

# CHEF SURVEY: WHAT'S

# HOT

# IN 2012

NATIONAL  
RESTAURANT  
ASSOCIATION®

The National Restaurant Association each year surveys professional chefs, members of the American Culinary Federation, on which foods, beverages, cuisines and culinary themes will be hot trends on restaurant menus. The What's Hot in 2012 survey was conducted in the fall of 2011 among nearly 1,800 chefs. See p. 13 for more information about the methodology.

## Top 20 trends



- 1 Locally sourced meats and seafood
- 2 Locally grown produce
- 3 Healthful kids' meals
- 4 Hyper-local sourcing (e.g. restaurant gardens)
- 5 Sustainability
- 6 Children's nutrition
- 7 Gluten-free/food allergy conscious
- 8 Locally-produced wine and beer
- 9 Sustainable seafood
- 10 Whole grain items in kids' meals
- 11 Newly fabricated cuts of meat (e.g. Denver steak, pork flat iron, Petite Tender)
- 12 Farm/estate-branded ingredients
- 13 Food trucks/street food
- 14 Micro-distilled/artisan spirits
- 15 Artisan/house-made ice cream
- 16 Health/nutrition
- 17 Non-traditional fish (e.g. branzino, Arctic char, barramundi)
- 18 Fruit/vegetable children's side items
- 19 "Mini meals" (e.g. smaller versions of adult menu items)
- 20 Culinary cocktails (e.g. savory, fresh ingredients, herb-infused)

## Top Trends by category



### APPETIZERS

- 1 Vegetable/vegetarian appetizers
- 2 Ethnic/street food-inspired appetizers (e.g. tempura, taquitos, kabobs, hummus)
- 3 Charcuterie plates/samplers
- 4 Amuse-bouche/bite-size hors d'oeuvre
- 5 Warm appetizer salads



### MAIN DISHES/ CENTER OF THE PLATE

- 1 Locally sourced meats and seafood
- 2 Sustainable seafood
- 3 Newly fabricated cuts of meat (e.g. Denver steak, pork flat iron, Petite Tender)
- 4 Non-traditional fish (e.g. branzino, Arctic char, barramundi)
- 5 Half-portions/smaller portion sizes

### SIDES/STARCHES

- 1 Non-wheat noodles/pasta (e.g. quinoa, rice, buckwheat)

- 2 Black rice
- 3 Quinoa
- 4 Red rice
- 5 Vegetable pickles



### PRODUCE

- 1 Locally grown produce
- 2 Organic produce
- 3 Superfruits (e.g. acai, goji berry, mango-steen)
- 4 Exotic fruits (e.g. rambutan, dragon fruit, paw paw, guava)
- 5 Heirloom apples



### DESSERT

- 1 Artisan/house-made ice cream
- 2 Bite-size/mini-desserts
- 3 Savory desserts
- 4 Deconstructed classic desserts
- 5 Dessert flights/combos

### BREAKFAST/BRUNCH

- 1 Ethnic-inspired breakfast items (e.g. Asian-flavored syrups, chorizo scrambled eggs, coconut milk pancakes)

- 2 Traditional ethnic breakfast items (e.g. huevos rancheros, shakshuka, ashta, Japanese)
- 3 Fresh fruit breakfast items
- 4 Prix fixe brunches
- 5 French toast/stuffed French toast

### KIDS' MEALS

- 1 Healthful kids' meals
- 2 Whole grain items in kids' meals
- 3 Fruit/vegetable children's side items
- 4 "Mini meals" (e.g. smaller versions of adult menu items)
- 5 Oven-baked items in kids' meals (e.g. baked chicken fingers, oven-baked fries)



### ETHNIC CUISINES AND FLAVORS

- 1 Ethnic fusion cuisine
- 2 Peruvian cuisine
- 3 Regional ethnic cuisine
- 4 Cuban cuisine
- 5 Southeast Asian cuisine (e.g. Thai, Vietnamese, Malaysian)

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Top Trends by category continuedOTHER FOOD ITEMS/  
INGREDIENTS

- 1 Artisan/specialty bacon
- 2 Artisan cheeses
- 3 Ancient grains (e.g. khorasan wheat, spelt, amaranth)
- 4 Greek yogurt
- 5 Ethnic cuisine cheeses (e.g. queso fresco, paneer, lebneh, halloumi)

- 4 Gluten-free/food allergy conscious
- 5 Farm/estate-branded ingredients

NONALCOHOLIC  
BEVERAGES

- 1 House-made soft drinks/soda/pop
- 2 Specialty iced tea (e.g. Thai-style, Southern/sweet, flavored)
- 3 Gourmet/house-made lemonade
- 4 Organic coffee
- 5 Dairy-free milk (e.g. soy, rice)



## PREPARATION METHODS

- 1 Pickling
- 2 Fermenting
- 3 Sous vide
- 4 Liquid nitrogen chilling/freezing
- 5 Oil-poaching

## CULINARY THEMES

- 1 Hyper-local sourcing (e.g. restaurant gardens)
- 2 Sustainability
- 3 Children's nutrition

ALCOHOL AND  
COCKTAILS

- 1 Locally-produced wine and beer
- 2 Micro-distilled/artisan spirits
- 3 Culinary cocktails (e.g. savory, fresh ingredients, herb-infused)
- 4 Food-beer pairings/beer dinners
- 5 Onsite barrel-aged drinks



## What's HOT

All 223 Items Ranked by "Hot" Responses

		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
1	Locally sourced meats and seafood	83%	5%	12%
2	Locally grown produce	81%	4%	15%
3	Healthful kids' meals	78%	7%	16%
4	Hyper-local sourcing (e.g. restaurant gardens)	77%	12%	11%
5	Sustainability	76%	8%	16%
6	Children's nutrition	75%	6%	19%
7	Gluten-free/food allergy conscious	75%	10%	15%
8	Locally-produced wine and beer	73%	10%	17%
9	Sustainable seafood	73%	10%	16%
10	Whole grain items in kids' meals	72%	16%	12%
11	Newly fabricated cuts of meat (e.g. Denver steak, pork flat iron, Petite Tender)	72%	20%	8%
12	Farm/estate-branded ingredients	72%	15%	14%
13	Food trucks/street food	70%	16%	14%
14	Micro-distilled/artisan spirits	70%	17%	14%
15	Artisan/house-made ice cream	68%	12%	20%
16	Health/nutrition	68%	7%	25%
17	Non-traditional fish (e.g. branzino, Arctic char, barramundi)	68%	21%	10%
18	Fruit/vegetable children's side items	68%	12%	20%
19	"Mini meals" (e.g. smaller versions of adult menu items)	68%	15%	17%



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		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
20	Culinary cocktails	67%	24%	8%
21	Simplicity/back to basics	66%	9%	25%
22	Ethnic-inspired breakfast items (e.g. Asian-flavored syrups, chorizo scrambled eggs, coconut milk pancakes)	65%	20%	15%
23	Artisan/specialty bacon	65%	19%	16%
24	Half-portions/smaller portion sizes	65%	17%	18%
25	Artisan cheeses	65%	10%	26%
26	Organic produce	64%	20%	17%
27	Food-beer pairings/beer dinners	64%	17%	19%
28	Oven-baked items in kids' meals (e.g. baked chicken fingers, oven-baked fries)	63%	19%	18%

		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
29	Non-wheat noodles/pasta (e.g. quinoa, rice, buckwheat)	63%	26%	12%
30	Ancient grains (e.g. khorasan wheat, spelt, amaranth)	62%	27%	11%
31	"Kid cuisine"/gourmet children's dishes	62%	29%	10%
32	Black rice	61%	28%	11%
33	House-made soft drinks/soda/pop	61%	27%	12%
34	Onsite barrel-aged drinks	61%	26%	13%
35	Bar chefs/mixologists	61%	24%	15%
36	Bite-size/mini-desserts	60%	24%	16%
37	Superfruits (e.g. acai, goji berry, mangosteen)	60%	31%	9%
38	Greek yogurt	60%	22%	18%
39	Gluten-free beer	60%	31%	9%
40	Quinoa	60%	28%	12%
41	Street food-inspired main courses (e.g. tacos, satay, kabobs)	60%	21%	19%
42	Savory desserts	59%	28%	12%
43	Specialty beer (e.g. seasonal, fruit, spiced)	59%	16%	25%
44	Exotic fruits (e.g. rambutan, dragon fruit, paw paw, guava)	59%	29%	12%
45	Grass-fed beef	59%	25%	16%
46	Lower-sodium entrees	59%	24%	17%
47	Low-fat/non-fat milk or 100% juice options on kids' menus	59%	16%	26%
48	Organic wine	58%	31%	11%
49	Children's entree salads	58%	30%	12%
50	Ethnic cuisine cheeses (e.g. queso fresco, paneer, lebeh, halloumi)	58%	22%	20%
51	Specialty/gourmet sandwiches	58%	19%	23%
52	Flatbreads (e.g. naan, pappadum, lavash, pita, tortilla)	57%	19%	23%
53	Heirloom apples	57%	19%	24%
54	Specialty salt (e.g. flavored, smoked, regional)	57%	32%	11%
55	Craft beer/microbrews	57%	15%	29%
56	Black garlic	56%	33%	11%
57	Food-liquor/cocktail pairings	56%	19%	25%
58	Beer sommelier	56%	29%	15%
59	Red rice	55%	31%	13%



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		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
60	Ethnic fusion cuisine	55%	32%	13%
61	Peruvian cuisine	55%	31%	15%
62	Ethnic-inspired children's dishes	54%	34%	12%
63	Heirloom beans	54%	26%	20%
64	Vegetable/vegetarian appetizers	54%	20%	25%
65	Inexpensive/underused cuts of (meat e.g. brisket, shoulder, skirt steak)	54%	16%	29%
66	Deconstructed classic desserts	54%	37%	9%
67	Food-alcohol pairings	54%	14%	32%
68	Foraging	54%	32%	14%
69	Ethnic/street food-inspired appetizers (e.g. tempura, taquitos, kabobs, hummus)	54%	21%	25%
70	Tapas/meze/dim sum (e.g. small plates)	54%	26%	21%
71	Free-range pork/poultry	53%	25%	22%
72	Ethnic condiments (e.g. raita/raitha, chimichurri, sriracha, chutney, soy sauce)	53%	19%	28%
73	Regional signature cocktails	53%	19%	28%
74	Dessert flights/combos	53%	32%	15%
75	Meatless/vegetarian items	53%	22%	25%
76	Vinegar/flavored vinegar/house- made vinegars	53%	24%	23%
77	Specialty iced tea (e.g. Thai-style, Southern/sweet, flavored)	53%	26%	21%
78	Asian-flavored cocktails (e.g. lemongrass, lychee, Thai basil)	53%	34%	14%
79	Organic beer	52%	34%	14%
80	Pop-up/temporary restaurants	52%	38%	9%
81	Specialty potatoes (e.g. purple, fingerling, baby Dutch yellow)	52%	22%	26%
82	Pickling	52%	22%	26%
83	Alternative red meats (e.g. buffalo/bison, ostrich/emu)	52%	36%	12%
84	Fermenting	51%	34%	14%
85	Infused/flavored liquor	51%	32%	17%
86	Micro-vegetables/micro-greens	50%	31%	19%



		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
87	Hybrid fruits/vegetables (e.g. plumcot, grapple, broccoflower)	50%	41%	9%
88	Game meats (e.g. venison, game birds, boar, rabbit)	50%	25%	25%
89	Non-traditional spirits (e.g. soju/ sochu, cachaca)	50%	38%	12%
90	Regional ethnic cuisine	50%	18%	32%
91	Agave	50%	34%	16%
92	Sous vide	50%	35%	15%
93	Vegetable pickles	50%	31%	19%
94	Gourmet/house-made lemonade	49%	28%	23%
95	Umami	49%	36%	15%
96	Traditional ethnic breakfast items (e.g. huevos rancheros, shakshuka, ashta, Japanese)	49%	23%	28%
97	Fresh herbs	49%	5%	46%
98	Wine or beer flights/samplers	48%	25%	26%
99	Charcuterie plates/samplers	48%	25%	27%
100	Organic cocktails	48%	42%	10%
101	Heirloom tomatoes	48%	17%	35%
102	Organic coffee	48%	34%	19%
103	Cuban cuisine	47%	31%	21%
104	Liquid nitrogen chilling/freezing	47%	46%	6%
105	"Skinny"/lower-calorie cocktails	47%	42%	10%
106	Southeast Asian cuisine (e.g. Thai, Vietnamese, Malaysian)	47%	22%	31%
107	Vegan entrees	47%	32%	21%
108	North African/Maghreb cuisine	47%	37%	16%



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		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
109	Dark/bitter greens (e.g. collards, kale, beet tops)	47%	23%	31%
110	Oil-poaching	47%	35%	18%
111	Korean cuisine	47%	35%	19%
112	Regional signature cocktails	46%	19%	35%
113	Organic liquor	46%	43%	11%
114	Vegetable ceviche/seviche	46%	41%	13%
115	Asian-inspired entree salads	46%	36%	18%
116	Food-wine pairings	46%	12%	42%
117	Signature cocktails	45%	24%	31%
118	Molecular gastronomy	45%	48%	7%
119	Flower syrup/essence	45%	42%	13%
120	Root vegetables (e.g. parsnip, turnip, rutabaga)	45%	18%	37%
121	Fresh beans/peas (e.g. fava, sweet, snow)	45%	18%	37%
122	Amuse-bouche/bite-size hors d'oeuvre	45%	26%	29%
123	Asian noodles (e.g. soba, udon)	44%	31%	24%
124	Latin American/Nuevo Latino cuisine	44%	25%	31%
125	Whole grain bread/rolls	44%	18%	38%
126	Smoking	44%	14%	42%
127	Asian mushrooms (e.g. shiitake, straw, enokitake, cloud ear fungus)	44%	22%	35%



		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
128	Low-calorie/low-fat entrees	43%	33%	24%
129	Matcha/green tea powder	43%	42%	14%
130	Mediterranean cuisine	43%	19%	38%
131	Fresh fruit breakfast items	43%	14%	43%
132	Non-traditional veal cuts	43%	40%	17%
133	Savory pies	43%	27%	31%
134	Vegetable chips	42%	41%	16%
135	Dairy-free milk (e.g. soy, rice)	42%	33%	25%
136	Braising	42%	12%	45%
137	Agua fresca	42%	39%	18%
138	Absinthe	41%	45%	14%
139	Non-traditional eggs (e.g. duck, quail, emu)	41%	47%	13%
140	Specialty oils (e.g. truffle, sesame, grapeseed, hazelnut)	41%	24%	35%
141	Non-traditional wines (e.g. ice wine, fruit-based wine)	41%	40%	20%
142	Aged meats (e.g. prosciutto, Iberian ham)	41%	15%	44%
143	Nordic/Scandinavian cuisine	40%	44%	16%
144	Hot peppers (e.g. habanero, chipotle, jalapeno)	40%	21%	39%
145	Pomegranates	40%	32%	28%
146	Warm appetizer salads	39%	40%	21%
147	Lean cuts of meat (e.g. loin, round)	39%	26%	35%
148	Goat	39%	45%	16%
149	Fruit/vegetable purees	38%	31%	31%
150	Fennel	38%	28%	34%
151	Wine on tap	38%	49%	14%
152	Gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches	38%	38%	24%
153	Tongue (e.g. beef, duck)	38%	47%	15%
154	Bacon-flavored/covered chocolate	38%	54%	9%
155	Middle Eastern cuisine	37%	35%	27%
156	Braised vegetables	37%	36%	27%
157	Muddled cocktails	37%	39%	24%
158	Dark chocolate	37%	15%	48%
159	Infused/flavored oils	36%	28%	35%
160	Passion fruit	36%	46%	18%
161	Wine by the glass	35%	18%	46%
162	Edamame/soy beans	35%	38%	26%
163	Avocados	35%	17%	47%

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	HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>164</b> Beets	35%	26%	39%
<b>165</b> Sushi/sushi-style items	35%	32%	33%
<b>166</b> Olive oil	35%	11%	54%
<b>167</b> Traditional cocktails (e.g. martini, Manhattan, sidecar, gin sling)	35%	18%	48%
<b>168</b> Lowcountry cuisine (e.g. South Carolina/Georgia coast)	35%	29%	36%
<b>169</b> Grilling	34%	10%	55%
<b>170</b> Honey	34%	12%	54%
<b>171</b> Duck fat	34%	42%	24%
<b>172</b> Curries	33%	31%	36%
<b>173</b> Gelato/sorbet	32%	32%	36%
<b>174</b> Cider	32%	28%	40%
<b>175</b> Prix fixe brunches	32%	39%	29%
<b>176</b> Tomatillos	31%	35%	33%
<b>177</b> Flavored/enhanced water	31%	56%	12%
<b>178</b> Goat cheese	31%	26%	44%
<b>179</b> Roasting	30%	11%	58%
<b>180</b> Sweet potato fries	30%	43%	27%
<b>181</b> Steamed/grilled/roasted vegetables	30%	21%	48%
<b>182</b> Radish/daikon	30%	38%	32%
<b>183</b> Tap water/filtered water	30%	34%	36%
<b>184</b> Green tea	30%	40%	30%



	HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>185</b> Compound/flavored butter	29%	37%	33%
<b>186</b> Olives	29%	21%	50%
<b>187</b> Cupcakes	29%	45%	26%
<b>188</b> Ceviche/seviche	29%	43%	28%
<b>189</b> Foam/froth/air	29%	66%	5%
<b>190</b> Fruit desserts (e.g. cobbler, crisp, galette, tart)	28%	21%	51%
<b>191</b> Lollipops	28%	51%	21%
<b>192</b> Energy drinks	28%	58%	14%
<b>193</b> French toast/stuffed French toast	28%	33%	40%
<b>194</b> Soul/comfort/Southern cuisine	27%	24%	48%
<b>195</b> Sake/mirin	27%	39%	34%
<b>196</b> Granita	27%	49%	23%
<b>197</b> Cotton candy/marshmallows/s'mores	27%	45%	28%
<b>198</b> Flavored popcorn	27%	51%	22%
<b>199</b> Brown/wild rice	27%	36%	37%
<b>200</b> Chicken and waffles	26%	43%	31%
<b>201</b> Falafel	26%	49%	25%
<b>202</b> Comfort foods (e.g. chicken pot pie, meatloaf, roasted chicken)	26%	18%	56%
<b>203</b> Pears	26%	20%	54%
<b>204</b> "Fun-shaped" children's items	26%	55%	19%
<b>205</b> Smoothies	25%	31%	44%
<b>206</b> Slaw	25%	33%	42%
<b>207</b> Egg dishes	24%	19%	56%
<b>208</b> Shortbreads	24%	35%	41%
<b>209</b> Polenta	24%	37%	39%
<b>210</b> Milkshakes/malts	23%	26%	51%





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		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>211</b>	Macaroons	23%	39%	38%
<b>212</b>	Barbecue/barbeque	22%	22%	56%
<b>213</b>	Mini-burgers/sliders	22%	61%	17%
<b>214</b>	Grits	22%	35%	44%
<b>215</b>	Macaroni and cheese/mac'n'cheese	21%	32%	47%
<b>216</b>	Bottled water	19%	41%	40%
<b>217</b>	Milk/flavored milk	19%	46%	36%
<b>218</b>	Wasabi peas	19%	67%	15%
<b>219</b>	Cauliflower	18%	35%	48%
<b>220</b>	Boxed wine	17%	62%	21%
<b>221</b>	Oysters	17%	34%	49%
<b>222</b>	Italian cuisine	16%	22%	62%
<b>223</b>	Pies	16%	26%	58%



## Individual Categories

Ranked by "Hot" Responses

		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>APPETIZERS</b>				
<b>1</b>	Vegetable/vegetarian appetizers	54%	20%	25%
<b>2</b>	Ethnic/street food-inspired appetizers (e.g. tempura, taquitos, kabobs, hummus)	54%	21%	25%
<b>3</b>	Charcuterie plates/samplers	48%	25%	27%
<b>4</b>	Amuse-bouche/bite-size hors d'oeuvre	45%	26%	29%
<b>5</b>	Warm appetizer salads	39%	40%	21%
<b>6</b>	Ceviche/seviche	29%	43%	28%
<b>7</b>	Mini-burgers/sliders	22%	61%	17%
<b>8</b>	Oysters	17%	34%	49%

## MAIN DISHES/CENTER OF THE PLATE

<b>1</b>	Locally sourced meats and seafood	83%	5%	12%
<b>2</b>	Sustainable seafood	73%	10%	16%
<b>3</b>	Newly fabricated cuts of meat (e.g. Denver steak, pork flat iron, Petite Tender)	72%	20%	8%
<b>4</b>	Non-traditional fish (e.g. branzino, Arctic char, barramundi)	68%	21%	10%
<b>5</b>	Half-portions/smaller portion sizes	65%	17%	18%
<b>6</b>	Street food-inspired main courses (e.g. tacos, satay, kabobs)	60%	21%	19%
<b>7</b>	Grass-fed beef	59%	25%	16%
<b>8</b>	Lower-sodium entrees	59%	24%	17%
<b>9</b>	Specialty/gourmet sandwiches	58%	19%	23%



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## Main Dishes/Center of the Plate continued

		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
10	Inexpensive/underused cuts of meat (e.g. brisket, shoulder, skirt steak)	54%	16%	29%
11	Tapas/meze/dim sum (e.g. small plates)	54%	26%	21%
12	Free-range pork/poultry	53%	25%	22%
13	Meatless/vegetarian items	53%	22%	25%
14	Alternative red meats (e.g. buffalo/bison, ostrich/emu)	52%	36%	12%
15	Game meats (e.g. venison, game birds, boar, rabbit)	50%	25%	25%
16	Vegan entrees	47%	32%	21%
17	Asian-inspired entree salads	46%	36%	18%
18	Low-calorie/low-fat entrees	43%	33%	24%
19	Non-traditional veal cuts	43%	40%	17%
20	Lean cuts of meat (e.g. loin, round)	39%	26%	35%
21	Goat	39%	45%	16%
22	Gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches	38%	38%	24%
23	Tongue (e.g. beef, duck)	38%	47%	15%
24	Sushi/sushi-style items	35%	32%	33%
25	Falafel	26%	49%	25%
26	Comfort foods (e.g. chicken pot pie, meatloaf, roasted chicken)	26%	18%	56%
27	Barbecue/barbeque	22%	22%	56%

## SIDES/STARCHES

1	Non-wheat noodles/pasta (e.g. quinoa, rice, buckwheat)	63%	26%	12%
2	Black rice	61%	28%	11%
3	Quinoa	60%	28%	12%
4	Red rice	55%	31%	13%
5	Vegetable pickles	50%	31%	19%
6	Asian noodles (e.g. soba, udon)	44%	31%	24%
7	Braised vegetables	37%	36%	27%
8	Sweet potato fries	30%	43%	27%
9	Steamed/grilled/roasted vegetables	30%	21%	48%
10	Brown/wild rice	27%	36%	37%
11	Polenta	24%	37%	39%
12	Grits	22%	35%	44%
13	Macaroni and cheese/mac'n'cheese	21%	32%	47%



		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
PRODUCE				
1	Locally grown produce	81%	4%	15%
2	Organic produce	64%	20%	17%
3	Superfruits (e.g. acai, goji berry, mangosteen)	60%	31%	9%
4	Exotic fruits (e.g. rambutan, dragon fruit, paw paw, guava)	59%	29%	12%
5	Heirloom apples	57%	19%	24%
6	Heirloom beans	54%	26%	20%
7	Specialty potatoes (e.g. purple, fingerling, baby Dutch yellow)	52%	22%	26%
8	Micro-vegetables/micro-greens	50%	31%	19%
9	Hybrid fruits/vegetables (e.g. plumcot, grapple, broccoflower)	50%	41%	9%
10	Fresh herbs	49%	5%	46%
11	Heirloom tomatoes	48%	17%	35%
12	Dark/bitter greens (e.g. collards, kale, beet tops)	47%	23%	31%
13	Root vegetables (e.g. parsnip, turnip, rutabaga)	45%	18%	37%
14	Fresh beans/peas (e.g. fava, sweet, snow)	45%	18%	37%
15	Asian mushrooms (e.g. shiitake, straw, enokitake, cloud ear fungus)	44%	22%	35%
16	Hot peppers (e.g. habanero, chipotle, jalapeno)	40%	21%	39%
17	Pomegranates	40%	32%	28%
18	Fennel	38%	28%	34%
19	Passion fruit	36%	46%	18%
20	Edamame/soy beans	35%	38%	26%



## CHEF SURVEY: WHAT'S

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IN 2012

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## Produce continued

		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
21	Avocados	35%	17%	47%
22	Beets	35%	26%	39%
23	Tomatillos	31%	35%	33%
24	Radish/daikon	30%	38%	32%
25	Olives	29%	21%	50%
26	Pears	26%	20%	54%
27	Cauliflower	18%	35%	48%

## DESSERT

1	Artisan/house-made ice cream	68%	12%	20%
2	Bite-size/mini-desserts	60%	24%	16%
3	Savory desserts	59%	28%	12%
4	Deconstructed classic desserts	54%	37%	9%
5	Dessert flights/combos	53%	32%	15%
6	Gelato/sorbet	32%	32%	36%
7	Cupcakes	29%	45%	26%
8	Fruit desserts (e.g. cobbler, crisp,	28%	21%	51%
9	Lollipops	28%	51%	21%
10	Granita	27%	49%	23%
11	Cotton candy/marshmallows/ s'mores	27%	45%	28%
12	Macaroons	23%	39%	38%
13	Pies	16%	26%	58%



		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>BREAKFAST/BRUNCH</b>				
1	Ethnic-inspired breakfast items (e.g. Asian-flavored syrups, chorizo scrambled eggs, coconut milk pancakes)	65%	20%	15%
2	Traditional ethnic breakfast items (e.g. huevos rancheros, shakshuka, ashta, Japanese)	49%	23%	28%
3	Fresh fruit breakfast items	43%	14%	43%
4	Prix fixe brunches	32%	39%	29%
5	French toast/stuffed French toast	28%	33%	40%
6	Chicken and waffles	26%	43%	31%
7	Egg dishes	24%	19%	56%

## KIDS' MEALS

1	Healthful kids' meals	78%	7%	16%
2	Whole grain items in kids' meals	72%	16%	12%
3	Fruit/vegetable children's side items	68%	12%	20%
4	"Mini meals" (e.g. smaller versions of adult menu items)	68%	15%	17%
5	Oven-baked items in kids' meals (e.g. baked chicken fingers, oven-baked fries)	63%	19%	18%
6	"Kid cuisine"/gourmet children's dishes	62%	29%	10%
7	Low-fat/non-fat milk or 100% juice options on kids' menus	59%	16%	26%
8	Children's entree salads	58%	30%	12%
9	Ethnic-inspired children's dishes	54%	34%	12%
10	"Fun-shaped" children's items	26%	55%	19%



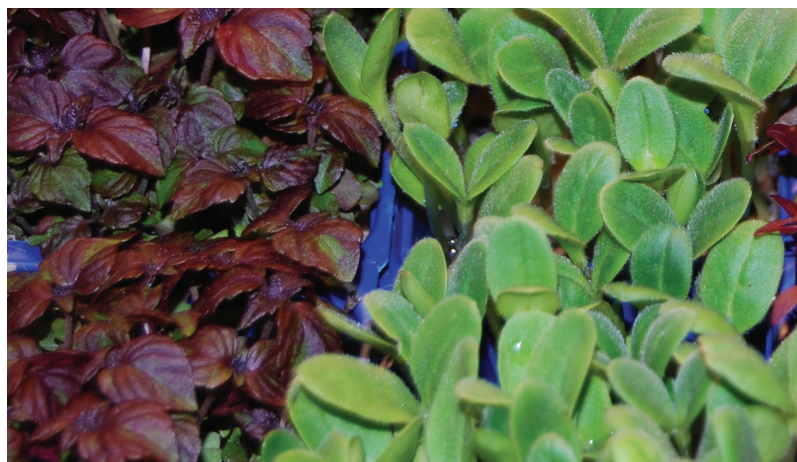
## CHEF SURVEY: WHAT'S

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		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>ETHNIC CUISINES AND FLAVORS</b>				
1	Ethnic fusion cuisine	55%	32%	13%
2	Peruvian cuisine	55%	31%	15%
3	Regional ethnic cuisine	50%	18%	32%
4	Cuban cuisine	47%	31%	21%
5	Southeast Asian cuisine (e.g. Thai, Vietnamese, Malaysian)	47%	22%	31%
6	North African/Maghreb cuisine	47%	37%	16%
7	Korean cuisine	47%	35%	19%
8	Latin American/Nuevo Latino cuisine	44%	25%	31%
9	Mediterranean cuisine	43%	19%	38%
10	Nordic/Scandinavian cuisine	40%	44%	16%
11	Middle Eastern cuisine	37%	35%	27%
12	Lowcountry cuisine (e.g. South Carolina/Georgia coast)	35%	29%	36%
13	Soul/comfort/Southern cuisine	27%	24%	48%
14	Italian cuisine	16%	22%	62%



		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>PREPARATION METHODS</b>				
1	Pickling	52%	22%	26%
2	Fermenting	51%	34%	14%
3	Sous vide	50%	35%	15%
4	Liquid nitrogen chilling/freezing	47%	46%	6%
5	Oil-poaching	47%	35%	18%
6	Smoking	44%	14%	42%
7	Braising	42%	12%	45%
8	Grilling	34%	10%	55%
9	Roasting	30%	11%	58%
10	Foam/froth/air	29%	66%	5%

**CULINARY THEMES**

1	Hyper-local sourcing (e.g. restaurant gardens)	77%	12%	11%
2	Sustainability	76%	8%	16%
3	Children's nutrition	75%	6%	19%
4	Gluten-free/food allergy conscious	75%	10%	15%
5	Farm/estate-branded ingredients	72%	15%	14%
6	Food trucks/street food	70%	16%	14%
7	Health/nutrition	68%	7%	25%
8	Simplicity/back to basics	66%	9%	25%
9	Food-alcohol pairings	54%	14%	32%
10	Foraging	54%	32%	14%
11	Pop-up/temporary restaurants	52%	38%	9%
12	Umami	49%	36%	15%
13	Molecular gastronomy	45%	48%	7%



Photo credit: Greg Grossman



## CHEF SURVEY: WHAT'S

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		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>OTHER FOOD ITEMS/INGREDIENTS</b>				
1	Artisan/specialty bacon	65%	19%	16%
2	Artisan cheeses	65%	10%	26%
3	Ancient grains (e.g. khorasan wheat, spelt, amaranth)	62%	27%	11%
4	Greek yogurt	60%	22%	18%
5	Ethnic cuisine cheeses (e.g. queso fresco, paneer, lebeh, halloumi)	58%	22%	20%
6	Flatbreads (e.g. naan, pappadum, lavash, pita, tortilla)	57%	19%	23%
7	Specialty salt (e.g. flavored, smoked, regional)	57%	32%	11%
8	Black garlic	56%	33%	11%
9	Ethnic condiments (e.g. raita/raitha, chimichurri, sriracha, chutney, soy sauce)	53%	19%	28%
10	Vinegar/flavored vinegar/house-made vinegars	53%	24%	23%
11	Agave	50%	34%	16%
12	Vegetable ceviche/seviche	46%	41%	13%
13	Flower syrup/essence	45%	42%	13%
14	Whole grain bread/rolls	44%	18%	38%
15	Matcha/green tea powder	43%	42%	14%
16	Savory pies	43%	27%	31%
17	Vegetable chips	42%	41%	16%

		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
18	Non-traditional eggs (e.g. duck, quail, emu)	41%	47%	13%
19	Specialty oils (e.g. truffle, sesame, grapeseed, hazelnut)	41%	24%	35%
20	Aged meats (e.g. prosciutto, Iberian ham)	41%	15%	44%
21	Fruit/vegetable purees	38%	31%	31%
22	Bacon-flavored/covered chocolate	38%	54%	9%
23	Dark chocolate	37%	15%	48%
24	Infused/flavored oils	36%	28%	35%
25	Olive oil	35%	11%	54%
26	Honey	34%	12%	54%
27	Duck fat	34%	42%	24%
28	Curries	33%	31%	36%
29	Goat cheese	31%	26%	44%
30	Compound/flavored butter	29%	37%	33%
31	Flavored popcorn	27%	51%	22%
32	Slaw	25%	33%	42%
33	Shortbreads	24%	35%	41%
34	Wasabi peas	19%	67%	15%

## NONALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1	House-made soft drinks/soda/pop	61%	27%	12%
2	Specialty iced tea (e.g. Thai-style, Southern/sweet, flavored)	53%	26%	21%
3	Gourmet/house-made lemonade	49%	28%	23%
4	Organic coffee	48%	34%	19%
5	Dairy-free milk (e.g. soy, rice)	42%	33%	25%
6	Agua fresca	42%	39%	18%
7	Flavored/enhanced water	31%	56%	12%
8	Tap water/filtered water	30%	34%	36%
9	Green tea	30%	40%	30%
10	Energy drinks	28%	58%	14%
11	Smoothies	25%	31%	44%
12	Milkshakes/malts	23%	26%	51%
13	Bottled water	19%	41%	40%
14	Milk/flavored milk	19%	46%	36%



# CHEF SURVEY: WHAT'S

# HOT

# IN 2012



		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>ALCOHOL AND COCKTAILS</b>				
<b>1</b>	Locally-produced wine and beer	73%	10%	17%
<b>2</b>	Micro-distilled/artisan spirits	70%	17%	14%
<b>3</b>	Culinary cocktails (e.g. savory, fresh ingredients, herb-infused)	67%	24%	8%
<b>4</b>	Food-beer pairings/beer dinners	64%	17%	19%
<b>5</b>	Onsite barrel-aged drinks	61%	26%	13%
<b>6</b>	Bar chefs/mixologists	61%	24%	15%
<b>7</b>	Gluten-free beer	60%	31%	9%
<b>8</b>	Specialty beer (e.g. seasonal, fruit, spiced)	59%	16%	25%
<b>9</b>	Organic wine	58%	31%	11%
<b>10</b>	Craft beer/microbrews	57%	15%	29%
<b>11</b>	Food-liquor/cocktail pairings	56%	19%	25%
<b>12</b>	Beer sommelier	56%	29%	15%
<b>13</b>	Regional signature cocktails	53%	19%	28%
<b>14</b>	Asian-flavored cocktails (e.g. lemongrass, lychee, Thai basil)	53%	34%	14%
<b>15</b>	Organic beer	52%	34%	14%
<b>16</b>	Infused/flavored liquor	51%	32%	17%
<b>17</b>	Non-traditional spirits (e.g. soju/sochu, cachaca)	50%	38%	12%
<b>18</b>	Wine or beer flights/samplers	48%	25%	26%



		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennial Favorite
<b>19</b>	Organic cocktails	48%	42%	10%
<b>20</b>	"Skinny"/lower-calorie cocktails	47%	42%	10%
<b>21</b>	Regional signature cocktails	46%	19%	35%
<b>22</b>	Organic liquor	46%	43%	11%
<b>23</b>	Food-wine pairings	46%	12%	42%
<b>24</b>	Signature cocktails	45%	24%	31%
<b>25</b>	Absinthe	41%	45%	14%
<b>26</b>	Non-traditional wines (e.g. ice wine, fruit-based wine)	41%	40%	20%
<b>27</b>	Wine on tap	38%	49%	14%
<b>28</b>	Muddled cocktails	37%	39%	24%
<b>29</b>	Wine by the glass	35%	18%	46%
<b>30</b>	Traditional cocktails (e.g. martini, Manhattan, Sidecar, gin sling)	35%	18%	48%
<b>31</b>	Cider	32%	28%	40%
<b>32</b>	Sake/mirin	27%	39%	34%
<b>33</b>	Boxed wine	17%	62%	21%





# CHEF SURVEY: WHAT'S HOT IN 2012



## TECHNOLOGY TRENDS IN RESTAURANTS FOR 2012

### What is the hottest technology trend in restaurants for 2012?

Smartphone apps for consumers (e.g. ordering, menus)	26%
Tablet computers (e.g. iPad) for menus and wine lists	25%
Social media for marketing/loyalty programs	16%
Mobile-wireless/at-the-table payment options	16%
Smartphone apps for chefs/restaurateurs (e.g. recipes, measurement converters)	11%
QR codes on menus, marketing, etc.	4%
Other	2%

### Would you consider launching a food truck as an entrepreneurial business venture?

Yes	61%
No	22%
Not sure	17%

### Achieving USDA Dietary Guidelines in Restaurants

The new USDA Dietary Guidelines recommend that Americans eat more fruits and vegetables. How is this best achieved in restaurants?

Offer a wider variety of vegetable/fruit side dishes on menus	55%
Using more produce in existing recipes (e.g. double the amount of peas in risotto dish)	19%
Follow MyPlate visual guideline of making fruits and vegetables half the plate	16%
Other	10%

### Restaurant Gardens

Does the restaurant/foodservice establishment where you work have a garden?

Yes, a traditional garden	28%
Yes, a rooftop garden	3%
No, we don't have space for a garden	21%
No, we rely on suppliers for all our produce needs	48%

## METHODOLOGY:

The National Restaurant Association conducted an online survey of 1,791 members of the American Culinary Federation in October-November 2011. The chefs were given a list of 223 food and beverage items, cuisines, culinary themes and preparation methods, and were asked to rate each item as a "hot trend," "yesterday's news" or "perennial favorite" on restaurant menus in 2012.

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Watch the "What's Hot in 2012" video on the National Restaurant Association's website:

[www.restaurant.org/foodtrends](http://www.restaurant.org/foodtrends)



Join the National Restaurant Association on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for additional restaurant industry updates and information.

[www.facebook.com/NationalRestaurantAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/NationalRestaurantAssociation)

[www.twitter.com/WeRRestaurants](http://www.twitter.com/WeRRestaurants)

[www.youtube.com/restaurantdotorg](http://www.youtube.com/restaurantdotorg)



Founded in 1919, the National Restaurant Association is the leading business association for the restaurant industry, which comprises 960,000 restaurant and foodservice outlets and a workforce

of nearly 13 million employees. We represent the industry in Washington, D.C., and advocate on its behalf. We operate the industry's largest trade show (NRA Show May 5-8, 2012, in Chicago); leading food safety training and certification program (ServSafe); unique career-building high school program (the NRAEF's ProStart, including the National ProStart Invitational April 27-29, 2012, in Baltimore, Md.); as well as the Kids LiveWell program promoting healthful kids' menu options. For more information, visit [www.restaurant.org](http://www.restaurant.org).



The American Culinary Federation, Inc., established in 1929, is the premier professional organization for culinarians in North America. With more than 20,000 members spanning 225 chapters nationwide, ACF is the culinary leader in offering educational resources, training, apprenticeship and programmatic accreditation. In addition, ACF operates the most comprehensive certification program for chefs in the United States, with the Certified Executive Chef® designation the only culinary credential accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). ACF is home to ACF Culinary Team USA, the official representative for the United States in major international culinary competitions, and to the Chef & Child Foundation, founded in 1989 to promote proper nutrition in children and to combat childhood obesity. For more information, visit [www.acfchefs.org](http://www.acfchefs.org).