

Summer 2022 Edition

NEWS BITES

Elevating your in season
summer orders

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Foodbymaria combines
fresh veggies with a
comfort classic

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ANCESTRAL EATS AND
ETHNIC FLAVORS
GOING MAINSTREAM


LIPMAN
family farms

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Chance Singletary

NATIONAL FOODSERVICE SALES SHARING HIS INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

Being in the produce industry for 9 years now, I can say that there are still always new trends to tackle or efficiencies to improve amid changing behaviors and economies, and this year has proven to be a challenge acknowledged by all of us at every level of the supply chain.

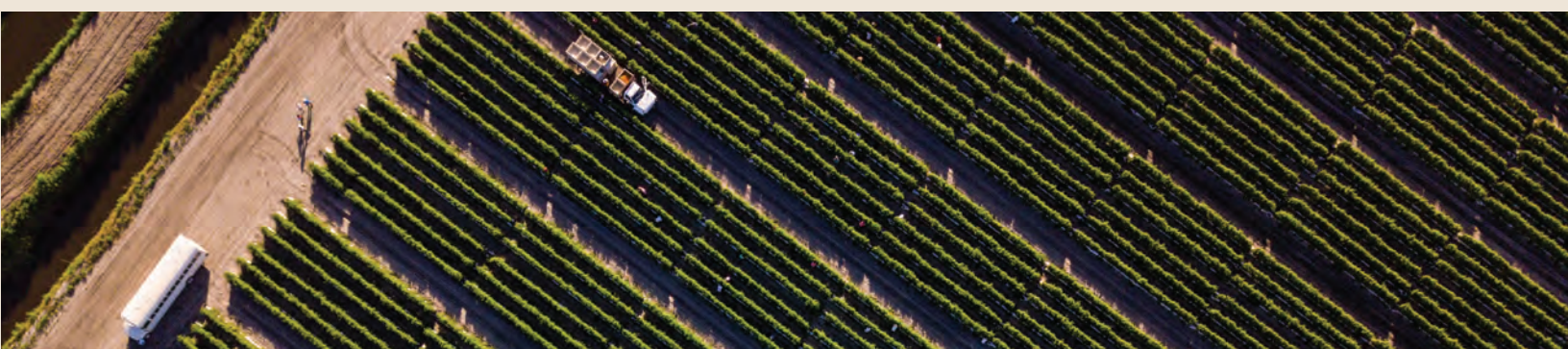
With the pandemic easing up, consumers are back to dining out and restaurants are seeing brighter days ahead. According to Technomic, approximately 97% of the top 500 restaurants have generated overall sales growth in 2021 compared to the previous year. Fast-food chains grew sales through convenience, while fine dining also grew with the reopening of experiential, in-person dining.

Nonetheless, inflation is causing people to reconsider their habits when it comes to eating. With restaurants being forced to shift their menu offerings and make decisions on the ingredients they purchase in order to maintain margins, we have a responsibility as suppliers to offer ingredient items that make the most sense for each customer and their strategy.

With the summer produce season in full swing, there is good, healthy supply in tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, and pepper from our local east coast growers. It's a great time to take advantage of in-season offerings by highlighting their seasonality on menu specials without having to stray away from current orders or introduce new items.

Another way to make the most of your summer produce is to incorporate new cooking methods. My family and I love cooking with fresh produce on our griddle grill including grilled peppers, onions, squash, and tomatoes during the summer to bring out their flavors and freshness.

The costs of everything have impacted our business, from fertilizers and seeds to fuel and packaging. But where there is surety in our company's resilience and stability, there is promising strength in our ability to grow and supply our crops year-round as anticipated.



ETHNIC

sparks of flavor

This is one of my absolutely FAVORITE dishes- Greek green beans with an incredibly lush tomato sauce. Growing up I remember standing over the stovetop while my YiaYia and Mom were cooking and taking in this divine aroma of all sorts of ingredients. I ALWAYS grabbed a slice of bread to sneak a taste part way through cooking- because honestly, the sauce is JUST TOO HEAVENLY not to. There is definitely something to be said about this combination, how warm it makes you feel and all of the special memories that flow through my mind while making it!

My mom and YiaYia were always in charge of the busy kitchen, teaching us how to make everything “just perfect”-I was always amazed at how they could

create such deliciousness right before our very eyes. The entire family always sat together with such a beautiful array of food, enjoying each other's love, laughter, and company with thus Greek Fasolakia being one of the stars! I am SO GRATEFUL to have grown up Greek because it meant that food was equally nourishing and delicious. Please go enjoy this recipe as much as I do! I promise you will be able to taste and feel the love in every single bite.

@foodbymaria

Greek Food Blogger

Maria Koutsogiannis



Traditional Greek Fasolakia

Serves: 5 Prep Time: 15 minutes Cook Time: 45 minutes

Here you have Greek green beans in a gorgeous, lush tomato sauce. You're in for a treat. This recipe was and still is my favourite recipe. There is just something to be said about this combination, how warming it is and the memories that flow through my mind while making it!

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp. (30 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 large yellow onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
5 cups of green beans
3 medium-sized potatoes, cut into quarters then halved
1/2 cup (30 g) fresh parsley, roughly chopped
1/4 cup (30 g) fresh mint, roughly chopped
2 (13.5-oz [398-ml]) can of roma tomatoes, unsalted
1-2 tbsp. Vegetable stock paste

1 tsp coconut sugar
1/2 tsp tomato paste
boiling water to cover the mixture
1 tbsp. Sea salt
1 tsp black pepper
Serve with bread and feta of choice.



DIRECTIONS

In a deep pot heat the olive oil for a minute, then add the onion and garlic. Cook down on low heat until the onion is translucent. Add the beans and potatoes to the pot and cook them for about 3 minutes on medium heat, stirring occasionally to avoid burning. When the potatoes and beans begin to develop a nice golden colour add the parsley, mint, tomatoes, vegetable stock paste, coconut sugar and tomato paste. Simmer this mixture for around 10 minutes, on medium heat, stirring often to avoid burning.

Increase the heat to high and add hot water to cover the beans and potatoes. Bring to a boil then simmer on low heat with a lid on for about 30 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Make sure there is always water in the pot. You don't want this to be a soup-like dish but you definitely want some extra liquid so you can enjoy that beautiful sauce with a slice of bread at dinner!

@foodbymaria



VEGETABLE-CENTERED DISHES

By: Audarshia Townsend

“GOING GREEN”

never sounded better as produce continues to dominate menus in 2022. Supply-chain issues, labor concerns, healthier lifestyles, and more have affected shifts and attitudes regarding how the foodservice industry approaches fruits and vegetables.

To that end, we chat with several experts, who offer their insights on the evolution of vegetable-centric dishes. From playing up umami-rich offerings to embracing a larger than ever variety of vegetables, they discuss what to expect in the next 12 months.

Markon, of course, is always at the forefront of foodservice trends. The premier produce resource offers a product line of more than 800 fresh fruit and vegetable options from which to choose. They're also backed by a highly rated 5-Star Food Safety Program, which gives operators more confidence in what they serve.

“We're solutions oriented and work closely with our customers to put more produce on

plates,” says Deena Ensworth, Culinary Innovations Director, Markon Cooperative. She adds that the likes of Brussels sprouts and cauliflower continue to be popular, and she expects off-the-beaten path global offerings to hit mainstream in 2022.

“The Filipino favorite ube (purple yam), the bright flavors of yuzu (especially in beverages), and the vibrant color of hibiscus” are making inroads, she continues. “Mushrooms are also big for many reasons: their meat-replacement capabilities, their umami-rich flavor, and their nutrient-dense, immunity-boosting properties.”

Culinary techniques are also responsible for putting vegetables front and center, explains Cathy Holley, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief of Flavor & The Menu, and president of The Flavor Experience. Most notably, she says, are high-heat methods, such as pan frying, applied to Brussels sprouts to make them “crave-able” for even the most vegetable-adverse diner.

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“That will continue in 2022 and far beyond,” Holley predicts. “We’ve seen Brussels sprouts, of course, plus beets and cauliflower are also really taking off, and there’s roasted carrots and harissa on trend-forward menus right now. What I am looking forward to seeing is more produce items that are benefiting from such things, such as parsnip or even heartier greens.”

Holley expects chefs to experiment as much possible. That includes playing around with proteins, says Nicholas Gonring, who serves as Corporate Consulting Chef for Gordon Food Service (overseeing its North American culinary department). With meat prices at an all-time high due to supply issues, he recommends chefs using them conservatively, adding nuanced flavor profiles to vegetables. He calls them “protein inclusions.”

Gonring adds: “We’re talking about miniscule amounts of them to really uplift the produce items and give them flavor because vegetables on their own don’t have crave-ability factor.

“You need something to uplift them and give them umami presence. There are things you can judiciously include to bring the flavor profile to an entirely new level. We’re not talking chicken or steak; we’re talking about small protein inclusions that would dramatically affect the crave-ability.” Olive oil and anchovies slathered on broccolini, then grilled, is an example, he says.

What’s also pushing the veg-centric trend, continues Gonring, is the fact that chefs are giving customers an experience they cannot recreate at home with plant-based products like burgers, “chicken” nuggets, and meat-free sausages. Umami-enhanced pro-

duce is a driving force that many chefs are discovering as a secret weapon.

“Those umami flavor profiles are things that will help execute vegetables to a whole different way that you’ll be more successful with,” he says. “Umami-based foods in cooking is a genius hack. It’s how you make menus resonate with diners.

“There’s psychology behind it. The flavors in your mouth get you to salivate, your whole sensory is kind of overloaded, it sends a message to your brain to make you feel like you’re receiving something that is delicious and savory, and it gives you an instant flavor memory.”

Ian Ramirez agrees that what was once an afterthought is now in high demand. In recent years, he notes, entire concepts have been created around vegetarian offerings with flavor-forward approaches.

“I feel that we have been able to figure out how to have more varieties of fresh produce on our shelves as well as applying different cooking techniques to them,” says Ramirez, Director of Culinary Innovation and Operations for Creative Dining Services. “Cauliflower has seemed to be a shining star in the vegetable world in recent years, and one of the things I keep seeing on menus is cauliflower tacos.”



Summer Squash Pasta Sauce

Serves: 4 Prep Time: 10 minutes Cook Time: 30 minutes

This sauce is INCREDIBLY easy to make and is definitely rooted in my Greek heritage. Full of flavours that I grew up with and cook with every day. You get to incorporate all of these gorgeous, fresh vegetables to make one dreamy sauce. It's SO EASY to customize and incorporate any other veggies you have! Pour it over fresh pasta to create the most delicious, nutrient-packed dish for you and your loved ones!! All you need to do is cook the onion, zucchini, tomatoes, and garlic until nice and golden brown.

The smell that comes off of this combination is incredible- it's hard not to dive in and eat it as is! However, it truly isn't

complete until you add all of your remaining ingredients, blend and pour over a freshly cooked pasta! If you have never been comfortable cooking, and want to make something this nostalgic, I highly recommend starting with this recipe. It grounds you and sends warmth into every part of you. Everything I create, I take inspiration from the Greek in me- there is something so special to be able to share this part of myself with you through the flavour, nourishment, and my own family. Enjoy this immensely and customize it and share it with your WONDERFUL OWN FAMILY.

@foodbymaria



Method:

Start by heating the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add tomatoes, onions, zucchini and garlic and cook for around 10 minutes stirring occasionally to avoid burning. Once the vegetables have browned a bit, increase the heat to high and add the vegetable stock, cream, parsley, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes or until the vegetables are soft.

Transfer the mixture to a blender and blend until smooth or your preferred consistency.

Manage the blender carefully to avoid burning.

Enjoy with your pasta of choice, more fresh herbs and parmesan cheese (optional)!

Note: When serving with pasta, I recommend combining the cooked (al dente) pasta and sauce to a pot and reducing for a few minutes so the ingredients have a few minutes to get to know each other.

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. Olive oil
- 5 vine tomatoes, washed and quartered
- 1 large yellow onion, roughly chopped
- 1 large zucchini, roughly chopped
- 2 large yellow zucchini, roughly chopped
- 5 cloves of garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 cup of vegetable stock
- ½ cup cream of choice
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp. Salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- ¼ tsp red chili flakes

Pasta of choice for serving.

How to Breathe New Life Into Salads on Restaurant Menus

Techniques like pickling, grilling, and layering textures are giving customers a new spin on a classic.

From staples like Caesar and house salads to more international variations like Thai green mango and papaya salad, salads are one of the more versatile menu items. Fresh produce acts as a canvas for chefs to layer flavors and textures. The result can fall anywhere between light and refreshing to hearty and comforting.

This wide range of possibilities is something executive chef Dreux Ellis of Café Gratitude loves, and it's one of the reasons he considers salads to be among his favorite foods.

"I love that you have this endless sort of rainbow of colors and textures," Ellis says. "They're a reflection of the wealth and abundance in the plant kingdom." He adds that salads are one of the rare items that can be both healthy and a type of comfort food, with health benefits coming from nutrient-rich greens and the comfort element supplied by supplementary ingredients like roasted vegetables and healthy fats like avocados.

Classics like chopped salads are being reinvented all the time, the chef says. To that point, Café Gratitude, which serves organic, plant-based fare, has a torta española chopped salad that uses a chickpea frittata in place of the usual egg. The menu at the multiunit Southern California concept features half a dozen salads in total, including a warm broccolini and edamame salad, a kale and sea vegetable salad, and an asparagus and tomato confit.

While greens provide a familiar starting point, new ingredients are sprinkled in to keep up with trends. Hot ingredients of the moment include pickled vegetables, specialty radishes, heirloom tomatoes, and marinated proteins like tofu, all of which Ellis says have become more and more popular as customers place a greater focus on health and wellness while dining.

"I definitely see an Asian-fusion trend going on," he says. "Lots of alternate uses of fruits, vegetables, and proteins in salads [and] in combinations that we're not accustomed to as Americans, like tofu that has been marinated and lightly fried in panko and sesame—I love that."

Ellis suggests pairing tahini with garlic, lemon, and

parsley to create a simple, Mediterranean-style dressing, which offers a rich mouthfeel without the added fats of ranch and French varieties.

He says that finishing the salad with roasted vegetables to add depth—or even fermented veggies for digestive benefits—makes for a winning combination that's both healthy and appetizing.

"Roasted beets add a really gorgeous bright red color, and things like sauerkraut can give the salad a probiotic quality," Ellis says.

From an operator's perspective, Ellis thinks salads can be great for the bottom line, even when running an organic operation like Café Gratitude. Despite recent pressures from supply chain disruption and inflation, he believes it's still possible to turn a profit on salads, especially at restaurants where the menu primarily revolves around animal proteins.

"They're going to be great for the bottom line," he says. "You can get a lot of mileage out of more traditional greens like romaine and baby gems, which aren't so expensive. Combining them with a few star players will come up with something that's special without really increasing the bottom line."

Michael Sullivan, vice president of culinary at NextGen Casual chain True Food Kitchen, thinks fruits like peaches and blueberries will be in style this summer. In addition, he foresees more nuanced textures shaping menus.

He adds that as people's appetite for newer flavors increases, international influences from spicy and acidic foods will become more popular. Ingredients like Fresno and Calabrian chilies, pickled peppadew peppers, and yuzu pack a novel punch.

"People are more health-conscious, health-aware right now," Sullivan says. And when all else fails, he says pickling is a surefire way to bring in fresh flavor and a health halo.

"Pickled is always a big win," he says.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR

SUMMER TOMATOES

With inflation continuing to rise and make a larger impact on the food industry, every step taken to reduce costs can make an impact. During summer growing season, there are many ways you can make the most of your tomatoes and reduce waste.

tomato juice

Though famously known for its popularity in a certain brunch cocktail, the juice from a tomato can be saved and used in many ways with its distinct flavor and nutritional value.

Save it as a **broth** for cooking rice and pasta. Use it to make a tomato herb **salad dressing**. Mix it with spices and a creamy base for a **dipping sauce**.

marinated tomatoes

A great way to elevate your tomatoes to be applied in normal application is to soak them in a simple marinade. Olive oil, herbs, garlic, and an acid base can bring out the flavors and juices of a tomato. The longer they soak, the stronger the flavor!



fermented tomatoes

Fermenting has steadily become more popular in foodservice dining, with a growth rate of 68% over the last 10 years.

This method is an easy fix for oversupply or end-of-season tomatoes that you're looking to use up. They take just a few simple ingredients, 10 minutes to put together, and several extra months of shelf life.

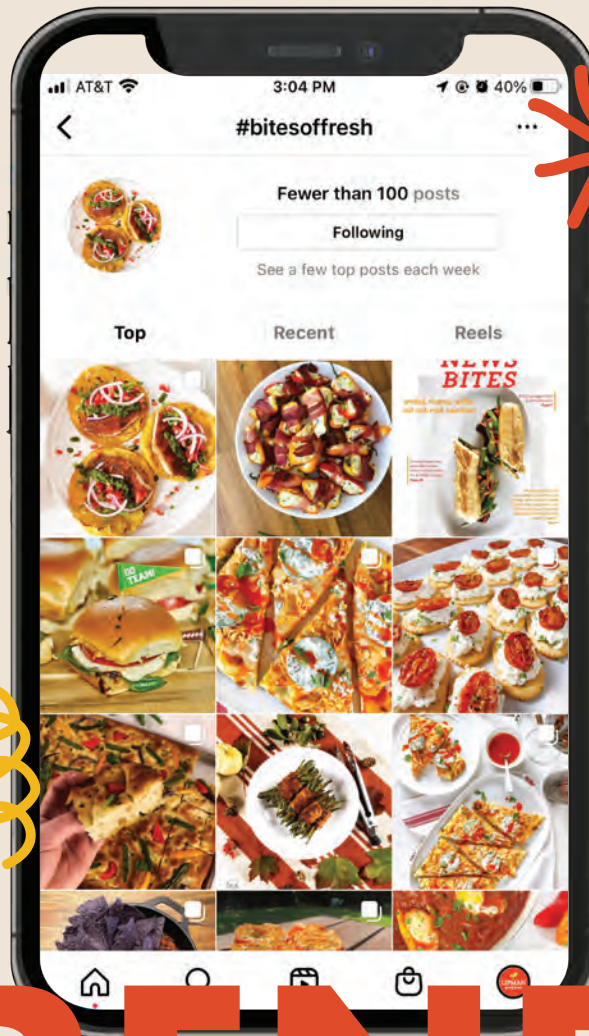
The process of brining and fermenting also intensifies the flavor and nutritional value of your tomatoes!

tomato jam

Incorporate tomato jam in appetizer plates, charcuterie boards, sandwich platters, or generally as an elevated condiment spread.

Its **sweet and savory** combination is a popular flavor profile among snacking items.





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GOOD

FROM THE

GROUND UP.

