2018 Canada Trends
Let's Get Started!

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Putting Plants to Work

Plants are cropping up across the menu, replacing ingredients from dairy milks and animal meat to noodles and condiments. It’s a confluence of trends in healthy eating, dietary preferences, animal-welfare concerns and environmental stewardship. Veggie noodles, plant milks and indulgent plant-based proteins should solidify more prominent placement on menu boards next year.

Yum! What Else?
Evolving lifestyles, new technologies and on-demand availability are eroding traditional mealtimes, menu categories and sales channels. What’s coming is a new normal in which diners have around-the-clock access to everything on the menu, whether it’s breakfast for lunch or a 2 a.m. snack. We’ll also see more food and drink mashups, unexpected ingredient combinations, daypart migration and industry interlopers.

Exciting! What Else?
Addressing food waste is an issue more operators want to tackle. And it’s not just independents and smaller chains—larger operators are also increasingly focusing efforts on reducing food waste. Expect more edible packaging, smaller portion sizes, trayless dining, dishes made of food scraps or waste, and novel operational approaches such as reduced prices during off-peak hours.
Indigenous Cuisines Inspire

Chefs will bring new attention to the foods of the First Nations by shining a light on Canada’s native cuisines. Concepts dedicated entirely to authentic indigenous ingredients and preparations will continue to emerge as diners’ interest in First Nation cuisines grows. Look for ingredients such as bannock, Ojibwe wild rice, Oolichan grease, Saskatoon berries, hominy, bison, elk and Muskeg tea in the spotlight on menus.

Tasty! What Else?
Hungry for ‘Eatertainment’

As the country observes a continued growth in off-premise dining, operators will do more to win over dine-in customers, adding engagement to the overall meal experience. Nostalgic forms of entertainment, such as arcade games, pingpong and classic board games, coupled with quality food, creative cocktails and attentive service, will keep fun-seeking guests inside longer and have them coming back for more.

Sounds Fun! What Else?
Delivering Convenience

Delivery, whether self-operated or provided through a third party, is now a staple of the industry. But entering the delivery business is also opening operators up to new competition, including the meal-kit market. To stay competitive, operators that are quick to perfect their delivery process—maintaining food temperature, quality and friendly service—will excel.

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