



QUORRRTERLEY INSIGHT 2021

Quorn™

TRENDS ROUND-UP

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We all know how just how hard the hospitality sector has been hit during the events of 2020, making it more challenging than ever for us to gather our insights for the quarterly trends report in the hands-on way we prefer to. Thankfully, we were able to venture out in a safe, socially distanced way during a brief window between lockdowns to discover all the latest food trends and share our learnings with you. With the help of our research partners, The Food People and Mintel, we've identified the trends we feel will drive us next year. This includes those that reflect the impact of the pandemic on consumer needs, and those that will help us look to the future fully prepared to take on a new, more positive year!

Have a look at the key menu themes we identified during our final 'trends trip' of 2020, and if you'd like to know more about Quorn or have any feedback then please get in touch at: www.quornfoodservice.co.uk.

CHICKEN

Chicken remains a hero on almost any menu, whether it be in the more indulgent fried option or a healthier, grilled variety. Wherever you go, you're bound to find exotic and exciting chicken choices in all formats, from burgers to wings.

FIRE AND SMOKE

With new, exciting flavours in high demand, chefs are igniting tastebuds by charring their food with flame, seasoning dishes with scorching spice blends, and smoking them using various woods.

COMFORT

Comfort doesn't just come from our surroundings, but from the food we enjoy as well. So, it was no surprise that in these trying times we saw a marked increase in the inclusion of everyday comfort meals — whether traditional or with a luxurious new twist for added comfort.

DELIVERY

Over the last nine months, restaurant brands and operators alike have had to adapt their approach to takeaway and food delivery services in order to survive. This trend has come with lots of new innovations — think ordering via app, contactless deliveries and drive-through meals. It looks to be here to stay as working patterns change and new dayparts begin to emerge.

CLUCKING CLASSICS

Always in high demand, chicken has been a consistent staple of our trends reports — fried chicken in particular. And for good reason! This evergreen trend has developed even further during the pandemic as consumers look for sources of indulgence and comfort.



Wherever you go, you're bound to find an exotic and exciting method of preparing chicken appearing on menus, with cuisines such as Korean, Mexican, and Middle Eastern taking the lead right now. While indulgent deep-fried chicken remains a consumer favourite, many of these cuisines boast their own unique flavours for making the leaner, healthier chicken dishes even more appetising.

This has inspired UK restaurants and brands to approach using chicken substitutes in a different light, meaning that the opportunities for menus to include meatless 'no fowl' dishes are limitless — from breakfasts to high-end evening meals. Meat free innovation has come far enough that consumers can look to wings and tenders as well as the more traditional burgers as ways to satisfy their fried, no-fowl cravings. As these substitutes edge closer to perfecting their textures, it's now up to us all to use some culinary experimentation to bring in the flavours from different corners of the world and make the vegan or vegetarian option the full package.

Source: thefoodpeople – foodwatching, 2021 trend predictions, July 2020

Inspiration: Wingman's Soho

SOME LIKE IT HOT

While consumers looked for ways to socialise outdoors during the summer's relaxed lockdown rules, many have been gravitating to the traditional barbeque for big flavours and easy preparation. Reflecting this trend, chefs have been turning up the heat on the grills and bringing fire to their menus with BBQ charring, as well as smoking using different varieties of wood to bring increasingly complex flavours into the dishes.

While the BBQ typically conjures up images of sizzling meat, there's no reason that this grilling method can't be applied to plant-based dishes as well, and that's exactly what we saw. Meat substitutes can look, feel, and taste just like the real thing when charred or smoked, with flavours and textures amplified beautifully. But this fiery trend isn't just about the way we cook, it's also about the extra touches we can use to tingle the tastebuds, such as spicy rubs and hot sauces. Vegetarian and vegan foods can often hold a liberal application of hot sauce or be prepared in a spicy marinade just like their meat counterparts, so consumers know that whatever their meal choices, there's always a way to bring the flavour!

Inspiration: Smokehouse London



COMFORT IS KING

We're dressing for comfort while we work from home, and everyone seems to be looking for comfort from their food orders as well! Food is about escapism for a lot of people, and this is reinforced by the emerging trend of seeking food that is familiar and "safe." But just because these meals are familiar doesn't mean they have to be basic. Even staple meals like classic Italian pasta dishes can be turned up a notch with luxurious additions such as truffles to give them a taste of extravagance and intensify the feelings of comfort.



But bringing a little something special to a comforting dish isn't just achieved through adding high-end ingredients. Sometimes it can be about mixing up flavours with something different in order to make it stand out — for instance, a dollop of fig jam to compliment a simple serving of ham and goat's cheese. In the meat free world, even the simplest Quorn comfort foods can be elevated in innovative ways. For a deliciously different breakfast, a Quorn Southern Fried Bite can be drizzled with maple syrup and served on top of a fluffy waffle for a sweet and savoury kick!

Source: thefoodpeople – foodwatching, 2021 trend predictions, July 2020

Inspiration: Gloria's Shoreditch

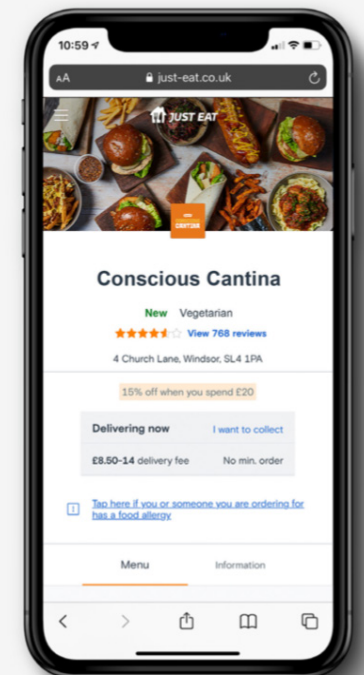


SIT BACK RELAX, ENJOY



From high-end meals to fast food, the option to have restaurant-quality food delivered safely to our doors has been key in getting foodservice businesses through 2020. But to really have an edge over competitors, it's important to offer both the convenience and experience aspects of eating out that people are missing.

To evolve with this trend, restaurants have put incredible effort and innovative thinking into their delivery services. Boxes containing cooked breakfasts (for instance, from London's Iranian-style café Dishoom), gourmet pizza kits (such as Pizza Pilgrims) and high-end delivery options from Oldstead-based Tommy Banks are just a few examples of how restaurants have been going above and beyond to give their customers the 'eating out at home' experience, and in turn keeping their revenue streams alive. Watch out for the launch of Conscious Cantina — Quorn's dark kitchen venture on JustEat — to see exactly how we've taken this trend on board!



WHAT TO WATCH IN 2021

There's a lot more to come in 2021, and we'll be keeping our fingers on the pulse...

Conscious consumptions: While certainly not a new trend, it's becoming even more important to consumers that they understand how their food has been sourced, where it's from, how it's made and the impact that it has on the planet.

Alfresco cooking: The pandemic has encouraged us to do more outdoor socialising, which has resulted in the rise of open-air cooking both at home and in restaurants, from pizza ovens and BBQs to fire pits and smokers.

Mini splurge: It's all about making the ordinary extraordinary. From adding salted caramel or foam to their coffees, or pairing a naan with bacon and eggs, consumers are treating themselves by making their everyday meals something special to boost their moods.





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