sample box.

BambuHome.com

55 TO-GO DONE RIGHT

Designed to increase efficiency and diminish human error by taking online orders and automatically inputting them into a restaurant’s POS system, Chowly’s software

streamlines the orders through platforms such as GrubHub and Eat24, pushing them into the kitchen’s normal prep queue. Priced per transaction, with set-up fees that range from \$75 to \$150.

Chowlyinc.com

56 RISE UP

Raise the cool factor with these Glacier Acrylic Risers, which offer a stunning backdrop for food and—with half-inch-thick walls—are durable enough to stand up to weighty dishes. Available in 5-inch-square, \$86, and 7-inch-square, \$130, models.

Amnow.com

57 COMPACT COMMERCIAL PIZZA OVEN

BakerStone International, creator of the original BakerStone Pizza Oven Box, has introduced its first industrial model. Made of stainless steel, the unit is designed to sit above a restaurant’s charbroiler or patio grill, and through the broiler or gas grill, create an impromptu pizza oven. The BakerStone Commercial Pizza Oven opens a restaurant’s menu to a new category of pizza and flatbreads, without sacrificing precious kitchen space. \$429

BakerStoneBox.com

(53) DW HABER & SON / (54) BAMBU / (56) AMERICAN METALCRAFT / (57) BAKERSTONE INTERNATIONAL



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Going Green

Field to fork, opportunities for operators to embrace sustainability run the gamut from plating vegetarian options to reducing demands on labor, landfills, and water consumption.

58 A-MAIZE-ING VEGGIE BLENDS

Simplot extends the flavors of summer with the latest addition to its Roastworks brand. The Flame Roasted Corn & Jalapeño Blend combines flame-roasted sweet corn and white corn with green onion, cilantro, jalapeño, and garlic. With bright flavors and a bit of a kick, this gluten-free vegetarian blend can be tossed into salads or employed in other dishes like burritos and corn cakes. Priced to order.

SimplotFoods.com/roastworks

59 SAVE WATER, SAVE MONEY

Dipping into the well too often can be a major drain on a restaurant's bottom line. The ConserveWell utensil holder is an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional, perpetual-flow dipper wells. One ConserveWell unit can save more than 250,000 gallons of water per year, and its water remains above 140 degrees, keeping utensils safe from harmful bacteria. A programmable timer reminds users to refresh water. Estimated cost is \$525 per unit.

Server-Products.com

60 HIGH YIELD, LOW PREP

A new value-add broccoli product has reduced food waste at the point of harvest and increased yields from the field. The Diced Broccoli Stem Blend is the next-gen take on the traditional bite-size broccoli floret. While the trimming and prep necessary for traditional florets can be labor-intensive, the Broccoli Stem Blend comes ready to use, has been triple-washed, and offers 100 percent yield. Six 2-pound bags per case, with a 16-day shelf life, and priced to order.

ChurchBrothers.com



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61 SUSTAINABLE SYRUP

Hershey Foodservice cans traditional packaging for its chocolate syrup in favor of an eco-friendly, BPA-free pouch. Weighing 85 percent less than the traditional No. 10 can, Hershey's Chocolate Syrup pouch cuts the product's packaging materials nearly in half and is estimated to reduce landfill waste by 27 percent. And since the pouch takes up less space, restaurant operators can store more back-of-house—just in case of a chocolate craze. A case of four 64-ounce pouches is priced \$23.09.

HersheyFoodservice.com

62 HOW DOES YOUR GARLIC GROW?

Not every chef grows his own, but almost all restaurants use garlic. The Michigan Garlic Farm is a family-owned farm that specializes in hardneck garlic and sells both seed garlic bulbs and culinary garlic bulbs. All of the garlic is hand-planted, hand-weeded, and hand-harvested, with no herbicides or pesticides. Products include garlic bulbs, powders in 2-ounce jars, and garlic chive plants. Seed garlic is \$17 per pound; culinary garlic is \$15 per pound.

MichiganGarlicFarm.com

63 MAKING THE CUT

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eat your drink

65

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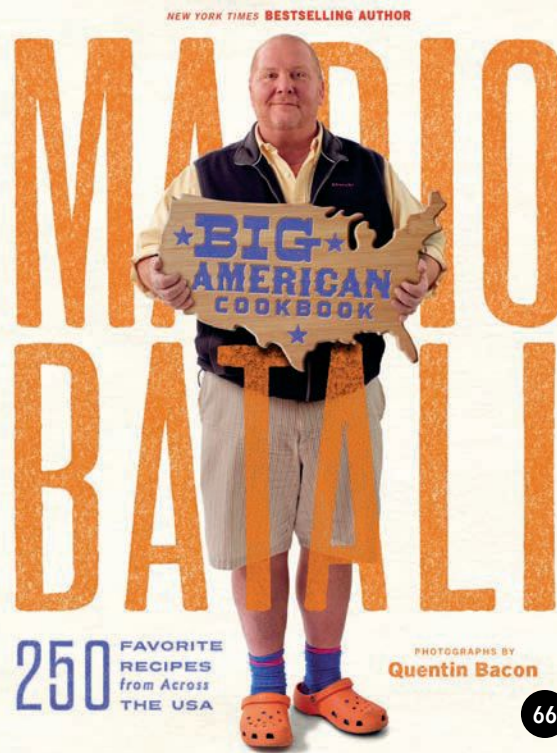
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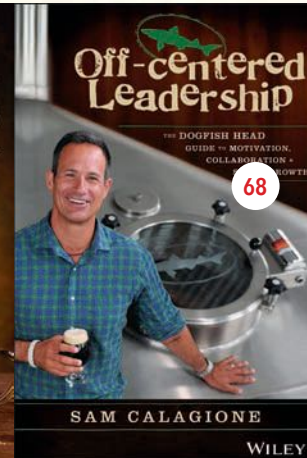
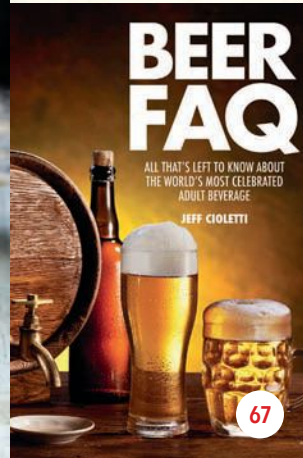
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THE DISH ON DELIVERY

Thanks to demand for more convenient service, consumers continue to turn to delivery to fulfill their restaurant fix in a hurry—and the full-service industry is where the fastest growth is taking place.

BY BARNEY WOLF

DELIVERY HAS LONG BEEN A COMPONENT

of America's pizza parlors and Chinese food purveyors, but now—as time-strapped consumers demand convenience—all manner of restaurants are offering door-to-door To-Go services. Laying claim to this business opportunity is a growing industry of online third-party delivery services, eager to run the delivery relay on behalf of restaurants.

These providers include divisions of fast-growing Amazon and Uber, as well as others that have a history in dealing with restaurants, such as Groupon and GrubHub. Most depend on technological advancements powered by the ubiquitous adoption of smartphones and mobile devices.

Although just 5 percent of restaurant spending is done through online delivery platforms, according to investment firm Morgan Stanley, and pizza makes up more than half of that, delivery services are revving their engines to grow the business. In fact, NPD Group restaurant analyst Bonnie Riggs, who acknowledges that pizza currently makes up 64 percent of the 1.7-billion-trip delivery pie, suggests that full-service restaurants are where the growth is occurring. During the three-year period that ended in May, overall restaurant delivery was flat, an NPD report found. However, when pizza data was excluded, the report found that delivery was up 26 percent—up 21 percent for casual-dining restaurants alone.

NPD also found that diners not currently using delivery services would consider doing so for casual concepts more than any other segment. As a result, “full-service restaurants have the best opportunity for growth in delivery,” Riggs says.

Similarly, Morgan Stanley notes that third-party online restaurant delivery services, which are mainly in larger metropolitan markets, have been gaining traction because of the incremental business the service produces for restaurants. “In our view,” the investment firm’s analysts state, the nation “is in the early days of a significant shift in the access to delivery food,” and the trend will gain steam as various internet-enabled businesses continue to grow and offer more variety.

OPERATIONS



THINKSTOCK

OPERATIONS

That's one reason big companies with infrastructure in place, like Uber and Amazon, entered restaurant food delivery. "What else can we do with this vast network of drivers and the efficiencies it brings?" is the question we asked," explained Uber's special projects chief, Jason Droege, at the National Restaurant Association show in May. "To connect people with the food they want has a lot of power."

People are busy and have less time dedicated to food preparation at home, says Anna Tauzin, senior marketing and innovation manager at the NRA. "They like what restaurants have to offer, and now they want all those options at home." Two years ago, restaurant sales surpassed grocery sales, the NRA reported. Not surprisingly, consumers have sought more ways to source food from eateries. "As consumer demand has gone up, technology and delivery companies have risen to meet that demand," she says. Today, UberEats is in more than a dozen markets, and Amazon restaurant delivery, part of its free-delivery Prime membership program, has grown to 12 markets.

Third-party delivery also frees restaurant operators from absorbing "all the other costs—having liability insurance, hiring drivers, and making sure the whole experience is positive. It puts all that in other hands," Riggs says. At the same time, Tauzin notes, delivery is a means to increase sales and marketing to new customers.

There is, however, a bit of a Catch-22 for full-service restaurants: The biggest users of online delivery are tech-savvy millennials, who typically have fewer dollars to spend. That makes pricier full-serves appear less attractive than less-expensive quick serves. But Riggs notes that by the time a consumer adds the costs of delivery services—minimum order, delivery charge, and tip, for instance—"you might as well go with a casual restaurant, because the cost may be only a buck or two different."

Driving Control

For operators, certain issues are paramount: food safety, menu integrity,

speed of service, and competent couriers, among others. Restaurants that partner with specific delivery services gain more control over these matters.

Increasingly the business model takes on the mentality of a partnership, and many delivery businesses work with the restaurants to determine what foods are offered online—notably foods that travel well. They may also suggest the kind of packaging to use and handle payments on behalf of the restaurant. Some delivery operators even provide photographs of menu items on their website.

The companies communicate with restaurants in various ways, and many provide restaurant operators with an iPad or similar device dedicated to online orders. Drivers are typically equipped with hot and cold bags to keep the food at the right temperature.

In return, delivery companies typically charge a percentage of the online order—often 10 to 20 percent—and most charge a delivery fee.

A few services, such as DoorDash and Postmates, not only sign restaurants as partners, but also offer diners the ability to order from an even wider range of menus. Their couriers can visit any restaurant, order items, and then deliver those to the buyers, via car or bike. Some operators don't like having little control over how their food travels. "We have received a number of complaints from operators," Tauzin states.

Both DoorDash and Postmates say they'd rather forge partnerships with restaurants but want to give consumers the choice. "We understand this business is driven by forming deep, lasting relationships with restaurants in the form of supporting them and helping them grow their business," says Ryan Broderick, head of merchant operations for DoorDash, which is in 25 metropolitan markets. At the same time, he notes, "From the consumer standpoint, we pride ourselves on offering selection."

About 30 percent of Postmates' business is with restaurant and retail partners, but "we don't need a partnership" to provide delivery to a consumer, explains Anand Dass, director of business devel-

opment. "We are just matching a customer with a courier, who we call a Postmate, who does the transaction on the part of the customer."

However, when there's a partner relationship, the restaurant's menu is curated to items that will travel well, with consideration given to how far they can be transported, Dass says. Couriers are dispatched to be at the restaurant when the food is ready. All this "makes it better for the customer."

GrubHub, which launched in 2004, is the nation's largest online and mobile food ordering company, with 44,000 restaurants in some 900 American cities. It began as an online restaurant ordering service and started its delivery business in 2014. Over the years, it acquired a number of other online menu and delivery companies, including Seamless, which began as a web-based way for companies—and later consumers—to order from restaurants.

GrubHub delivery began in its hometown, Chicago, as the test market, says Meghan Gage, public relations manager. "We wanted to be sure we could do it really well." Today, some 5,000 restaurants—independents and chains alike—are part of the delivery service in 50 markets. Having restaurant partners who have used GrubHub ordering system for years has been an advantage in delivery, she notes.

For instance, New York City's The Stanton Social, which celebrity chef Chris Santos and partners opened on the Lower East Side in 2005, uses GrubHub and Seamless delivery exclusively. "Other restaurants in the neighborhood do, too," says Michelle Alden, the restaurant group's general manager.

The restaurant, part of TAO Group, is known for its shareable plates, but doesn't offer its entire menu on the delivery services' sites, because some just don't travel well. Packaging—having salad and dressing in separate containers or meatballs in a specific vessel—is crucial.

In the year since beginning delivery, the restaurant has seen a revenue uptick. A number of diners who ordered online

OPERATIONS

now visit the restaurant, while regular guests sometimes order online if they “don’t want to get dressed up or fight the lines,” Alden notes.

Caviar, which was launched in 2012 by a group of passionate San Francisco foodies because favored restaurants weren’t delivering, now partners with some 2,000 restaurants—from fine-dining spots to food trucks—in 17 markets.

“I think our high-quality partners is what sets us apart,” says Catherine Fardon, a spokeswoman for Caviar, which was acquired two years ago by payments company Square. One of Caviar’s distinguishing features is the ability to order food up to a week in advance.

“We work closely with our partners all the way through,” from photographing menu items for its online pages to testing whether the food can be delivered well, she notes. The service also offers streamlined ordering for groups or events, scheduling, and bill splitting.

Two upscale pizza-centric restaurants in Brooklyn, New York, that have received great reviews, Emily and Emmy Squared, use Caviar, solely. “It’s just the best option for our restaurants,” says Emily Hyland, who owns the eateries with her husband, Matt.

“New York is a very delivery-oriented culture. Nobody cooks. But we’re a small operation, and we had to decide what we would need to do to deliver,” she notes. The third-party delivery service “takes all of the logistical headaches and nonsense out of our hands.”

Emily’s thin-crust pies are baked in a wood-fired oven, while Emmy Squared serves Detroit-style pizza. “I did a lot of R&D, ordering from my apartment, which is 15 minutes away,” Hyland says. “The pizza always came delicious.” Parts of the menu, such as the popular Emily Burger, are not available via delivery.

Keeping it Local

Groupon’s roots are in local businesses, and that includes restaurants. The company’s initial deal was with a pizza place. “One of the key benefits is Groupon has acquired tens of millions of customers who have downloaded our app,” says Dan Roarty, the Chicago-based company’s senior vice president of restaurants. Last year it acquired restaurant delivery service OrderUp and is now integrating online ordering into the Groupon app.

Third-party delivery for full-service restaurants isn’t new, but it’s been fragmented. Many cities have their own ser-

vices, like Delicious Deliveries in Phoenix and Tucson, and Cafe Courier in Columbus, Ohio.

While restaurants that use delivery acknowledge that using a third-party delivery service means they cede a portion of each sale to the courier company, they say that the increased revenue and increased access to customers is worth it.

“Part of it is getting people who have not been to the restaurant to try our food,” says Thomas Nguyen, owner of Houston’s two Peli Peli eateries, which feature South African fusion. “It also allows us to engage more with existing customers.”

Peli Peli uses both DoorDash and UberEats Instant Delivery—the former for various items on the regular menu and the latter to deliver multiple orders of a single dish that Uber promotes.

For three-unit Salvation Pizza in Austin, Texas, the decision to use third-party delivery operations brought an additional issue: The chain already has its own delivery drivers. “It did feel like a gamble when we did it, especially the impact it would have on our in-house drivers,” says owner Michael Dinsmore, who acknowledges there was resentment at first. However, the drivers have other duties at the units and have not been impacted. Salvation Pizza uses UberEats, Amazon, and Favor. “What we get through them is bigger orders and our delivery business is growing,” Dinsmore notes. “The more people we reach, the better it is for our brand.”

Atlanta’s Publik Draft House and the two other restaurants that are part of the Grazie Hospitality Group have signed delivery agreements with at least a half-dozen services. “They’re pretty much the same, except how they make their money,” says co-owner Eddie Johnson. “One will tack on a fee for the consumer, while some will take a percentage of the sale. Some add on a delivery charge.”

Grazie has been diligent in controlling which menu items can be delivered and how to prepare them. With hamburgers, for instance, buns coated with extra butter “create a seal so the burger doesn’t make it soggy. And the pickles and tomatoes are separate.” ■



GRUBHUB

GRUBHUB DELIVERY REPRESENTS MORE THAN 5,000 RESTAURANTS—BOTH INDEPENDENTS AND CHAINS—IN 50 MARKETS.

Building Success In-House

With its own team of chefs, architects, and artisans, Barteca Restaurant Group is growing from the inside out. **By Karon Warren**

When cofounders Sasa Mahr-Batuz and Andy Pforzheimer opened their first location of Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant in 1996, they teamed up with an architect and other design professionals to bring their restaurant to life. Although the launch was successful, Mahr-Batuz was not thrilled about the process.

"I felt like I asked for more things that were different from [the architect's] thinking," he says. For the second location, the pair elected to work alone.

When it came time to expand again, they tried working with outside vendors once again, but to no avail. Mahr-Batuz says they were disheartened by the long and tedious process. Moving forward, he and Pforzheimer opted to build their own design team in-house. Assuming a hands-on role in all aspects of the business allowed the two cofounders to create products they were eager to share with guests.

Today, the company has its own team of five architects, its own carpentry workshop, its own culinary team, and its own art director.

"We don't want to make compromises," says Jeff Carcara, CEO of Barteca Restaurant Group, based in Norwalk, Connecticut. "We want what we want. We've been lucky to find great people who want to be a part of our company."

The result has been two successful restaurant concepts—Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant and bartaco—that have experienced rapid growth in recent years. Today, Barcelona Wine Bar operates 12 locations in five states, and bartaco spans 11 locations in six states. Each brand will open two additional locations by year-end.

Carcara thinks both brands are so successful because they resonate with customers.

"They provide a great value," he says. "Customers can go have an appetizer or hang out all night. It's not just about



BARTECA RESTAURANT GROUP RETAINS A HANDS-ON APPROACH TO GROWTH AND EVEN CREATED ITS OWN IN-HOUSE DESIGN TEAM.

getting your stomach full."

The restaurants' designs certainly provide a welcoming setting. Barcelona Wine Bar draws inspiration from the tapas bars in Spain and Italy. Instead of a cool, minimalist design, the restaurants feature warm undertones, with wood and brick walls for an urban yet intimate environment.

Established in 2010, sister concept bartaco takes a more laid-back approach, reminiscent of the beach culture found in Brazil, Uruguay, and Southern California. This relaxed vibe is reflected in whitewashed woods, chandeliers made of woven baskets, bar tops crafted with reclaimed wood, and bright blue-and-white-striped cushions.

"We wanted to create spaces that feel like they've been there forever, that are comfortable and cozy," Mahr-Batuz says.

The welcoming atmosphere at both restaurants extends to the employees, too. In an industry known for high turnover, Barteca Restaurant Group boasts a high employee-retention rate.

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CEO JEFF CARCARA (FAR LEFT) AND COFOUNDER SASA MAHR-BATUZ KEEP BARCELONA AND BARTACO (ABOVE) RESTAURANTS UNIQUE IN AMBIANCE AND WITH DIFFERENT, LOCALLY SOURCED MENUS.

Restaurant Group is upfront with its business approach and with employee expectations from the very beginning.

“It’s simple: Don’t ever change the guest focus,” Carcara says. “It’s clear on all levels. Our employees really appreciate that, and it makes our employees feel comfortable. We have a transparent culture; everybody has an open line to me.”

In fact, Carcara just wrapped up a tour of every restaurant in which employees were invited to a roundtable discussion with him. He says the employees were comfortable speaking up and sharing thoughtful ideas.

While the emphasis on the guest experience and an open work environment will continue, Mahr-Batuz says Barteca Restaurant Group will continue to grow and evolve.

“If you stop creating, the competition takes over,” Mahr-Batuz says. “A cookie-cutter approach is easy to roll out, but for us to be cutting edge, we have to do more than the competition; we have to see things differently.”

For example, all Barcelona locations feature different menus, which allows chefs to put their own unique spin on the tapas and source local ingredients. If the restaurant chose a more standardized menu instead, it could alter the guest experience—and not necessarily in a good way, even if the alternative would be easier to execute. As Carcara points out, easier isn’t always better, and Barteca’s mission is ultimately to make its brands better. To achieve sustainable, uncompromising growth, the company must also invest in bringing on the best people, he adds.

Although Barteca is opening four locations before the end of 2016, the company isn’t pursuing growth just for the sake of it. Carcara says the team takes each new unit as it comes rather than adhering to rigid numbers.

Barteca is focused on continuing the “great experiment,” as Pforzheimer calls this endeavor.

“We really do have a burning desire to keep our filters the same in 100 restaurants as in 23,” Carcara says. “It’s not going to be easy. We’re going to stay as focused as we can on our guests’ experiences.” ■



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Diverse happy hour offerings make for profitable food and beverage programs.
By Peggy Carouthers

LIBBEY, INC.

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BOLD BEVERAGES ARE PUTTING HAPPY HOUR BACK IN THE SPOTLIGHT.

LIBBEY INC.

Happy Hour Hype

Exciting beverage menus give happy hour new life.

Happy hour has been a full-service staple for decades, but its popularity with consumers is growing, according to Leo Basile, head of sales for **Abita Brewing Company**.

“Twenty years ago [happy hour] was a big thing to do, and then it faded away to a nightlife situation,” he says. “Happy hour is making a huge comeback. It never went away, but at the same time, it’s one of those things that is really starting to see a nice resurgence.”

This growth is leading to more cre-

ative usages of the happy hour timeframe to attract customers and differentiate from competitors.

“People are being more creative with happy hour,” says Jim Clarke, U.S. marketing manager for **Wines of South Africa**. “Sometimes it’s giving happy hour a theme or story or promoting a certain type of wine as the happy hour special instead of just saying drinks are cheaper. [Happy hour] is a great way to control inventory and expose your customers to parts of your beverage pro-

gram that are maybe being overlooked.”

Working with Wine

One way to appeal to consumers is by giving them new selections of wines to appeal to the trending consumer desire for global experiences. This move toward wider palates is especially true for millennials, notes Susan J. Dountas, director of foodservice marketing for **Libbey Inc.**, and offering a wider selection can help capture this audience.

“Wine continues to be popular, but



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SELECTING THE RIGHT SERVICEWARE IS VITAL TO THE SUCCESS OF A HAPPY HOUR PROGRAM.

ARC CARDINAL

Form and Function

Almost as important as what is served at happy hour is how those items are served. Choosing the right dinnerware and glassware both for function and visual appeal is vital to a successful happy hour program.

“We’re making the connection between architects, food, and beverage,” says Cindy Romero, marketing manager at **Arc Cardinal**, noting that serviceware can tie disparate elements together and set the tone for a restaurant or its happy hour program.

Creative presentations can help enhance not only the appeal of the dish, but also the flavor. Sommeliers have long known that the vessel wine is served in is important to taste, but bartenders are now also looking at how the choice of glass can affect cocktails.

“People are focusing on their serviceware more and recognizing that what type of glass you are serving it in can help increase perception and flavor, like we think of with wine,” says Juliet Greene, senior corporate chef with Charlie Baggs Culinary Innovations. “Now they are doing that on the cocktail side.”

How drinks are served can also affect consumer preferences and influence their ordering choices, making happy hour glassware and dinnerware selection key to success. Surprising and exciting presentations can be a key differentiator in a crowded happy hour market.

“Presentations that resonate at the table and bar solidify an establishment’s reputation as an innovative destination,” says Susan J. Dountas, director of foodservice marketing for **Libbey Inc.** “The right dinnerware and glassware can reflect and enhance the theme of any dining room, club, or bar to guests.”

By selecting the right glass for each beverage every time, operators are able to make an investment that puts the right finishing touch on a happy hour program and drive sales.

the way it is consumed depends on the generation you are serving,” she says. “Millennials are selecting and drinking wine spontaneously, and approach authentic wines from unique regions within casual gatherings that allow them to freely explore more rich flavors and aromas.”

While consumers want new experiences, it’s important to add variety without alienating customers with overly unfamiliar options when selecting which wines to menu.

“Today’s wine drinkers are looking to try something different, but they don’t necessarily want to go off the deep end,” Clarke says. “South Africa is still a new place to have wine from, but produces familiar varieties.”

Choosing which type of wine to menu for a happy hour promotion can be challenging, as operators need to stick to the budget without alienating wine drinkers with specific preferences. This is especially true for white wine drinkers, Clarke notes.

“White wine drinkers tend to be very varietally focused,” he says. “They drink Sauvignon Blanc or Chardonnay, and they don’t like to vary. If it’s happy hour and you want to have one wine on offer, the Sauvignon Blanc drinkers hate it if you have a Chardonnay and vice versa.”

The trick, Clarke says, is to offer a median style, such as a Chenin Blanc from South Africa. This regional Chenin has enough body to appeal to drinkers of Chardonnay, while offering a generous aroma that Sauvignon Blanc drinkers appreciate. Its freshness also appeals to Pinot Grigio drinkers.

By finding such a balance, operators can appeal to a wide range of guests with differing preferences and increase sales.

Craft Craze

Beer is seeing exceptional growth. Craft and signature varieties are especially popular with younger consumers.

“Craft beer shows no signs of slowing down,” Dountas says. “Any bar that hopes to pull in the millennial crowd will have to have at least a few craft beer options on its menu.”

Leo Basile at Abita also notes that the trend toward craft beer has led to an influx of new breweries and products. While he notes that this movement is good for the beer market, he also notes that there is still a place for longer-running beer companies that still have a vital role in the market.

“People want new shiny craft beers and cocktails,” he says, “but the reality is that some guys have been around for a long time with their beers. At the end of the day it’s the legacy breweries that continue to be creative and sustain the category.”

But simply offering a large selection of craft beers for the sake of it can also be a mistake. Basile notes that it is important for operators to take their guests’ specific preferences into consideration.

“If you have a crowd that is drinking a lot of IPAs, that’s one thing, but if you have a crowd drinking goes or sours, cater to what they want,” he says. “If you have consumers that come in and really enjoy a regular lager beer or a double IPA, it’s great to have one or two. You don’t have to have 10. We always try to help educate our purveyors to read

their crowds, and that goes as far as spirits go as well.”

Creative Concepts

Though cocktails do not get as much attention on happy hour menus as beers and wines, having a prime selection of cocktails available can help turn happy hour customers into repeat visitors. This means that cocktail innovation is especially important to restaurants looking to stand out, and one way to do that is to explore new ingredients and concoctions.

“We have the world at our fingertips,” says Kim Haasarud, mixologist and founder of Liquid Architecture. “I can really play around with a lot of exciting ingredients, and if I need to get a specific ingredient, it’s nothing to go on Amazon or online to a spice shop to order that.”

This accessibility is especially exciting because as consumers look for bold flavors in their food, that preference for new taste experiences is also moving into the cocktail sector.

“On the flavor side, I’m seeing a lot of smoky, spicy, floral and other culinary driven notes moving to the beverage

menu,” says Joey Torkelson, beverage mixologist and applications manager at **Kerry**. “Everywhere I go there is a jalapeño or spicy margarita on the menu. Some of the other beverages popping up are using kombucha, boozy shakes, and drinking vinegars.”

While bold flavors are gaining momentum, on the other end of the spectrum, so are simpler cocktails.

“Across the board, you see cocktails getting simpler,” Haasarud says. “Let’s take a margarita or a gimlet for example—those are already pretty simple cocktails, but you’re using more premium spirits and fresh ingredients versus reaching for the sour mix off of the gun.”

Tom Maas, founder of **RumChata** and master blender, notes the same trend and says that this is another move driven by millennials who prefer beverages like Old Fashioneds and Manhattans to other drinks.

“There is a return to basics by millennials,” he says. “Comfort drinks, like comfort foods, are back in style. ... millennials have turned to whiskeys and more basic cocktails versus flavored vodkas and other flavored spirits.”

Another reason for the preference for simpler cocktails is that many consumers are more health-conscious today than in the past. This simplicity allows guests to enjoy beverages without extra chemicals and additives, especially when simple changes are made to include more natural ingredients, like honey, instead of artificial sweeteners.

“You see a lot of people paying attention to that and wanting simple cocktails for health reasons,” Haasarud says. “Instead of simple syrup, bartenders are using a honey simple syrup to add flavor and depth. It’s also a more natural alternative to sugar, so you see a lot of happy hour cocktails getting simpler but better.”

Bold new beverage options are giving bartenders and operators the freedom to experiment at happy hour while exciting customers and drawing in more traffic, and the innovation shows now signs of slowing down. ■



HAPPY HOUR COCKTAIL MENUS ALLOW BARTENDERS TO EXPERIMENT WITH NEW CONCOCTIONS.

KERRY

Fare with Flair

How successful happy hour food menus can drive restaurant profits.

The star of most happy hour programs may be beverage, but food is still an important consideration for successful programs and adds extra profit when consumers come in for the drinks.

According to Don Odiorne, vice president of foodservice for the **Idaho Potato Commission**, happy hour offers “approachable food costs for the operator and a chance for the guest to experience multiple items on the menu.”

In addition to profits, one of the biggest benefits to operators is that the risks of introducing new menu items are reduced in a happy hour setting because consumers do not have to pay for larger portions of unfamiliar dishes.

“[Operators] will have items offered specifically at those times, but you cannot get them during regular service hours,” says Juliet Greene, director of new business development and senior corporate chef for Charlie Baggs Culinary Innovations. “They are looking at expanding out their full-time menu and will experiment and see how well [a dish] does in the happy hour environment to test it before they launch into a full portion size.”

Because of this freedom to test new dishes, chefs are taking advantage of this opportunity to try new things. In many cases, the dishes they serve are updates on classics. Salty foods, for example, have long been a happy hour favorite and are getting upgrades with new variations.

“Salty snacks and easy finger foods are always a hit during happy hour,” says Megan O’Keefe, media relations



EXCITING HAPPY HOUR DISHES DRAW IN NEW CUSTOMERS AND BOLSTER RESTAURANT SALES.

for **SaltWorks Inc.** “Similar to trends behind the bar, sea salts have been used to add interesting character and unique flavor notes with popular bar and happy hour foods.”

By using different varieties of salt, operators can achieve new flavor profiles that elevate classic dishes. She notes that Fusion Black Truffle Salt, for example, can add a distinct savory element and elegance to crispy pommes frites, while Fusion Thai Ginger sprinkled atop steamed edamame or tempura vegetables adds brightness and a crunchy pop of salty flavor. Naturally cold-smoked sea salts can be added to a dry rub or as a finishing touch on hot wings.

But unlike in the past, happy hour

offerings are not only reserved for fried foods, as consumers have come to expect exciting fare in healthier, smaller portions. Many of these new dishes are made to be indulgent without causing excessive consumer guilt.

“We’re seeing millennial diners look for more flavor adventure in their ‘small bites’ fare,” says Catherine Golding, foodservice business development manager at **Meat & Livestock Australia**. “The days of a platter of fried foods being sufficient for a bar menu are numbered.”

This means that many untraditional happy hour foods are growing in popularity, and innovative dishes are popping up on menus.

“These guests are willing to pay a

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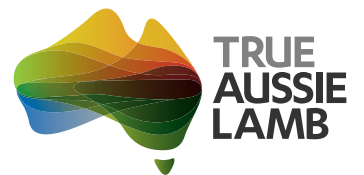
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RESTAURANT SMARTS HAPPY HOUR

bit more for bolder ethnic flavors and less-common proteins, like Aussie lamb,” Golding says. “We see it showing up in skewers, meatballs, and sliders, all items that are easy to share and a good value for the operator and the guest.”

Grilled and potato tacos; sliders and other handheld foods like kebabs featuring meats, like chicken or shrimp and potatoes and marinated vegetables; and dips, hummus, and guacamole are more exciting items showing up on menus, Odiorne says.

But it is not just what is on offer that is changing. Flavor preferences are also adapting, and spicy foods are growing in popularity.

“As diners continue to call for spicy foods, we’re seeing movement beyond sriracha and into North African harissa, Korean *gochujang* and Peru’s *aji amarillo* as the literally hot flavors of the day that

all marry really well with the natural flavors of Aussie lamb,” Golding says. “They end up in rubs, marinades, and dipping sauces, all easy to use and providing a signature, craveable flavor for the operator.”

Shareable happy hour snacks are also on the rise, as consumers want to try new dishes without paying more for large, single-person servings.

“A trio of different spiced popcorns or wings can be shared among friends and provide variety in flavors,” says Susan J. Dountas, director of foodservice marketing for **Libbey Inc.** “This allows guests to pick and choose several small options so everyone is happy.”

While these offerings can be labor intensive, premade products are available to help ease the burden while still ensuring quality. Still, Odiorne cautions that even with premade offerings, res-

taurants need to put their own spins on items.

“If processed or premade, [offerings] need to be customized on premise so the restaurant down the street isn’t serving the exact same thing,” Odiorne says. “Keep the final assembly easy so it can fit into something a line cook can do without interrupting the normal prep routine between lunch and dinner.”

But no matter what is on offer, happy hour menus should be a priority for operators, Greene says, noting that to ignore it is to miss out on both excitement and sales.

“Some restaurants do not take advantage of happy hour, like it’s not an important daypart,” she says, “but there is lots of opportunity for people to try your restaurant, to explore, and to have that safe exploration at a lower price point and with that community feeling.” ■



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BITE-SIZED APPETIZERS AND SHAREABLE PORTIONS ARE BOTH ON TREND FOR HAPPY HOUR MENUS.

Bold flavors and less-common proteins, such as lamb, can be key differentiators for happy hour programs.



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Sweet and Savory Endings

Amor y Amargo is a tiny space, a cozy New York City bar that only has room for an equally petite-sized crowd. Yet imbibers flock here, undeterred by the lack of seating, because the cocktails—bitter tipples like the Black Rock Chiller (Suze, Branca Menta, reposado tequila) and 8 Amaro Sazerac—are exactly what they want to sip after a filling, three-course dinner elsewhere in the neighborhood.

Likewise, at Fiola in Washington, D.C., the Bitter New Yorker (Buffalo Trace bourbon, Averna, Campari, chocolate bitters) is often the preferred way of following Ossobuco tortellini. Yet it wasn't so long ago that the term *after-dinner drink* raised eyebrows, conjuring images of dusty cordial bottles filled with pastel-hued liquids on the back bar and cloying, shoddily made Grasshoppers. Today's postprandial quaff is far more desirable, dovetailing with a growing predilection for deeper, nuanced flavors.

The after-dinner selections have traditionally been stereotyped as sweet and syrupy, says Adam Orzechowski, bar manager of the New Orleans restaurant Trinity, so naturally, he explains, many Americans have long avoided the realm of after-dinner spirits and cocktails. "I think there was a lot of misinformation out there, and with the advent of this whole mixology movement, they just took a back seat," he explains. "The modern trend is far more balanced, with more focus on pairings. Bitter, dry, and citrusy notes all help finish [the dining] experience."

At Bar Frances, another New Orleans



AFTER-DINNER DRINKS LIKE THIS IRISH CREAM COFFEE LIQUEUR ARE TIMELESS, BUT RESTAURANTS ARE OFFERING MORE SAVORY OPTIONS AS WELL, INTRODUCING BITTER, DRY, AND CITRUSY NOTES TO HELP FINISH THE MEAL.

restaurant, bar manager Craig Seaman isn't entirely convinced that the beguiling genre has made a full-on comeback, but he thinks the category is garnering more respect because of the availability of top-notch products. "It's so far ahead of what was on the market 20 or 30 years ago," he recalls. "Amaro [selections] have exploded; there are so many that you can't fit them all on a back bar. There are better nut, spice, cream, and coffee liqueurs. If these were going to be the ingredients in after-dinner cocktails because they worked well with what was in the dessert, then we needed better quality. Now we have that."

While Seaman points out that customers tend to gravitate to classics like Sambuca and Frangelico when capping off a meal, he is delighted when they

seek out more unconventional offerings, whether it be a nip of Cognac or sherry. There are no specific concoctions at Bar Frances meant to stand in for dessert, but in general Seaman thinks "the creativity of bartenders has helped make guests take a second look at the menu. They may not have room for dessert, but maybe just one more cocktail."

Jenn Harvey, bar manager at the neighborhood bistro Temple Bar in Cambridge, Massachusetts, agrees. "A rising tide lifts all boats, so the resurgence of cocktail culture in general helps after-dinner drinks, especially with amaro gaining traction," she says. Her customers love experimenting with the Italian digestif. Whiskey is an especially popular way to wind down after, say, a dinner of Salt & Pepper Calamari and Colorado

{Pairings}

lamb at Temple Bar. It features prominently in Turin Back Time, Harvey's riff on the Boulevardier with Gran Classico and Tempus Fugit Crème de Cacao. "It has a lovely balance of bitter and chocolate sweetness," she points out.

Her dessert cocktail menu is composed of only a quartet of options, but Harvey strives for each of them to hit a certain mark—whether sweet and creamy, bitter and herbal, citrusy and bright, or classic coffee. Harvey also likes to entice patrons with a few interesting, less-well-known spirits such as Seymour's Boston Cream Liqueur from Boston Harbor Distillery, a rum and Vermont maple syrup-based elixir that is a locally made alternative to Baileys.

For those guests craving something more adventurous than a dessert wine, Orzechowski likes to steer them to Trinity's Nightcaps menu, where they can contemplate the Cyn and Juice (Cynar, house-infused sage-orange juice, soda) or the float like Holy Java (Papa's Pilar Blonde rum, Nocello, café mocha, espresso shot). "Guests have ordered that instead of a dessert because it satisfies a sweet craving and is booze-forward, too."

From a decidedly utilitarian perspective, the after-dinner drink can be good for you, helping to ease digestion. "What

would an epic meal be without the final bow? After-dinner drinks and spirits are often overlooked for their medicinal qualities of allowing the proper, effective, and intoxicating process of digestion to incur," says Eric Alperin, partner at the Varnish in Los Angeles. "As a Frenchman having spent summers in Paris, the meal wasn't over until the last bit of fromage had been cut and then re-covered with the cloth, followed by the decanter being placed on the table. Sometimes chocolate, a tart, or fruit accompanied, but there was always a few fingers' worth of Cognac."

"Even at the ripe young age of 12," Alperin continues, "I was given a sip of that golden dram. It burned. I coughed, but I sure as hell wasn't thinking about my overly full stomach anymore. Years pass, and one learns that the bracing quality of a swig of Cognac or amaro allows for tiny liquid soldiers to settle and carry your meal along the way."

Darnell Holguin, head bartender at Fifty Restaurant in New York City, finds "a lot of people are trying to forgo the sugar intensity often found in desserts, so they seek dessert in liquid form," he says. "I love the idea of aiding digestion with a libation." As a substitute for an excessively rich dessert, he might tap

into the robust love for Scotch as a nightcap by encouraging his guests to spring for the Speyside Meadow.

In the past, says Harvey, after-dinner drinks were an afterthought, focusing solely on the "sweet stuff. Amaretto, coffee liqueurs, and Irish creams mixed together can weigh people down, especially after a meal," she notes, adding that guests would now prefer to save their sugar intake for actual confections.

This is why Seaman often recommends "an amaro to help jumpstart digestion. It's the perfect end to a great meal, and you always feel a bit lighter afterwards." If diners prefer not to embrace a drink so heavy on the biters, then he might suggest a Madeira or Port "as a nice finish on the palate without having all the heat of a whiskey or Cognac. If [guests] are really on the fence, I'll pour a taste for them to try to win them over with a new experience."

After a meal of potato gratin and grilled Wagyu strip loin dressed with Bearnaise, chances are guests won't be inclined to dig into a mound of pastry cream. Orzechowski uses this opportunity to explain why a cocktail is a more ideal send-off than a heavy dessert: "Guests will leave on a lighter note and without that overly full feeling." ■



BAR FRANCES / JOSH BRAS TED

CRAIG SEAMAN, BAR MANAGER AT BAR FRANCES IN NEW ORLEANS, THINKS AFTER-DINNER COCKTAILS HAVE GAINED MORE RESPECT AND INTEREST BECAUSE OF THE AVAILABILITY OF TOP-NOTCH PRODUCTS—LIKE AMARO SELECTIONS AND VARIED LIQUEURS.



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AT EASTERN STANDARD GROUP, MOLLY HOPPER-SANDROF, DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT, KNEW HER EXPERIENCE WAS PERFECT FOR HIRING FRONT-OF-HOUSE STAFF, BUT FOR THE KITCHEN SHE HELPED DEFINE A ROLE THAT IS PART CHEF, PART HR.

It's no secret that staffing challenges are one of the biggest problems for chefs and restaurant owners nationwide. According to a report from the National Restaurant Association, one in four restaurant operators say they have difficulty filling job openings. Couple this with the fact that hospitality employee turnover was over 70 percent in 2015 and it's easy to see why owners and operators are worried. Both independents and chain restaurants are using incentives like stipends for student loans and hiring bonuses to attract and retain talent.

At Eastern Standard Group in Boston, upper-level management is deploying a different approach and adding a new

role to its team to decrease employee turnover and create a more attractive work environment. "We have to reinvent the way we hire, train, and treat culinary staff," says Molly Hopper-Sandrof, director of people and staff development for the Eastern Standard Group. She is responsible for human resources at the group's six properties, which employ a total of 500 people. When thinking about the culinary hiring goals for the company, she considered her personal experiences in a restaurant and her background working in front-of-house roles throughout college.

"I've never actually been a cook," she says. Because of this, Hopper-Sandrof realizes she is at a disadvantage when

thinking about the needs and wants of her culinary staff. "When you're working with chefs, there's a lingo that you need to speak," she explains. "I couldn't relate to what a line cook or a sous chef might need, and in order for us to become a more attractive place and more innovative, we need to be able to use that lingo."

Hopper-Sandrof and the management team at Eastern Standard Group created a new role in the company that's part chef and part human resources to bridge the gap between the HR and culinary worlds.

In order to prepare for this new position in the company, the team worked to refine exactly what it would entail and what the existing staff could gain.



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THE SIX PROPERTIES IN THE EASTERN STANDARD GROUP EMPLOY A TOTAL OF 500 PEOPLE IN THEIR RESTAURANTS.

“When our team decided to create this new role within our HR department, we thought having someone with restaurant chef experience would be extremely valuable for our ongoing staffing needs,” says Andrew Holden, general manager of Eastern Standard and proprietor of the group’s newest property, Branch Line. Training for the position includes three weeks of back-of-the house training across the group’s six restaurant locations. “A firsthand understanding of the kitchen provides great insights in terms of the skills and traits needed to be successful in our restaurants and the opportunities cooking staff should be afforded for continued growth,” he adds.

In July of this year, the company found a former chef to fill the role, and Hopper-Sandrof says her staff has responded favorably. Looking ahead, she anticipates the role will vary depending on what the staff needs. “He’ll be filling out worker’s comp, but can also walk into a kitchen and show an intern how to chop chives or if it’s busy he can do expo,” she says. The fact that the chef is also bilingual is an asset that can be applied across all departments.

For Hopper-Sandrof, the role is really about “being an advocate” for cooks and creating less of a division between front of the house and back of the house, which is a good step for everyone. “I don’t want to be overconfident, but I think any steps that a restaurant can take to improve quality of life for its back-of-house [team] is a great step.” ■

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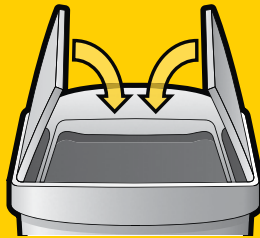
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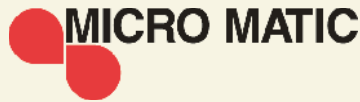
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Mentorship Matters

Mentorship is an essential part of any successful career, but especially for young chefs. This is why Chef Jérôme Bocuse, son of legendary Paul Bocuse, the founder of the Bocuse d'Or global culinary competition, serves as executive vice president of the board of directors at ment'or. A firm believer in the importance of mentorship, Chef Bocuse works to provide education, connections, and leadership to young American chefs.

What does being a mentor mean to you?

It's a very rewarding experience. When you are a mentor, you are a guide for the mentee, and you feel proud to be a role model for them and to inspire them to become what they want to become.

But before anyone is going to be mentored, they need to be inspired. You can mentor or guide people, but if that's not what they want to be, you are not going to be successful.

What makes mentorship so important?

Mentorship is very essential. I still need mentorship, and there is always somebody who does things better. All your life, look for some kind of guidance, and you'll always learn from something—that never ends. And mentors are not always in the kitchen. There are people that inspired me in life in general, not only on the business side, but also in the way they interact with people and run



CHEF JÉRÔME BOCUSE SERVES AS EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR MENT'OR BECAUSE HE IS A FIRM BELIEVER IN THE POWER OF MENTORSHIP TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF CHEFS.

the business as well. I can get mentorship from a businessman running a company or from a chef to improve a dish. Seek guidance from different fields.

How have you been able to pass on your experience to other chefs?

I like chefs to experience and make mistakes by themselves in order to learn the right way. I have a hard time believing in telling them: "This is the way you do it, and you have to do it this way and no other."

I want them to fail. I want them to feel it and understand that this didn't work. I want mentees to take responsibility, and I tell them to try things and get feedback from the dining room. That's how they grow. I don't want them to be a soldier; I want them to be managers. I want them to be entrepreneurs. I want them to understand.

What type of mentorship does ment'or offer young chefs?

There are a lot of chefs who don't have

exposure to the network. The real value of ment'or is being there to talk to some known chefs who are already established and have made names for themselves and to take advantage of that and be inspired.

We have a diverse Culinary Council. Some chefs will be inspired by Tom Colicchio, or Daniel Humm, or by Grant Achatz, or Wolfgang Puck. We have a large panel with different styles of cuisine, and we provide great diversity. We have a great network of chefs, and we can open doors for chefs in this country who don't have the connections to be able to get established.

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