

FUTURE MENUS



GLOBAL FOODSERVICE TRENDS
VOLUME 3



Unilever
Food
Solutions

As a chef or food service professional, you know how important it is to keep up with menu trends. It ensures you offer unique and exciting dishes that attract new customers, while keeping your regulars coming back for more. It's also an opportunity to showcase your creativity. Not keeping up risks allowing the competition to get ahead.

However, keeping abreast of evolving menu trends is hugely time-consuming and all too often requires long hours of researching new ingredients, new techniques and testing. Hours you simply don't have. That's where our *Future Menus* comes in.

Our highly skilled team of 250 in-house chefs, who are based all over the world, have worked on developing delicious, on-trend recipe ideas that you can use for your menus. With 5,000 years of collective experience between them, our chefs are perfectly positioned to help you craft the exciting creations your diners want today. They go to work every day to help *Unilever Food Solutions* customers serve up 200 million delicious dishes across the globe.

“Our highly skilled team of *UFS* in-house chefs, who are based all over the world, have worked on developing delicious, on-trend recipe concepts that you can use for your menus.”

These recipe concepts are the way to bring the trends to life in your menu. Each concept belongs to one of the four menu trends we have identified this year: Street Food Couture; Borderless Cuisine; Modernised Comfort Food; and Diner Designed.

Each one has been designed with operational requirements and costs in mind. They provide delicious inspiration with flavours, cuisines and culinary techniques from all corners of the world. While they are globally inspired, each concept is also highly adaptable to ensure it resonates with your local market.

Along with these concepts, you will find lots of rich insights into each of the four menu trends and how they are defining the food service industry. Use them to stay ahead and to spark your creativity – a perfect recipe to delight your guests.

Kees Van Erp
Global Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions



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Senior Corporate Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, North America

An alumnus of the Technology Center and College of DuPage, Chef Alvaro has worked as a chef for 19 years. During his career, he has worked for the likes of Sodexo and Quest Food Management. First joining *Unilever Food Solutions* as a culinary intern in 2005, he returned to the company in 2014. He is now a Senior Corporate Chef, leading the Midwest in supporting sales with menu and recipe development.

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DANIELLE VENTER

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Chef Danielle began her journey as a chef in some of South Africa's top restaurants and hotels and now has over 16 years of experience, having also lectured at a prestigious chef school. Chef Danielle sits on the board of the *Chaine des Rotisseurs KZN South Africa* and is a member of the *South African Chefs Association*. For the past five years, Danielle has served as the regional Demand Creation chef for *Unilever Food Solutions South Africa*.

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Chef Edwin attended culinary school in the Netherlands aged 12, going on to work in various kitchens from the age of 16. He has worked in Michelin-starred restaurants and achieved the highest title in the Netherlands: chef S.V.H. Meesterkok (certified master chef). Looking for a new challenge, he became a development chef at KLM airline catering. He then joined *Unilever Food Solutions* as a culinary consultant and has been working there for 26 years.

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BRANDON COLLINS

Corporate Executive Chef
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A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Chef Brandon worked at restaurants before moving to a role at Sodexo as Executive Chef at Pitch, which was Unilever's personal care division's co-creation space. After working closely with the company, he took a position as Corporate Chef Northeast, later becoming the Corporate Executive Chef, which is his current title. Here he manages a team of eight chefs from across the US and Canada. Chef Brandon is also one of only two people in the world to hold the title of Maille mustard sommelier.

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Since 1999, Chef Chris has honed his craft in hotels and restaurants, establishing a robust foundation in Chinese cuisine. A highly successful online content creator, he has a following of 500,000 and regularly gives interesting insights into the culinary world. At *Unilever Food Solutions*, he has excelled in roles such as Sales Chef, Innovation Chef and CRM Chef Leader, showcasing his leadership and creativity.

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Chef Eric began his career as a trainee chef at Swissôtel's Stamford Hotel in 2003. He honed his expertise in multi-cuisine cooking, which has included working at a Michelin-starred restaurant before joining Unilever in 2009. He proudly holds numerous gold medals and top honours from regional and international competitions, including a double gold win at the Culinary World Cup 2010 in Luxembourg. In his role at *Unilever Food Solutions*, he is dedicated to pioneering innovative dishes and solutions that shape the culinary future.

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Raised in a family of chefs, Chef Frank began his career aged 17 by pursuing various food service roles. Throughout his time in the industry, he has worked as a chef de partie, sous chef and head chef and has worked everywhere from small cafés and canteens to international hotels and Michelin-starred restaurants. From 2000 to 2005, he was also a high-level competitive chef, before joining Unilever Food Services 15 years ago.

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Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Indonesia

Chef Gun Gun is a graduate of the Food Production Management department at the National Hotel & Tourism Institute. Starting his career at the Novotel Hotel Group, he joined *Unilever Food Solutions* in 2006 and was appointed Executive Chef in 2017. He won Unilever's highly prestigious Global Hero Award in 2022 for the incredible support he gave to *UFS* customers during the Covid pandemic. He is also a very popular online content creator with over 320,000 followers so far.

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JAMES BROWN

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

Chef James has been in the food service industry for over 22 years and has worked for esteemed establishments such as Champney's Health Resort, Le Petit Blanc, Polpo and Polpetto – beginning as a commis chef and later holding roles such as Culinary Director. Honing his skills in kitchens around the UK to support his formal training, Chef James earned a diploma in culinary arts and retained a Bib Gourmand at Polpetto for two years running.

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KYLE JAKOBI

Customer Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, North America

Chef Kyle started his career as a culinary school graduate and has since honed his skills in roles at upscale wine bars, Fairmont Hotels and Bosch/Siemens, eventually rising to Executive Corporate Chef. Now with *Unilever Food Solutions*, he serves as Western Zone Chef, collaborating with food service operators across national accounts, non-commercial sectors, military and regional chains. Chef Kyle's adventurous style blends Asian and Southwestern flavours, fostering connection and creativity through food.

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PHILIP LI

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, China

Since 1988, Chef Philip has accumulated extensive experience in Chinese cuisine in hotels and restaurants. He led the Chinese national team competing at the 2020 IKA Culinary Olympics to great success. The team won three gold medals, one silver and one bronze. Chef Philip has held various key positions in *Unilever Food Solutions* during his 27 years with the business, working his way up to lead a team of 80 chefs today, across China.

@李某人的美食空间



DIANNE ARANETA

On-Trend Flavours Lead

Unilever Food Solutions, Global

A graduate of the College of Business & Economics at De La Salle University, Chef Dianne has gained a wide range of industry experience and won leadership awards and a competition along the way, too. Before joining Unilever in 2011, she worked in a hotel and a corporation and took lead roles in restaurant chains and a pre-opening of a casual independent restaurant. She has also worked as a Research & Development chef, having held local, regional and global innovation chef roles, including with Unilever, for over a decade. She is now part of the global digital marketing team and plays a pivotal lead role in *UFS'* annual *Future Menus* campaign.

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Lead Chef

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Beginning his professional career in 1986, Chef Gili studied formal culinary arts at the Tadmor Hotel School and worked in a wide range of restaurants before becoming a consulting chef for numerous establishments and local and international fast-food outlets such as Domino's Pizza and Pizza Hut. Since 2003, he has served as the Lead Chef of *Unilever Food Solutions* Israel and is primarily involved in researching and developing new products and concepts for the Israeli food service market.

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JOANNE LIMOANCO-GENDRANO

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Gulf and Indian Ocean Islands

Chef Joanne has over 20 years of experience in the Food & Beverage sector, working across various establishments, including catering services, restaurants, an academic institution, food brands and hotel operations. Currently, Chef Joanne serves as the Executive Chef for the Gulf region and Indian Ocean Islands. She brings a wealth of experience from her tenure with *UFS* Culinary in Southeast Asia and her passion for Pan Asian cuisine, enriching her current team with a broad and diverse culinary perspective.

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MAURITS VAN VROENHOVEN

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Chef Maurits pursued a degree in culinary arts and hotel management before working at several fine dining restaurants in the Netherlands. After a stint in the USA, he worked as a pastry chef at a two-Michelin-starred restaurant in Amsterdam's Intercontinental Hotel. He then worked in several other restaurants and hotels before joining Unilever in Rotterdam. At Unilever, he started as a catering chef and for the past 11 years has held the role of Global Brand Development Lead Chef.

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PEIO CRUZ

Lead Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Spain

Chef Peio studied hospitality management in Bilbao before moving to England, where he began his career as a chef, working in hotel chains such as Sheraton and Hilton. He started as a local R&D chef at Unilever 24 years ago, gaining experience in international food as well as developing an extensive knowledge of the food service market and trends. In his current role as Lead Chef for *Unilever Food Solutions* in Spain, he supports product innovation.

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RENÉ-NOEL SCHIEMER

Deputy Head of Culinary Consulting

Unilever Food Solutions, Germany

Chef René-Noel began his professional career with a chef apprenticeship that ran from 2007 to 2010. Throughout his career, he has worked in various hotels and restaurants and large-scale venues and has participated in trade fairs such as INTERNORGA before becoming a freelance chef. In 2015, he took up a position as Culinary Consultant for *Unilever Food Solutions* Germany, which he held for seven years. Since April 2022, he has been Deputy Head of Culinary Consulting for *UFS* Germany.

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EVERT VERMANDEL

Global Lead Innovation Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, the Netherlands

Growing up in Zeeland, in the southwest of the Netherlands, Chef Evert found his culinary calling at a young age, working as a student chef and a commis. Then, in 1998, Chef Evert proudly joined Unilever to become Head of Kitchen Services at Unilever's corporate center. In 2013, he continued his journey with Unilever, moving to *UFS* R&D as a Global Innovation Chef, which inspired the transition to his current position. Today, Evert is the Global Lead Innovation Chef, creatively leading a team of great chefs in *HIVE*, Unilever's food innovation center in Wageningen.

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GIUSEPPE BUSCICCHIO

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Italy

With culinary experience at the Four Seasons Hotel in Milan and the Sheraton Nicolaus Hotel in Bari, Chef Giuseppe has built his career in high-end establishments. He has honed his expertise in gourmet cooking and professional culinary arts, earning recognition as an Emerging Chef of Southern Italy. Chef Giuseppe now serves as the Executive Chef of *Unilever Food Solutions* Italy, where he trains chefs, introducing them to new cooking techniques and innovative culinary combinations inspired by Italian traditions.

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THAÍS GIMENEZ

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Brazil

With a degree in Gastronomy from Senac Águas de São Pedro, Chef Thaís first made her name as a gastronomic consultant, working with global fine dining restaurants, bistros, hotels and airline catering. Her unique culinary expertise has gained her skills in understanding food trends and how to curate innovative menus and dishes. Now, in her current role at *Unilever Food Solutions*, Chef Thaís serves as Executive Chef for Brazil and Demand Generation Leader, where she crafts strategies that seamlessly blend creativity with market needs. Her ambition is to create unforgettable experiences in the food service business.

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JIRAROJ NAVANUKROH

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Thailand

Chef Jiraroj's connection to cooking began with his family. After establishing a culinary interest at a young age, he studied cookery at Dusit Thani College and, later, at Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Institute in Sydney, Australia, where he earned a Diploma de Cuisine. Chef Jiraroj first joined Unilever in 2006 as an application chef. By 2013 he was appointed Executive Chef focusing on the *UFS* Thailand and Myanmar markets. Today, Chef Jiraroj's ambition is to blend modern and traditional cooking techniques and bring new and exciting dishes to international audiences.

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KEES VAN ERP

Global Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions

Chef Kees began his culinary journey as a teenager. His distinguished global career brought him to *Unilever Food Solutions* in 1991, where he led product innovations for Unilever. Today, Chef Kees serves as the Global Lead Chef for *UFS*, acting as a functional leader for Unilever's chef teams worldwide. In this role, he inspires the next generation of culinary professionals.



WESLEY BAY

Head Culinary Advisor

Unilever Food Solutions, Belgium

Chef Wesley has worked in various Michelin-starred restaurants including Boxy's in Kortrijk, Belgium, where he connected with his passion for food and creative flavours. With his background in culinary education and experience in high-end catering, he took up the position of Head Culinary Advisor for *Unilever Food Solutions* Belgium. Since then, Chef Wesley has worked closely with *Unilever Food Solutions* for nearly 10 years.

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ANDRÉS CARDONA

Corporate Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, North Latin America

Chef Andrés has a wealth of experience in the food service industry, notably within high-end restaurants. His passion for gastronomy has driven his culinary career, driving him to experiment with unique techniques and flavours within Latin American cuisine. Chef Andrés joined Unilever in May 2020, and his current role as Corporate Chef involves leading with creativity and knowledge to enrich the food scene in Latin America.

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JIMENA SOLIS

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay

Chef Jimena has a degree in gastronomy and a particular expertise in pastry. In 2004, she discovered her love for food service while working in a restaurant in Buenos Aires. She subsequently moved to New Zealand to perfect both her English and skills in the professional kitchen. Chef Jimena has worked in several restaurants and taught at a professional pastry school in Argentina. She currently supports *Unilever Food Solutions* customers in three Latin American markets and is involved in Unilever's 'Women in Action' social initiative.

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ANDREAS WILLINER

Executive Lead Country Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, Switzerland

Chef Andreas is used to coming top of his culinary class and winning awards. In 2003, he represented his native Switzerland at the World Skills competition, winning the Vice World Champion title. He has worked as a catering chef and in four- and five-star hotels. Chef Andreas is also an experienced culinary coach and trainer. He is particularly passionate about the art of food styling, paying very close attention to detail and capturing his work via his other love: food photography. He has been with *Unilever Food Solutions* since 2008.

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YONGCHAN (LEO) KIM

Culinary Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, South Korea

Starting as a field chef in a five-star hotel, Chef Yongchan gained expertise in fine and casual dining before transitioning to franchise R&D and customised food solutions. With experience consulting on restaurant openings, kitchen design and menu innovation, he now specialises in chef-driven solutions, trendsetting initiatives, and culinary network development.

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INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

ANA ROŠ

With a string of awards under her belt, Slovenian chef Ana needs no introduction. Her restaurant, Hiša Franko, was awarded three Michelin stars in 2023 and has been recognised for its commitment to sustainability.

GAGGAN ANAND

Gaggan opened his impressive eponymous Indian restaurant in Bangkok, Thailand, back in 2010. It earned two Michelin stars and was frequently listed as one of the top 50 restaurants in the world. As a chef and business owner, he knows a thing or two about creating unique dining experiences. On [page 132](#), he shares how he creates a culinary journey that is truly diner designed.

SANTIAGO LASTRA

Mexican chef Santiago has swiftly become one to watch. Travelling across the world on a voyage of culinary discovery, he's utilised ingredients from multiple regions to create Mexican classics. His experiences have meant he's been able to create borderless dishes at his London-based restaurant, KOL. On [page 66](#), he discusses the impact of his travels and the magic of Mexican cuisine using British ingredients.

ASMA KHAN

Indian-born chef Asma has made a name for herself through her acclaimed supper clubs and memorable appearance on Netflix's *Chef's Table*. Her acclaimed London restaurant, Darjeeling Express, operates a female-led kitchen. This, alongside her impressive philanthropy, makes her the perfect spokesperson on all things relating to Positive Kitchen Culture, which you can find on [page 90](#).

RAFAEL LARUE

Rafael is the Chief Creative Officer of the transformation agency Livit Design, which specialises in the diner experience. As such, he is often looking at the emerging expectations of diners internationally. On [page 126](#), he shares his thoughts on the changing face of consumers and whether "unreasonable hospitality" is at the heart of dining.

UNILEVER FOOD SOLUTIONS, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT TEAM

For this edition of *Future Menus*, the research and development team at Unilever discuss fermentation, which is an emerging and highly popular, cooking technique. Here, they offer insightful context, tips and a look at the future of fermentation. Find fermentation inspiration on [page 144](#).



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Visit ufs.com/futuremenus for more information on this year's trends



GET #PREPPED FOR TOMORROW WITH UNILEVER FOOD SOLUTIONS



Unilever
Food
Solutions

#Prepped for tomorrow

Unilever Food Solutions (UFS) is a business of chefs for chefs. Accounting for 20% of Unilever's Foods Business Group, UFS operates in over 75 countries as a dedicated supplier to the food service industry. Drawing on the expertise of over 250 professional in-house chefs, UFS offers food service professionals high-quality products, industry inspiration and best-in-class services.

Our highly regarded portfolio of key products and solutions features power brands like Knorr Professional and Hellmann's, which perform exceptionally well in the professional kitchen.

UFS' annual Future Menus initiative is a very important resource for chefs. It offers the most up-to-date global culinary trends via in-depth market research along with chef-developed recipes that allow you to bring these trends to life very easily in your food service business.

In fact, our ever-growing collection of unique and classic recipes (available at [ufs.com/futuremenus](https://www.ufs.com/futuremenus)) is a valuable source of inspiration, helping chefs at all skill levels with both creativity and profitability.

The UFS Positive Kitchens initiative helps to foster a positive culture in the professional kitchen by addressing the key challenges commonly encountered and providing tools, training and advice to promote wellbeing.

In addition, our culinary training programmes provide chefs and food service professionals with valuable advice on key skills and techniques, along with other vital areas in the professional kitchen.

To find out more about how we help chefs and food service professionals across the globe to better serve their guests, visit [ufs.com/futuremenus](https://www.ufs.com/futuremenus)

FOOD THAT MOVES US

Welcome to Unilever Food Solutions' Future Menus, now in its third year, which has proudly become a critical tool for UK chefs and operators due to its unrivalled in-depth global market research and culinary insights.

In an ever-evolving culinary world that is changing faster than ever, staying ahead of the curve is clearly critical to business success. The excellent trend insights in Future Menus help to support busy food service professionals to drive innovation, spark culinary creativity and craft menus that satisfy customer needs and wants.

Getting you prepped for tomorrow

This year's Future Menus' insights are once again meticulously researched, validated, and informed by a bigger-than-ever research and insights base, which makes it such an invaluable resource for navigating our dynamic, challenging and opportunity-rich culinary world.


Trends - Food That Moves Us

Every year, Future Menus deep dives into the exciting and vibrant trends that are reshaping and influencing menus worldwide. The four key trends identified this year are:

- 1 Street Food Couture
- 2 Borderless Cuisine
- 3 Modernised Comfort Food
- 4 Diner Designed

Dishes from the heart

A key underlying influence shaping these four trends is a mindset shift by chefs across the globe towards 'Food That Moves Us' – where we are seeing dish ideas driven by emotion and the need to thrive and continually evolve.



Gen Z eat out more than any generation. A quarter eat out multiple times a week.*

Helping unlock Gen Z opportunity

New consumer insights, particularly into Gen Z consumers, have heavily influenced these four key Future Menus trends.

Our research* highlights how Gen Z, who eat out in the UK more than any other generation, aren't just another demographic; they are increasingly economically powerful trendsetters craving exciting dining experiences that are personalised, globally inspired and shareable.

With Gen-Zeders having different menu preferences and dining behaviours from other generations, such as 66%* being much more attracted to restaurants with global cuisine and one in ten only going to restaurants where they can customise dishes, they are a critical demographic for operators who want to understand and unlock their full value. It was therefore vital for us to have a strong Gen Z focus in this year's report.

The continuing cost-of-living crisis is, of course, also still influencing UK eating out trends with consumers still looking for affordable luxuries that bring them joy, such as exciting on-trend dishes, including Modernised Comfort Food.



West to East influence

The four key Future Menus trends have also been shaped by three big shifts. The first is the strong culinary shift that includes the global demand for Asian and Latin American flavours and cuisines, which underpins all the trends.

Migration of ideas

The second shift is the effect increasing migration and migration tourism, as well as a new generation of chefs aiming to honour their multi-cultural roots, is having on the culinary landscape, including driving the Street Food Couture and Borderless Cuisine trends. These trends are fuelling new and exciting developments in how chefs bring new ingredients, culinary techniques and flavours together to create something unique.

AI impact

Advancements in digital is the third key shift and is driving the Diner Designed trend – which is all about satisfying guests with more personalised experiences. Artificial intelligence and augmented reality are enabling this, along with an emphasis on new and exciting ways to create and serve dishes that fit with diners' personal flavour preferences.

Keeping beat with the street

Also underpinning this year's menu trends is how traditional ideas of food and how we experience it are also being redefined as cultural and social dynamics evolve. The Street Food Couture trend is a prime example and is heavily influencing culinary demand from the bottom up. Gourmet versions of traditional street foods, crafted with a chef's expertise, are now penetrating every channel in the food service industry, including fine dining establishments.

Making the trends work for your business

Unilever Food Solutions' talented team of expert chefs from across the globe have developed delicious recipes you will find throughout Future Menus. Each recipe brings to life one of the four trends. We hope these innovative dishes will help inspire you to embrace and implement the trends that are most relevant for your business.

You can find more information on this year's Future Menus and dish inspiration at ufs.com/futuremenus



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#Prepped for tomorrow

Unilever Food Solutions
Thais Gimenez

Unilever Food Solution
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STREET FOOD COUTURE

This trend focuses on elevating *Street Food* by incorporating high-quality ingredients and refined techniques, while maintaining its informal charm and sense of discovery. The result is a higher-quality dining experience that retains the casual and dynamic atmosphere of the street food scene. It appeals to modern diners seeking both accessible and exciting food options, particularly those influenced by global flavours.



MEXICAN,
INDIAN, KOREAN,
NORTH AFRICAN &
MIDDLE EASTERN

ARE CUISINES THAT
ARE RAPIDLY
GROWING WITHIN
STREET FOOD

Street food has been one of the most important and transformative menu trends of the last decade, not only because of the plethora of street food venues, including markets and food halls that have opened across the UK, but because of its bottom-up influence on British food culture, inspiring food from supermarket ready meals and snacks to QSR, pubs, fast casual and Michelin-rated menus.

By elevating street food, chefs offer diners an informal yet premium culinary adventure, balancing creativity with the roots of traditional street food culture.

Key factors contributing to this trend include:

The ongoing cost-of-living crisis – making accessible, affordable food more appealing.

- Ongoing broad appeal of street food – research* shows 70% of UK consumers like the idea of visiting a street food market, increasing to 84% of Gen Z
- Gen Z women are the biggest group of street food super fans – with 18% citing a visit to a street food market as their ideal night out
- Gen Z appeal – this demographic eat out more frequently than any generation in the UK* and have big and growing spending power, with their preference for informal dining experiences and affordable prices a key driver
- Price is right – affordable prices help to ensure repeat business from Gen Z – with 52% saying they would return to a restaurant and 37% likely to return if prices are affordable
- Pulling power: elevated street food helps meet Gen Z's need for ongoing excitement with food experiences to encourage them to eat out – two thirds (64%) say they would rather stay home on a Friday night than go out with friends
- Ongoing migration and globalisation influencing food choices
- Rise of digital nomads: increased social media visibility of global street food dishes
- An opportunity for younger chefs, with a range of cultural influences, to showcase creative, approachable food

Previous page:
A street food staple, this chicken taco is garnished with radish, onion, feta, coriander and lime.



GET SOCIAL

Gen Z are more likely to use TikTok or Instagram than Google search when looking for new places to eat, with 56% using TikTok and 32% Insta.*

At the core of Street Food Couture is the fusion of authentic cuisines, blending premium ingredients and refined techniques from various cultures in a thoughtful, innovative way. This fusion creates memorable experiences that balance tradition with innovation.

This approach results in bold, exciting flavours while preserving authenticity and paves the way for more inviting and accessible dining experiences.

For operators, Street Food Couture is both an exciting opportunity and a challenge. The trend sees a need to innovate without overcomplicating service, such as incorporating subtle twists like charcoal grilling for smoky flavour or international fusion dips, while preserving the core appeal of British street food. But opportunity knocks...

The top techniques

Here are some of the techniques which are dominating this trend:

- Fermentation
- Grilling
- Steaming
- Wok hei
- Marination
- Charcoal grilling

A taste of the delicious dishes prevalent in this trend:

- Mexican elote
- Indian chaat
- Gyros
- Loaded fries
- Gourmet mac + cheese
- Korean rice rolls
- Shawarma
- Filipino taho
- Indonesian martabak
- Tacos
- Sliders
- Barbecue skewers

ONE TO WATCH

ALEPPO PEPPER IS LIKELY TO BE AN EMERGING INGREDIENT WITHIN STREET FOOD OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS AND BEYOND.



Opposite page:
Smashed sliders with
melted cheese

This page: Chef Andres
Cardona enjoys a
smashed slider.



STREET FOOD WORLD MAP

EXPLORING STREET FOOD *around the world,* ONE BITE AT A TIME.



MEXICO

Street food in Mexico, with its immensely colourful and flavourful dishes, has deep roots dating back to pre-Hispanic times, when open-air markets were the main source of food. With the arrival of the Spanish, indigenous and European culinary traditions merged, creating unique dishes that today are an essential part of the Mexican culinary identity and are known for their incredible diversity. From classic tacos al pastor to exotic esquites, the variety of dishes reflects the mix of indigenous, European, African and Asian influences. In addition, traditional drinks such as horchata water and tepache can be found, which perfectly complement snacks such as sopes, quesadillas and tostadas.

INDIA

India has a long history of street food culture and its major cities constantly vie for which one has the best-tasting dishes. But it's Mumbai that lays claim to one of the most popular street foods. The Bombay sandwich (also called the Bombay grilled sandwich) can be found for sale from sandwichwalas (street vendors) on nearly every street. Made with white bread, boiled potatoes, raw onion, tomato, cucumber, peppers and slathered with spicy green chutney, it's toasted over an open flame. Other favourite street foods include pani puri – hollow, fried dough balls with savoury fillings – and spicy vada pav, a deep-fried potato fritter (vada) sandwiched between a soft and fluffy bread (pav).

Street food is the perfect way for communities to integrate and socialise. Every town and city has their own take on street food culture, with multiple influences from a variety of sources. We take a look at some places with a burgeoning street food scene and check out the dishes that are popular with the locals.

TURKEY

It's no surprise that the meeting point between Europe and Asia is home to one of the most diverse and exciting street food scenes in the world. Beyond the staple dishes like doner kebabs or lahmacun, try the kumru, which is one of the most popular dishes with locals and features cheese, tomato and sujuk sausage served in a toasted, oval bun, or balik ekmek – a grilled fish (usually an oily fish like mackerel) sandwich with vegetables and often served directly from the boat that caught it.



SOUTH KOREA

Street food vendors have been setting up their stalls in and around South Korean markets since the Three Kingdoms period (57 BC – AD 935). Today, globally famous dishes like bibimbap, Korean fried chicken and kimchi are still very popular, while tteokbokki is one of the country's most enjoyed – chewy rice cakes served with chilli sauce (gochujang), fish cakes or boiled eggs. Sundae is another popular dish, but don't get it confused with the Western idea of one. In South Korea, sundae is a blood sausage, made with pig intestines stuffed with noodles and dipped in chilli sauce.



PHILIPPINES

Filipinos take great pride in their street food scene. Eating from a cart, while on the move, is truly a way of life across the archipelago – and they absolutely love their dishes deep fried! Filipino street food is affordable, fast and easy to find, with vendors moving their carts to where the crowds are. Some of the most popular street food dishes are taho, fish balls, lugaw, palabok and turon. To beat the Filipino heat, try the kaleidoscopic and refreshing frozen sweet treat halo-halo – it's the unofficial dessert of the Philippines.

INDONESIAN

WRITTEN BY
Gun Gun Handayana
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, Indonesia



CHEF *Gun Gun Handayana*
**SPOTLIGHTS INDONESIA'S MOST
INFLUENTIAL STREET FOOD DISHES.**

INFLUENCE

If you're a fan of bold flavours, smoky aromas and dishes that pack a punch, Indonesia's street food scene is worth exploring. From bustling night markets to food carts perched on the edges of tropical beaches, Indonesian street food captures the soul of its people: vibrant, diverse and deeply rooted in tradition. Every region brings something unique to the table.

In this list, Chef Gun Gun Handayana introduces you to some of Indonesia's most popular street foods that locals can't live without – serving as inspiration to chefs and food service professionals around the world.

SATAY (SATE)

Origin: Java, Indonesia
Grilled skewers of marinated meat – typically chicken, beef, or lamb – served with peanut sauce and sometimes rice cakes (lontong). Satay can be elevated using premium meats, innovative marinades and refined plating for a modern presentation.

BEEF RENDANG

Origin: West Sumatra, Indonesia
This slow-cooked dish, traditionally braised in coconut milk and spices, gains a deep, rich flavour ideal for fusion creations like tacos or sliders, making it perfect for street food-inspired or gourmet menus.

GADO-GADO

Origin: Jakarta, Java
An Indonesian salad of blanched vegetables, boiled eggs, tofu, tempeh, and peanut dressing, Gado-Gado is visually vibrant with a variety of textures. It can be tailored with seasonal vegetables or artisanal peanut sauces, ideal for an elevated plated salad.

MARTABAK

Origin: Java, Indonesia
This thick, savoury or sweet pancake is typically filled with minced meat and eggs (savoury) or chocolate and cheese (sweet). Gourmet versions feature exotic fillings, high-quality cheeses, or premium chocolate, perfect for tasting menus.



AYAM BETUTU

Origin: Bali, Indonesia
Whole chicken or duck, marinated in spices, wrapped in banana leaves and slow-cooked or steamed to tenderness. This aromatic dish can be presented elegantly with infused oils and microgreens, suited for upscale dining.

BAKSO

Origin: Java, Indonesia
A comforting meatball soup with noodles, tofu and greens, Bakso can be refined using wagyu or seafood meatballs, delicate noodles and garnishes, offering a sophisticated take on this classic.

NASI GORENG

Origin: Java, Indonesia
A popular Indonesian fried rice with sweet soy sauce, vegetables and meat, typically topped with a fried egg. Nasi Goreng can be transformed with truffle oil, premium meats and elegant presentation, creating a luxurious version of this beloved staple.

Satay skewers marinated
in a peanut sauce.



TRINITY SURF & TURF INDONESIAN SKEWER

Indonesian barbecue skewers, or satay, are a cherished street food that ranks just behind nasi goreng in popularity. Traditionally made with marinated beef seasoned with sweet soy sauce, cumin, coriander, garlic and lime juice, these skewers are grilled over charcoal to achieve a smoky flavour and caramelised finish. The marination process, which can take place overnight, allows the meat to absorb the rich spices and sweetness, enhancing its flavour. Satay is not only a dish but a cultural symbol, reflecting the warmth and togetherness of Indonesian cuisine while showcasing traditional cooking techniques that have been passed down through generations.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus

WITH TEMARI SUSHI

WITH GUN GUN HANDAYANA



“TO ELEVATE STREET FOOD, RESTAURANTS SHOULD FOCUS ON *authenticity*, HIGH-QUALITY INGREDIENTS, AND PRESENTATION.”

— GUN GUN HANDAYANA
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, Indonesia

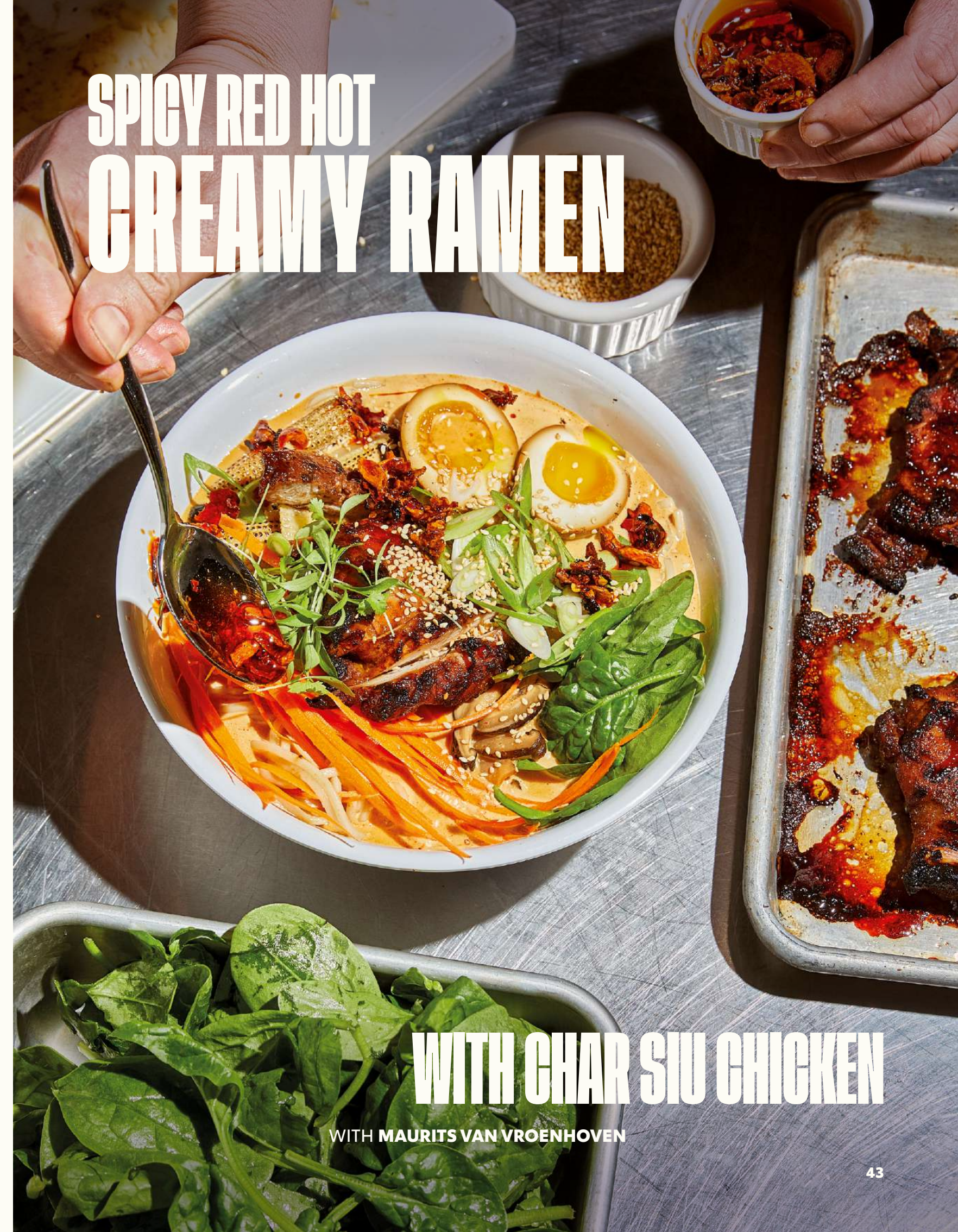
This bold, flavourful ramen dish features a layered broth crafted from roasted chicken stock and smoked mackerel stock, inspired by Japanese dashi. The stocks combine to create a deep umami base, elevated with creamy richness by whisking in mayonnaise. The noodles are adorned with fresh spinach, carrots, spring onions, a soft-cooked egg and tender char siu chicken marinated overnight in soy, garlic, ginger and hoisin before being grilled to perfection. A drizzle of crispy chilli oil adds heat, tying the dish together as an explosion of flavour and texture – comforting and satisfying.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



*"A high-impact,
EASY-TO-MAKE DISH
THAT'S STREET FOOD
ELEVATED TO ART."*

— MAURITS VAN VROENHOVEN
Global Lead Creative and Brand Development Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, the Netherlands



**SPICY RED HOT
CREAMY RAMEN**

WITH CHAR SIU CHICKEN

WITH MAURITS VAN VROENHOVEN

MR BEN SAN



WITH JOANNE LIMOANCO-GENDRANO & WESLEY BAY

A playful take on a Japanese sando inspired by the classic eggs Benedict. This creation features fluffy Hokkaido milk bread filled with layers of tamago-style eggs, cooked to a consistency to achieve a delicate soft texture. A miso sambal adds a spicy kick, while grilled pickled pineapple lends sweetness and acidity. Roasted king mushrooms contribute umami depth, prepared with soy for an extra layer of flavour. Topped with crispy bacon and piped citrus hollandaise, this dish embodies an on-the-go power meal, combining vibrant South East Asian flavours and simple techniques that highlight the beauty of street food culture. Although the preparation involves multiple components, such as layering and roasting, the assembly remains straightforward, allowing for an accessible yet flavourful dining experience.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



WESLEY BAY
Unilever Food Solutions,
Belgium



"STREET FOOD IS NOT ONLY *delicious*, IT FILLS PEOPLE UP AND EVOKES NOSTALGIA."

— **JOANNE LIMOANCO-GENDRANO**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, Gulf and Indian Ocean Islands

This dish is an innovative bao that fuses the flavours of duck à l'orange and Peking duck. It features a custom-made bao bun, shaped like a hot dog bun and infused with poppy seeds, aiming for a thinner, more delicate texture to hold more duck filling. The duck legs are brined with orange and ginger peels, then braised at a low temperature to ensure tenderness without losing bite. This versatile preparation can be transformed into multiple dishes, showcasing the adaptability and richness of street food.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



JOANNE LIMOANCO-GENDRANO
Unilever Food Solutions,
Gulf and Indian Ocean Islands



"STREET FOOD IS social. IT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER AND ENCOURAGES THEM TO TRY NEW THINGS."

— **WESLEY BAY**
Head Culinary Advisor
Unilever Food Solutions, Belgium

GRILLED DUCK CONFIT BAO



WITH JOANNE LIMOANCO-GENDRANO & WESLEY BAY

KOREAN-STYLE FISH CAKE SOUP



& TTEOKBOKKI

WITH YONGCHAN (LEO) KIM

Tteokbokki is a popular Korean street food made from rice cakes, fish cakes and gochujang (red chilli paste), known for its spicy-sweet flavour and loved by all ages. Eomuk-tang (fish cake soup), a warm broth-based dish with fish cakes, vegetables and sometimes seafood or meat, is especially popular in winter and often served alongside tteokbokki. These recipes can also be adapted into traditional Korean dishes: The tteokbokki sauce can be used to make dakbokkeumtang (Korean chicken stew) by adding chicken, potatoes and carrots, while the fish cake soup broth can serve as a base for beef radish soup by substituting beef for the fish cakes and adjusting seasonings.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



“TTEOKBOKKI... IS A *soul food* FOR KOREANS WHO ENJOY SPICY DISHES AND IS ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC KOREAN STREET FOODS.”

— YONGCHAN (LEO) KIM
Culinary Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, South Korea

These fish tacos come from Mexico's rich street food culture, particularly the Baja California region. The dish reflects a universal Mexican love for tacos as accessible and economical street food enjoyed across all social classes. They feature vibrant flavours, combining corn tortillas, fresh fish, vegetables and diverse sauces, creating a well-balanced, handheld "food pyramid". The dish celebrates Mexican culture through its ingredients and ease, offering a delicious and inclusive way to experience the complexity of regional flavours.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



KYLE JAKOBI
Unilever Food Solutions,
North America



"THIS DISH GIVES SPACE TO THE *exploration* OF DIFFERENT FLAVOURS AND CULTURES."

— **ANDRÉS CARDONA**
Corporate Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, North Latin America



BAJA CALIFORNIAN-STYLE FISH TACOS

WITH **ANDRÉS CARDONA & KYLE JAKOBI**



BORDERLESS CUISINE

This food trend transforms diverse food traditions into harmonious, innovative experiences. The movement is driven by *globalisation* and *migration* as well as a new generation of chefs aiming to honour their multicultural roots. These chefs are reimagining how different culinary influences can be combined to create unique yet authentic dishes that go beyond novelty.

**GLOBALLY,
TAHINI, MATCHA
GOCHUJANG AND SUMAC**

ARE THE INGREDIENTS
GROWING IN POPULARITY
MOST RAPIDLY.





Borderless Cuisine is more than a mash-up of flavours; it's a movement towards global integration in food. It really lays the foundation for a future where every dish celebrates cultural diversity. It's an integration of techniques, spice profiles and presentation styles that resonate with today's globally connected diner, including Gen Z who desire authentic, diverse and innovative experiences.

Key factors contributing to this trend include:

- Globalisation and migration expanding culinary knowledge and influence – research* shows that 68% of UK consumers say restaurants with adventurous global cuisines appeal to them, increasing to 77% with Gen Z
- A second generation of chefs honouring their cultural heritage
- Consumers seeking authentic experiences in food discovery – this desire is particularly strong among Gen Z, with 53%* classing trying completely new cuisines as a genuine treat
- Driving customer loyalty – 62%* of Gen Z say they are more likely to return to a restaurant where chefs experiment with modern takes on food from around the world
- Social currency of food – one in ten (11%) of Gen Z consumers say they would think less of someone for ordering 'basic' food
- Increased social media visibility of global cuisines
- A growing demand for meaningful storytelling behind these culinary creations
- Ongoing desire for food theatre – 46% of consumers would be more likely to return to a restaurant where you can see the chefs cooking, increasing to half (51%) of Gen Z

At the core of this movement is a desire to creatively and thoughtfully merge cuisines, combining traditional ingredients and techniques in ways that respect their origins. This trend paves the way for classic yet modernised dining experiences that offer not only bold flavours but also a deep sense of cultural significance.

The top techniques

Here are some of the techniques which are dominating this trend:

- Marination
- Brining
- Aging
- Sous-vide cooking
- Curing
- Steaming
- Caramelisation
- Smoking
- Fermenting

Borderless shopping list

Here are some of the ingredients which are dominating this trend:

- Miso
- Cured fish
- Kimchi
- Shiso
- Calamansi
- Pomegranate
- Mentaiko
- Aged soy sauces
- Pandan
- Gochujang
- Tahini
- Matcha
- Sumac
- Acai

ONE TO WATCH

MISO IS A MUST-HAVE AT THE MOMENT. CONSIDER INCORPORATING IT IN DISHES TO ATTRACT THE INTEREST OF DINERS.



THE KEY TO

BORDERLESS

CHEF *Alvaro Lima* CALLS UPON HIS OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AS A GUIDE TO BORDERLESS CUISINE.

Raised in Chicago, Chef Alvaro Lima has led a varied career in the world of food service. However, as a personal passion point, he enjoys cooking with bold Latin flavours and creating Modern Latin-inspired dishes – bringing together different international flavours in order to create harmonious dishes that draw from multiple culinary traditions.

WRITTEN BY

Alvaro Lima

Senior Corporate Chef

Unilever Food Solutions, North America

CUISINE

For Chef Alvaro, this approach serves as an opportunity to educate individuals about the similarities between different cuisines and global cooking techniques. “Whether you’re stewing meat Indian-style or you’re stewing it Mexican-style, you’re still stewing and using the same technique. Then you’re shredding the meat and folding it into a Mexican rice bowl or an Indian basmati – those ingredients are very interchangeable.”

From these points of commonality, it’s easier to spot ingredients or dishes that might easily blend together or to discover the techniques that might

enable this cross-pollination of different international flavours. From a consumer point of view, Chef Alvaro relishes the opportunity to introduce guests to new and brilliant combinations. “It’s important that diners become more aware of the different ingredients that are out there. It’s something new and exciting.”

When it comes to devising blended recipes, he recommends embracing an experimental method to help get the creative juices flowing rather than entering into the process with hard and fast rules. “The fun part for a chef is doing trial and error to see what works.

“It’s about taking things that the diner is comfortable with but they never would have thought of marrying together.”



To hear more from Chef Alvaro Lima on the Borderless Cuisine menu trend, visit ufs.com/futuremenus

It helps you step out of your comfort zone,” he explains. “When things don’t work, something different can still come out of it. You can tweak things here and there and end up with something that you never would have thought was going to work.”

While some kitchen teams might be nervous about adopting the principles of borderless cuisine, Chef Alvaro explains that chefs can step in and help to educate their staff on broader, more global food practices. “Even with cuisines they may have never cooked or tried before, there may be techniques that are familiar. Exposing a team to the ingredients and the culture is important, even if it’s through videos on YouTube or social media,” he says.

Chef Alvaro recalls bringing different cuisines together when creating birria ramen: a Latin-Japanese dish that he ideated after taking stock of the ingredients he had to hand. “I had stewed meat and a flavourful broth, so I wondered if I could fold in Japanese noodles to it and add scallions. I did this a couple of years ago where we married these things together. It wasn’t even fully intentional – birria was on the rise on menus and ramen was still doing extremely well in North American menus – but it worked out wonderfully.”

Understanding the hesitancy that some diners might have around trying new dishes, Chef Alvaro explains that fusing together aspects of well-known dishes can be a good entry point into the world of borderless cuisine. “With the example of ramen with birria, the diner might think, ‘Whoa, I like ramen and I like birria,

but I like birria in tacos and I like ramen with pork belly. Hey, let’s try it,” he says. “It’s about taking things that the diner is comfortable with but they never would have thought of marrying together. This can help open diners up and make them feel a little bit more comfortable.”

He believes borderless cuisine can be a way of sharing his Latin heritage while expressing his personal interests and sees it as an opportunity for chefs to share the depths and breadths of their own tastes and experiences. “With borderless cuisine, it tells a story of who the chef is. I can showcase what I grew up eating and what I still like to preach and share, but I can also introduce a new flavour,” he explains. “I love Japanese food, for example, so I can make a Mexican-influenced dish that is also very Japanese-influenced.”

He also thinks it’s important to combat misconceptions about borderless cuisine – namely that it isn’t cost-effective. He feels that borderless cuisine can actually help us minimise waste by unlocking new creative ways to reimagine how we use ingredients. “The big thing is being able to take sauces and produce and being able to repurpose them,” he explains. “Let’s say you make a dish and it doesn’t work out. Can you still build other dishes out of that? You can utilise just about everything, depending on the cooking technique, from that ingredient.”

Whether it’s introducing new combinations, finding ways to entice diners into trying new dishes or getting inventive with minimising waste, borderless cuisine promotes a sense of creative exploration.

Opposite page:
Chef Alvaro Lima,
Unilever Food Solutions,
North America.





COOKING BEYOND BORDERS

WITH CHEF *Santiago Lastra*





Chef Santiago Lastra is leading a new culinary moment that dissolves borders and rewrites tradition. At KOL – celebrated in The World’s 50 Best Restaurants since 2022 – he reimagines the vibrant flavours of his native Mexico using exclusively British ingredients. His cooking is as much about honouring heritage as it is about embracing innovation.

“I left Mexico when I was 18 and didn’t want to look back,” Chef Santiago recalls. “At the time, leaving Mexico was the definition of success. My dream was to learn from Europe’s top chefs – it never crossed my mind that my heritage or Mexican gastronomy was unique. It took 10 years for my perspective to shift.

That realisation came while working at the Nordic Food Lab in Copenhagen. There, Chef Santiago explored how to make tortillas using Scandinavian grains and nixtamalization – the traditional Mexican technique of cooking corn with calcium hydroxide. “I discovered how I could get Mexican flavours even without specific Mexican ingredients. That opened my eyes and made me realise how special it was to be Mexican and to be able to represent my country by serving Mexican food outside Mexico.”

Local ingredients for Mexican flavours

In Mexico, people cook with what they have around them; they don’t import ingredients. At KOL, I imagine the UK as an island that’s part of Mexico, creating Mexican flavours using only British ingredients. Each dish has a Mexican narrative or incorporates traditional techniques, like cooking ingredients wrapped in leaves. Everything is new, but also traditional.

We chefs like to think we can create tradition in our lifetime, but it takes a lot of time and effort to create something that is even equally as good as tradition. Just think – developing the first taco took at least 3,000 years. That doesn’t mean we shouldn’t try. At KOL, we’re building a culinary language and a way of working that, someday, could become tradition. Hopefully our process will become an easier and more natural thing to do.

The secret behind the cuisine

During my travels across Mexico, I discovered that Mexican food is made not for fuel, but for pure pleasure. So for the past decade I have been obsessed by the science behind that pleasure and how it influences both the palate and the mind. I return to Mexico multiple times a year, exploring taquerias, villages, markets and indigenous communities. Each visit deepens my understanding of what makes Mexican cuisine so special, helping me represent my country and its flavours in the best way possible.

Mexican food is explosive, yet perfectly balanced. It engages every part of the palate. Take the taco, for example: the crunch of the tortilla, the dumpling-like softness, the creaminess of the salsa and the chewiness of the meat. It’s everything you can ask for, a complete bomb of sweet, alkaline, sour, umami, spicy and aromatic. Everything you can ask for in just three bites. And that’s just street food. Mole sauces can contain up to 70 ingredients – ash, chocolate, vegetables, plantains, chillies, nuts and seeds – all layered to achieve maximum flavour complexity.

One of the most elegant things you can eat in Mexico – and one of my favourite dishes ever – is escamoles, known as Mexican caviar. It’s only available in late spring, as it’s made from the eggs of queen ants harvested from agave cacti. These delicate eggs are sautéed in butter with shallots and served with a tortilla, avocado and salsa. It’s just divine.

The craft of flavour

At KOL, we reimagined escamoles by steaming and cooking pine nuts until they softened into a jelly-like texture, mimicking the delicacy of ant eggs. We paired this with truffle, mushrooms and a veal and bone marrow stock. To complete the dish, we added a sprinkle of Formica rufa ants from Kent, whose sour flavour resembles lemon, as a nod to the queen ants from Mexico.

Creating dishes like this asks for a meticulous analysis of flavours. You really have to break them down and see them as flavour maps in order to seek alternatives. If I need to replace mango, for example, I look for something equally sweet, yellow and floral in the UK. That could be elderflower for the floral note – which we make into a syrup. Squash kombucha brings the right acidity and colour, or in summer, yellow bell pepper. Together, they become an ice cream that tastes remarkably like mango.



DOUGH REVIVAL

Developed by three *UFS* chefs from around the globe – Eric Chua (Singapore), Thaís Gimenez (Brazil) and James Brown (United Kingdom and Ireland) – this innovative dish brings the core element of Borderless Cuisine to life, celebrating the interconnectedness of global cultures through food and allowing chefs to experiment and create something unique. Chef Eric focuses on an iconic Singapore chilli crab sauce for dipping, addressing the move to fast-paced eating. Chef Thaís introduces deep-fried dough, topped with sumac and accompanied with two delicious dips – Brazilian moqueca and a smoky açaí-bbq dip made with the traditional super berry. They are the perfect accompaniment to all savoury dishes. Chef James adds British flair by glazing the dough balls and offering inventive dips like a rarebit espuma and a cottage pie mix, showcasing how the dish can unite different cultures and culinary techniques.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus

WITH JAMES BROWN, ERIC CHUA & THAÍS GIMENEZ



JAMES BROWN
Unilever Food Solutions,
UK & Ireland



ERIC CHUA
Unilever Food Solutions,
South East Asia
& South Asia



“PIZZA IS THE MOST *inclusive* DISH THAT WAS EVER CREATED.”

— **THAÍS GIMENEZ**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, Brazil

This collaborative dish by chefs René-Noel Schiemer and Evert Vermandel creatively blends German and Asian influences, showcasing a roasted half-chicken served with a ramen-style noodle salad. Chef René-Noel emphasises the fusion of flavours, integrating paprika into the ramen salad. Chef Evert notes the importance of contrasting flavours and global influences, ultimately transforming the traditional chicken dish into a trendy salad that reflects a borderless culinary approach.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus

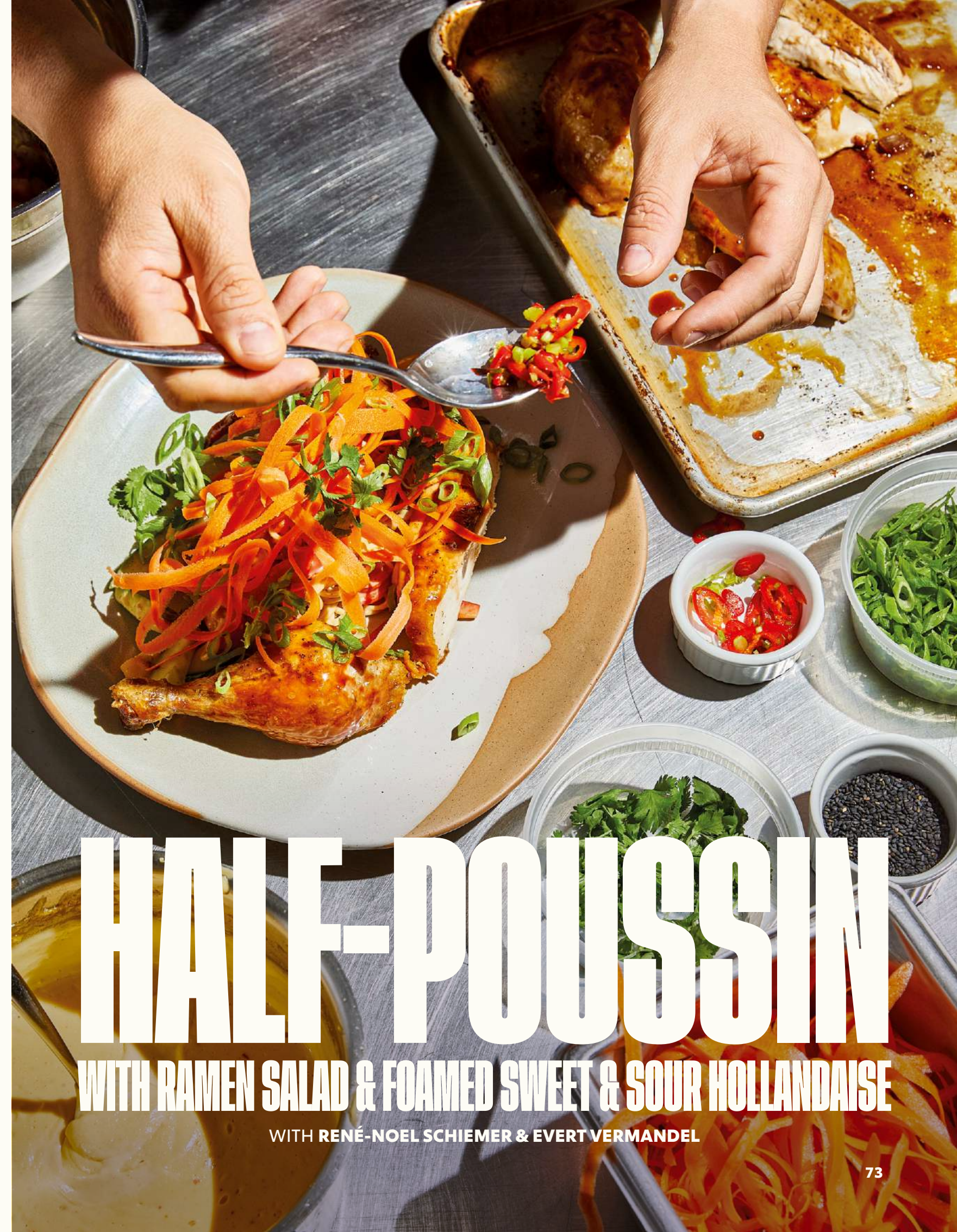


EVERT VERMANDEL
Unilever Food Solutions,
the Netherlands



**“BE BOLD IN COMBINING
classic CONCEPTS WITH
TRENDY TECHNIQUES AND
INGREDIENTS INSPIRED
BY OTHER CUISINES.”**

— **RENÉ-NOEL SCHIEMER**
Deputy Head of Culinary Consulting
Unilever Food Solutions, Germany



HALF-POUSSIN

WITH RAMEN SALAD & FOAMED SWEET & SOUR HOLLANDAISE

WITH RENÉ-NOEL SCHIEMER & EVERT VERMANDEL

FLAME-BROILED SKEWERED HERRING WITH MANGO PICO & ROUILLE



WITH ALVARO LIMA,
FRANK JAKOBSEN & KEES VAN ERP

This herring dish creatively combines Nordic and Latin flavours, showcasing a unique tropical pico de gallo. Chef Alvaro Lima's twist on the traditional salsa incorporates mango for a balance of sweetness and acidity, enhancing the beautifully charred herring that is lightly pickled and grilled. Chef Frank Jakobsen adds a Nordic flair through a dry-pickling technique, using vinegar powder and sugar, which transforms the herring into a semi-raw delicacy. This fusion highlights the versatility of herring while celebrating cultural culinary traditions.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



KEES VAN ERP
Unilever Food Solutions



FRANK JAKOBSEN
Unilever Food Solutions,
Denmark



**"IT'S A CELEBRATION
OF CULTURES,
BLENDING COMFORT
AND *curiosity* IN
EVERY DISH."**

— ALVARO LIMA
Senior Corporate Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, North America



This onion smashed burger, crafted by chefs Brandon Collins and Chris Zhong, beautifully blends American and Chinese culinary traditions. The innovative dish features a juicy hamburger patty, expertly smashed for a perfect texture, topped with thinly sliced onions and aged cheddar cheese. To elevate the classic flavours, an avocado and Chinese green chilli sauce adds a unique twist, marrying the comfort of an American favourite with vibrant Chinese influences. This burger exemplifies the concept of borderless cuisine, illustrating how diverse flavours and techniques can come together to create a harmonious dining experience.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



CHRIS ZHONG
Unilever Food Solutions,
China



**"IT'S MARRYING THE
flavours OF CHINESE
FOOD WITH THE
QUINTESSENTIAL
AMERICAN DISH."**

— **BRANDON COLLINS**
Corporate Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, North America



THE BORDERLESS BURGER

WITH BRANDON COLLINS & CHRIS ZHONG

BORDERLESS CUISINE

CRISPY



LASAGNE

WITH GIUSEPPE BUSCICCHIO,
ANDREAS WILLINER & JIMENA SOLIS

This innovative pasta dish reimagines lasagne by blending the rich culinary traditions of Argentina, Italy and Switzerland. At the heart of this creation is ossobuco brasato, prepared in an authentic Argentinian style with tender meat, vibrant vegetables and aromatic wine. The lasagne features fresh Italian pasta infused with saffron for a stunning golden hue, fried to enhance texture. Complementing this is a luxurious Parmesan cream, along with the distinct flavour of cavolo nero, a Tuscan black cabbage and a touch of cocoa bean, resulting in a unique blend that celebrates diverse global ingredients.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



JIMENA SOLIS
Unilever Food Solutions,
Argentina, Uruguay
and Paraguay



ANDREAS WILLINER
Unilever Food Solutions,
Switzerland



**"TOGETHER WE'RE
CREATING A NEW
DISH, A NEW
PROPOSITION
AND A NEW *vision.*"**

— **GIUSEPPE BUSCICCHIO**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, Italy

This chicken and waffle dish is a creative reimagining of a classic comfort food, blending global influences to elevate both flavour and texture. The waffles are prepared using a classic waffle iron for a crisp, golden exterior that contrasts with the tender, flavourful chicken. The chicken is marinated with Thai-inspired ingredients, adding complexity and a hint of spice. This pairing creates a dynamic balance of sweet, savoury and umami flavours, delivering an unexpected twist on the familiar. The dish exemplifies the appeal of borderless cuisine, transforming a well-loved concept into an engaging and memorable dining experience.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



EVERT VERMANDEL
Unilever Food Solutions,
the Netherlands



"THIS CHICKEN ISN'T JUST CRISPY: IT'S LAYERED WITH *bold* THAI FLAVOURS, COMPLEMENTED BY A CREATIVE BLEND OF KOREAN AND WESTERN INFLUENCES."

— **JIRAROJ NAVANUKROH**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, Thailand

SPICY ASIAN-GLAZED FRIED CHICKEN & WAFFLES WITH MAPLE MAYONNAISE



WITH **JIRAROJ NAVANUKROH**
& **EVERT VERMANDEL**

MEXICAN CHILI CHARRED OCTOPUS,

CAVOLO NERO & RED WINE SAUCE

WITH KEES VAN ERP, ALVARO LIMA & FRANK JAKOBSEN

This octopus dish combines traditional techniques with bold global flavours, starting with tender marination inspired by Central America and finishing with grilling to achieve a smoky, caramelised depth. It's paired with a classic French red wine sauce, enriched by the octopus cooking stock and chicken bouillon, creating a harmonious blend of richness and complexity. This approach exemplifies the creative possibilities of combining diverse culinary traditions into one cohesive and exciting dish.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



ALVARO LIMA
Unilever Food Solutions,
North America



FRANK JAKOBSEN
Unilever Food Solutions,
Denmark



"A classic **RED WINE SAUCE TIES THE BOLD GLOBAL FLAVOURS TOGETHER.**"

— **KEES VAN ERP**
Global Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions

This recipe creatively blends flavours and techniques from both Korean and Western culinary traditions. The dish features a delicate combination of sustainable white fish, prawns and scallops bound together with Hellmann's Professional Mayonnaise for a smooth, rich texture. This fusion, enhanced with fresh parsley and a hint of red chilli, is shaped into patties and pan-fried to golden perfection. The dish is finished with a spicy-sweet Gochujang Hollandaise, offering a Western twist on a traditional Korean element. This reflects the dynamic global influences that chefs are harnessing today, while staying true to the authenticity and depth of both cultures.

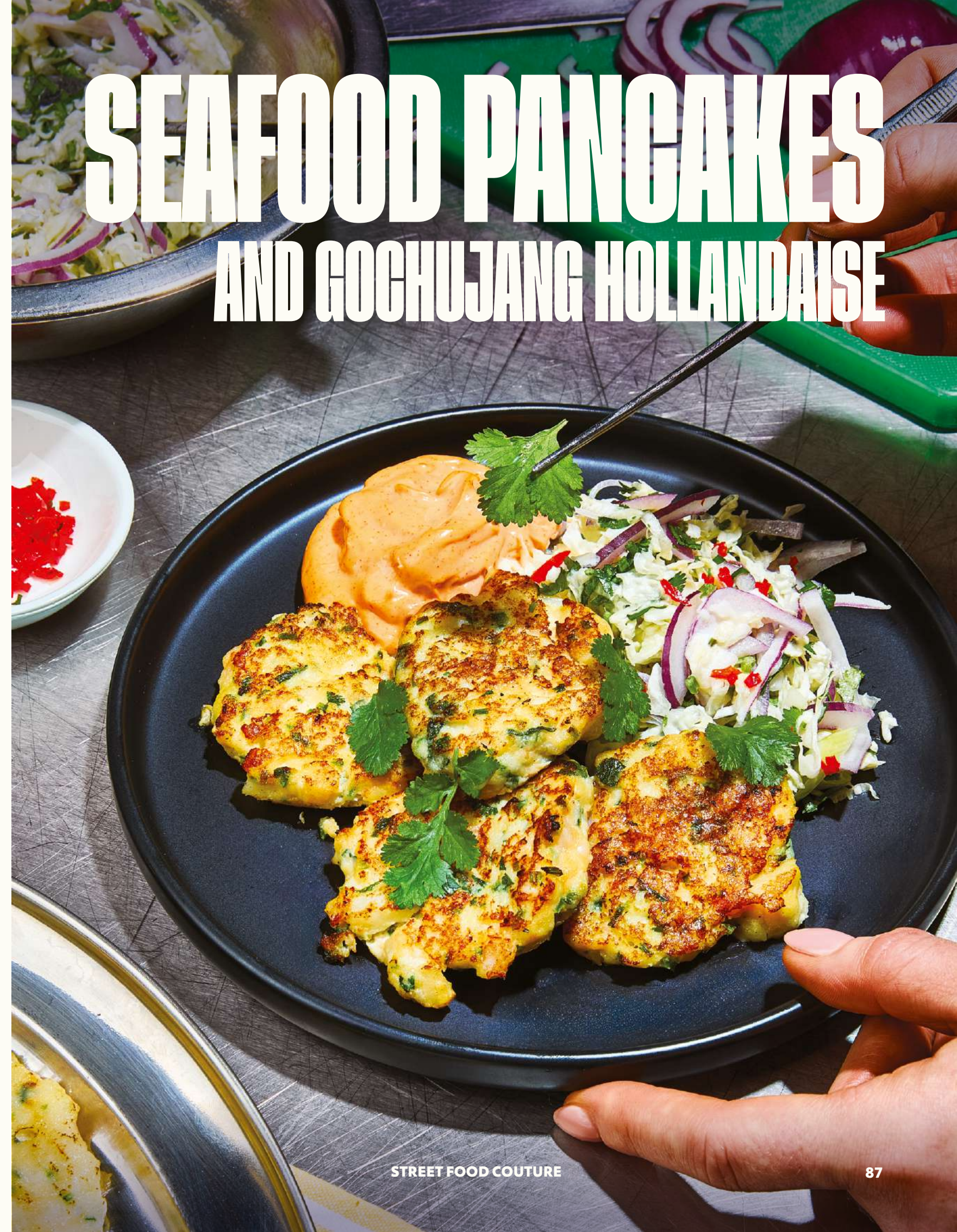
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"BLENDING THE RICH, BOLD FLAVOURS OF KOREA WITH THE SIMPLICITY AND FRESHNESS OF WESTERN TECHNIQUES CELEBRATES THE *beauty* OF CROSS-CULTURAL CUISINE."

— **JAMES BROWN**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

SEAFOOD PANGAKES AND GOCHUJANG HOLLANDAISE





RECIPE FOR A POSITIVE KITCHEN

**LEADING THE WAY
TOWARDS A POSITIVE
KITCHEN CULTURE
WITH CHEF *Asma Khan.***

Restaurant kitchen culture has long been associated with gruelling hours, strict hierarchy and abusive language. That would come to an immediate end if it were up to Asma Khan, chef and founder of Darjeeling Express, an all-female Indian restaurant in London. The activist and disruptor is on a mission to revolutionise the way kitchens operate – focusing not just on the food, but on the people who make it. Building communities and creating an environment where every person is valued, respected and empowered. Discover the positive kitchen.

At Darjeeling Express, I wanted to do things differently. We are a sisterhood. We look different and we come from different traditions, but we operate as a tribe. A group of women who cook together and who believe in each other. Women have always been at the centre of every culinary tradition, yet are often sidelined in professional kitchens. They feel underrepresented, isolated and disadvantaged. That is a massive issue. They should be made to feel welcome, equal, safe and that the doors are open for them to one day progress to head chef.

The hospitality business is run by people of all backgrounds, yet they are often not respected. But if you want to be successful, you need everyone in your team to feel valued. Restaurant owners should nourish their staff emotionally, physically and mentally. The idea that you have to endure abuse because of the pressures of the kitchen is absurd. If you can't handle the pressure, you need to step back and breathe. It's not a reason to mistreat others. People need to be able to play sports, to go out, to see a film, to meet their friends and to spend time with their cats.

We live in a revolutionary time of change within the industry. We're no longer talking about chefs doing molecular cuisine; we are talking about taking care of your staff.

Your priority is not the bottom line, the Michelin stars or the good reviews. It's the mental health of your own team. Look after them first, then look after your customers. The greatest legacy of our generation should be that we changed the industry for the next generation.

“The greatest legacy of our generation should be that we changed the industry for the next generation.”



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

If you build a really good dish, everything has to be in equal proportion. The same goes for your team. Every kitchen should have an emphasis on diversity. Diversity not just regarding skin colour, but also gender and sexuality. You must have people of every kind of background. Through food, conversations and mutual respect you can build bridges. Start a conversation with your team about what they need to feel equal. Make them feel their opinion matters. That is how diversity will be successful.



JUSTICE

Toxic work environments have been normalised in the restaurant industry for far too long. As many as one in four chefs have suffered physical abuse. I believe a kitchen should be a place where you feel safe. Owners, chefs and managers are responsible for setting up a framework of respect and equality. You need to have policies in place that oppose bullying, that state there is zero tolerance of racism and zero tolerance of anyone being touched against their consent.



FAIRNESS

As many as 74% of chefs feel sleep deprived to the point of exhaustion and 53% feel pushed to breaking point. People should get fair treatment and fair pay. That starts with shorter shifts and more reasonable working hours. Staff should be given the time to rest, pursue their personal passions and live balanced lives. Exhausted people make bad decisions, which only leads to poor outcomes.



EMPATHY AND COMMUNITY

Create an environment where staff feel supported, respected and empowered. That can be done by celebrating everyone's birthday, holidays of all cultures, or by simply taking the team out for ice cream on a hot day. Those small gestures foster connections and break down barriers. By promoting understanding and celebrating diversity, chefs and kitchen staff can create a space where everyone feels seen and valued.



MODERNISED COMFORT FOOD

Comfort food is evolving, with modern twists that reflect the chef's heritage and cultural influences. Today, it's about more than nostalgia – it's storytelling through personal connections to the dish. Chefs are revitalising classic, rustic recipes with contemporary flair, preserving their *authenticity* while creating fresh, unique dining experiences. This modern comfort food still feels familiar yet excites with something new!

THE USE OF TRADITIONAL YOGHURT

IS HEAVILY IMPACTING THIS TREND. IT CAN BE UTILISED IN MANY DISHES AS A LIGHTER YET STILL COMFORTING ALTERNATIVE TO CREAM.



Previous page:
Dan dan noodles are
trending globally.



Key factors driving this trend, including:

- Consumer desire for tradition and innovation - research shows that while diners still crave the reassurance of comfort food, with a desire for familiarity in uncertain times, they're also looking for a twist - something that surprises and delights
- Modernised Comfort Food meets that need by balancing tradition with contemporary creativity, which resonates with both nostalgic and forward-thinking diners
- Embracing this trend offers operators a strategic advantage by appealing to a wide audience looking for fresh culinary experiences
- Research* highlights that a key red flag for British diners is the menu not being exciting enough, with 34% of consumers saying this would make them less likely to book a restaurant
- Gen Z are more likely to reject restaurants with just British food. Going to a restaurant that revives old classic meals from around the world with a modern twist tops the list of genuine treats for Gen Z - with research revealing that 58%* describe it as a treat
- Today's operational challenges - rising costs, labour shortages, supply issues and the demand for efficiency are driving the need to adapt classic recipes to meet today's tastes
- Wider culinary influences and cooking styles in today's kitchens - Gen Z chefs largely have more diverse culinary training in a range of food service types, helping them to quickly becoming generalists and introduce new cooking styles
- Chefs are embracing their culinary and culture heritage first and foremost - they are reviving traditional and micro-regional recipes, which is helping to preserve culinary heritage by using authentic techniques and ingredients
- Diners are continuing to seek depth and authenticity in their food experiences which these modern twists on classics help satisfy with dishes that reflect stories of identity, heritage and evolution
- Driving customer loyalty - 60%* of Gen Z are more likely to return to a restaurant where chefs blend food from different cultures

Modernised Comfort Food is a continually evolving trend that shows no signs of slowing and is about taking diners on safe adventures with dishes that offer a fusion of tradition and innovation.

With increased macro-environment pressures, customers are naturally seeking foods that are deeply nourishing for the soul, covering everything from nostalgic dishes that feel comforting and safe, to recipes familiar to chef heritage and regional classics.

This trend is about revisiting and reinterpreting the classic dishes that evoke warmth and comfort (the food that feels like a hug to your customers) with thoughtful creativity and operational finesse, giving dishes a fresh spin to help meet the ever-evolving needs of today's diverse customer base.

Modernised Comfort Food respects the soul of comfort food while adding new layers of flavour and texture that really appeals to customers, including key customer group Gen Z, who value both the familiarity of home and the excitement of innovation.

While this trend is about chefs applying modern twists and new ingredients to dishes, maintaining the authenticity of the cuisine and dish remains essential. It's about blending quality British produce with authentic ingredients from the cuisine inspiring the new dimension of the dish.

In kitchens this means reworking traditional recipes by using innovative techniques and new ingredients. For example, a Lamb Shank Fatteh transforms a classic comfort dish by pairing slow-cooked lamb with modern elements like mushroom freekeh duxelles and a delicate puff pastry. Or a classic British pie, lasagne or burger can be given a modern twist with the introduction of exciting ingredients from around the globe.

Success with Modernised Comfort Food dishes is about striking the perfect balance between creativity and practicality - elevating every dish component from sourcing to presentation while maintaining consistency and efficiency during service.

ONE TO WATCH

THE POPULARITY OF FILIPINO CUISINE – HEARTY, COMFORTING AND PACKED WITH BOLD FLAVOURS – IS RISING. DISHES LIKE ADOBO, SINIGANG AND LECHON ARE BEING REVITALISED WITH LIGHTER PREPARATION TECHNIQUES AND CREATIVE PRESENTATION.



STORY TIME

WHEN PLANNING NEW MENUS AND SPECIALS, CONSIDER WHAT STORY A DISH TELLS, HIGHLIGHTING PERSONAL CONNECTIONS OF THE CHEF TO THE DISH AND BRING THESE TO LIFE IN YOUR MARKETING, INCLUDING SOCIAL MEDIA

DRIVING GEN Z LOYALTY

RESTAURANTS WHICH EXPERIMENT WITH MODERN TAKES ON FOOD FROM AROUND THE WORLD WOULD MAKE 62%* OF GEN Z MORE LIKELY TO RETURN

The top techniques in this trend:

Here are some of the techniques that are dominating this trend:

- Wood-fire cooking
- Stewing
- Infusion
- Slow cooking
- Charcoal grilling
- Marination
- Deep-frying
- Escabeche
- Pickling
- Preserving

Modernised Comfort Food dishes:

Here are some of the dishes that perfectly capture this trend:

- Burgers
- Mac and cheese
- Pies
- Sandwiches
- Fried chicken
- Lasagne
- Chilli
- Stews
- Soup
- Pancakes
- Hashes
- Risotto
- Waffles
- Salads



IDENTITY THROUGH FOOD

HOW FOOD CONNECTS
GEN Z AND MILLENNIALS
TO IDENTITY AND *heritage.*

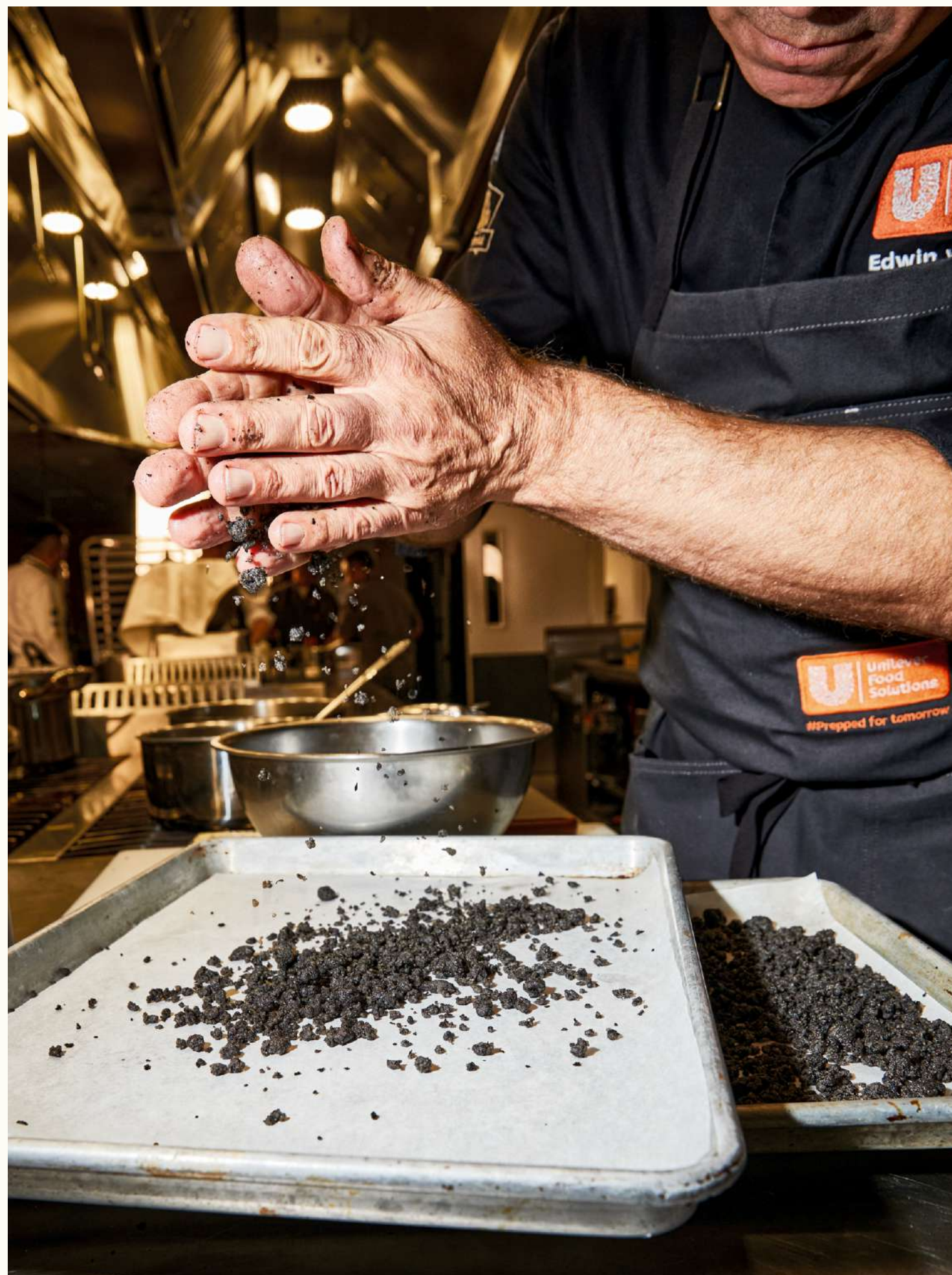
WRITTEN BY
Angela Hui



Have you ever paused to reflect on the story behind the dishes you create? Perhaps you've considered the origins of a key spice used in your kitchen or wondered about the history of a family recipe that inspires your menu. As a chef or restaurant owner, understanding the roots of food can transform your kitchen into a place that does more than just prepare meals; it can be a classroom to teach cultural history or a stage for celebrating dishes.

From age-old recipes passed down through generations to regional dishes reinvented with modern twists, Gen Z and Millennials see food as more than sustenance. Today's generation have some of the most adventurous palates shaped by early exposure to diverse flavours; they embrace food that excites the senses, learn about different cultures and dive into forgotten traditions that connect them to the past. Using food as a bridge between cultural heritage and modern life, they're rethinking how they consume food, engaging with culinary content in books and online and finding cooking inspiration in new ways. Food is a crux for storytelling – a chance to reconnect with roots, a space to explore identity and a way to foster a sense of community.

In 2018, Chris Ying, former editor of the cult indie food magazine *Lucky Peach*, explored this notion in the book *You and I Eat the Same*, highlighting the countless ways food and cooking connect us while also showing the stark differences and complexities of eating. For those working in the hospitality industry, this presents an opportunity to delve deeper into food and how it can be a connector, bridge cultural divides and launch conversations. Who gets to cook what and why? How can dishes reflect stories of identity, heritage and evolution? What message do you want to convey with your ingredients and cooking techniques? By being intentional with these choices, you create dishes that can resonate on a deeper level with customers.



“The next time you test a new recipe, plan a menu or introduce a special, consider what story it tells. Does it highlight forgotten traditions?”

Opposite page:
Chef Edwin Van
Gent prepares olive
crumble for his dish.

Consider how chefs like Joké Bakare, whose restaurant was the first in the UK run by a black female chef to win a Michelin star, approach this. Her restaurant, Chishuru, in London, uses hard-to-find West African ingredients alongside local British produce. Bakare goes that extra step to educate and inspire. “Food is multi-layered and anchors us to culture and tradition,” she says. Her approach challenges preconceptions and invites diners to explore the breadth and depth of West African cuisine in a new light, paving the way for a more nuanced understanding. “Food from the sub-Saharan continent often lacks technique and finesse – it’s all very one-pot. I want people who come to Chishuru for the first time to discover the techniques we use. It might look simple, but it’s deceptive.”

The desire for meaningful culinary experiences is evident in the dining habits of Gen Z and Millennials. Research from the restaurant-reservation platform Seven Rooms highlights that 34% of UK consumers in this demographic dine out at least three times a month. They’re not just looking for the next trend or the latest restaurant opening; they seek ‘third places’ outside home and work to connect and unwind. Factors such as convenience, personalisation and value when dining

out are considered the most important. Customers are usually loyal to their favourite brands and restaurants; they trust them and are willing to pay more for elevated experiences. What’s more, some of the biggest themes in restaurant marketing are related to authenticity, community connection, genuine flavours and inclusive spaces that celebrate diversity. In London, this shift is evident in places like Chishuru.

“The food world is finally sitting up and taking notice, but there’s a long way to go. It’s very important for me to hold on to the tradition of the food that I grew up with. In West African food, there’s not a lot of documentation on our food,” Bakare explains. “I want to be an agent of preservation while embracing modernity, ensuring these traditions endure for the next generation.”

This representation and diversity resonates strongly with younger diners and extends beyond the plate and into popular media. The internet has made it easier than ever to learn how to cook and discover places to eat. YouTube channels offer not only recipes and restaurant recommendations but also in-depth explorations of food origins and history. Meanwhile, social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok

allow home cooks, farmers, chefs, food and drink brands, restaurant groups and food writers to share their stories directly with audiences, bypassing traditional media. This shift has created opportunities for both amateur and professional cooks to share their culinary traditions with the world.

Embracing this rise in identity-driven cuisine presents a unique opportunity. You’re not just serving food – you’re crafting a memorable experience that educates and connects. In this age of authenticity, diners value intentionality and purpose. They want to know what they’re eating, the journey from farm to table and the stories behind the hands that made the food and feel that their meal is part of a larger cultural narrative. By offering context, stories and history, you invite your guests into a shared journey of discovery. The next time you test a new recipe, plan a menu or introduce a special, consider what story it tells. Does it highlight forgotten traditions? Does it connect to your heritage or personal experiences? Let your food tell the story of your roots, inspirations and vision for the future. In doing so, your restaurant becomes not just a place to eat but a destination for cultural exploration and meaningful dining.



GRILLED FISH AND CHIPS

This recipe perfectly embodies the Modernised Comfort Food trend by reimagining the classic dish with a fresh, contemporary twist. While the core elements remain familiar – tender fish and crispy chips – the use of grilling instead of frying offers a lighter, healthier version of the beloved comfort food. This modern approach highlights the chef’s ability to maintain authenticity while adding personal touches, such as seasoning with unique marinades or incorporating local, sustainable ingredients. This dish is a prime example of how comfort food can evolve, offering familiar warmth with a modern flair that invites diners to experience tradition in a new light.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



“BY GRILLING INSTEAD OF FRYING, WE PRESERVE THE COMFORT OF THIS CLASSIC WHILE GIVING IT A LIGHTER, MORE *vibrant* TWIST.”

— **AUDREY CRONE**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

The Beef & Guinness Smash Burger is a perfect representation of the Modernised Comfort Food trend, blending hearty tradition with bold, innovative twists. Rooted in classic comfort, the smash burger elevates familiar flavours by incorporating Guinness, adding depth and richness to the beef patty while maintaining the satisfying simplicity of a burger. The use of locally sourced, high-quality ingredients brings a personal touch. It's a modern take on a rustic favourite, delivering both nostalgia and surprise in every mouthful.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



"THE GUINNESS BRINGS A RICH DEPTH TO THE BEEF, TRANSFORMING A SIMPLE BURGER INTO SOMETHING WITH REAL *character.*"

— **AUDREY CRONE**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

BEEF & GUINNESS SMASH BURGER



FISH FINGER SANDWICH & KIMCHI MAYO



While the fish finger sandwich is a beloved childhood classic, the addition of kimchi mayo introduces a bold, tangy kick, reflecting global culinary influences. The kimchi, with its fermented depth, brings an unexpected twist that plays off the familiar crispiness of the fish fingers, giving the dish a contemporary edge. This fusion of nostalgia and innovation blends comforting, familiar flavours with exciting new ingredients, making the dish feel both nostalgic and refreshingly modern at the same time. It's a perfect example of how chefs are reinterpreting comfort food to tell a new story, one that's full of flavour and fresh perspective.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



"THE CREAMY, SPICY KICK OF KIMCHI MAYO ADDS A NEW LAYER OF FLAVOUR TO A *nostalgic* FAVOURITE."

— **JAMES BROWN**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

This dish reimagines the traditional comfort of a crispy, juicy chicken burger by incorporating the flavours and techniques of Japanese karaage. The tender, seasoned chicken is coated in a light batter and served in a soft, slightly toasted bun, bringing a comforting sense of familiarity. However, the addition of bold aromatic ingredients like ginger, soy and sake adds a fresh twist, transforming simple comfort food into a more elevated, exciting experience.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



“BY TAKING THE COMFORTING ESSENCE OF A CLASSIC CHICKEN BURGER AND ADDING THE BOLD FLAVOURS OF KARAAGE, I WANTED TO CREATE A DISH THAT FEELS BOTH NOSTALGIC AND *exciting*.”

— **JAMES BROWN**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

KARAAGE CHICKEN BURGER

DINER DESIGNED

Dining is moving beyond generic customisation to more interactive, personalised experiences, where diners take part in meal creation and modification. The *Diner Designed* menu trend focuses on making dining immersive and multisensory and offering unique, value-added experiences.



55%

INCREASE IN SEARCH RESULTS FOR GRILL-IT-YOURSELF KOREAN BBQ – HIGHLIGHTING A SHIFT TOWARDS UNIQUE, PERSONALISED DINING EXPERIENCES.



Key factors are driving this trend, including:

- The growing desire for personalised, engaging and immersive dining experiences, particularly by Millennials and Gen Z
- Gen Z's preference for curated choices and social-media-worthy moments – they want hands on engagement and to be co-creators of their meal. They want dining experiences to be interactive, personalised, unique, memorable and shareable on social media
- Shareability of experience is key to get right given Gen Z's preference to trust word-of-mouth (59%)*, TikTok (43%) or Instagram (32%) over Google search when finding new places to eat
- The key Gen Z customer group are also twice less likely (43%)* than UK consumers overall to think it's rude to use your phone when out for a meal
- Impact of technological advancements - Augmented Reality and Artificial Intelligence (AR, AI) are reshaping how meals are experienced by UK diners
- AR can create interactive menus to help diners engage all their senses and offer a more immersive and memorable experience
- AI is driving data enabled hyper-personalised dining interactions, with tailored recommendations based on past preferences, which offers a more customised experience
- Diners seeking communal experiences beyond traditional sharing platters
- Taboo around fussy eating is fading away – research* shows that only 41% of UK consumers (and just 30% of Gen Z) are likely to judge someone negatively for ordering lots of modifications to their meal

Previous page:
Traditional bibimbap
is easily modifiable
for the diner.

This trend reflects a shift towards deeper engagement in dining by UK consumers, where personalisation and interaction are key, which is being driven by continually evolving tech and diners' increasing demand for more meaningful and shared experiences.

While tech and food have grown increasingly intertwined in recent years, the relationship is now evolving faster than ever, particularly through digitally native Gen Z's strong desire for more menu interactivity. Research* shows that one in ten Gen Z consumers will only go to UK restaurants where they can customise dishes and a further 37% are more likely to go to restaurants with customisation options. Nearly half of Gen Z (45%) also see 'having it their way' as a genuine treat.

But Diner Designed isn't just about food; it's about creating experiences that forge strong emotional connections, which today's diners are eager to share and talk about. It's about transforming dining from a passive act into an engaging, interactive, multisensory journey for customers which has them returning and telling their friends about.

This trend obviously has a big impact for chefs and operators around menu creation and kitchen processes, with a need to balance offering menu options that allow diners to tailor elements of their dish with retaining the menu efficiencies and dish consistency and quality essential to ongoing business success. Food service professionals can look to smart tech driven kitchen appliances, including AI, to help streamline operations and reduce waste.

Delivery ideas also include prepping ingredients in advance for build-your-own stations an tableside dish customisation or creation for some dishes as part of the dish experience which also creates memorable theatre for customers.

DRIVING LOYALTY

62%* OF GEN Z ARE MORE LIKELY TO RETURN TO A RESTAURANT THAT ENCOURAGES CUSTOMISATION

DINER DESIGNED BILLS

CUSTOMERS ARE INCREASINGLY LOOKING FOR CUSTOMISED BILLS TOO – NEARLY HALF OF UK CONSUMERS (47%) SAY YOU SHOULD JUST PAY FOR WHAT YOU ORDERED, INCREASING TO TWO THIRDS (66%) OF GEN Z





The top techniques dominating this trend:

- Build your own
- Select your own
- Sharing mains
- Live prep
- Foams, espumas and aerated sauces
- Pureeing
- 3D printing
- Table-side cooking
- Flash freezing
- Fermentation
- Blowtorching
- Barbecue
- Skilleting
- Grilling – including grill it yourself
- Carving
- Finishing

Key ingredients for the Diner Designed menu trend:

- Nuts
- Beetroot
- Chocolate
- Lemon
- Saffron
- Mustard
- BBQ meats
- Fish, including shellfish
- Gelatin
- Ice cream
- Artisanal pasta
- Cheese
- Grains
- Spices
- Mushrooms

ONE TO WATCH

TECH THAT OFFERS HIGHLY TAILORED, MULTISENSORY DINING EXPERIENCES THAT GO BEYOND TASTE AND HELP INCORPORATE VISUAL, AUDITORY AND TACTILE ELEMENTS

A PLAN FOR PERSONALISATION



Eric Chua **UFS EXECUTIVE CHEF IN SINGAPORE, VIETNAM and CAMBODIA, SHARES COST-EFFECTIVE SUGGESTIONS TO SERVE UP PERSONALISATION IN THE RESTAURANT.**

Personalisation has become a cornerstone of the dining experience. By allowing diners to tailor their dishes according to their preferences, restaurants can create memorable and engaging experiences that keep customers coming back.

Personalisation has become a critical factor in the dining preferences of Gen Z, a demographic that values individuality, health consciousness and meaningful experiences. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z diners seek meals that reflect their personal tastes and dietary needs, making personalisation not just a menu trend but a necessity for food service professionals to deliver on.



Create topping stations: Set up a salad or wrap bar with a variety of toppings (e.g. proteins, vegetables, nuts and seeds). This allows Gen Z diners to craft their own dishes, enhancing their sense of ownership and creativity.

Custom dressing stations: Introduce a variety of interesting dressings and sauces inspired by regional cuisine flavours such as South East Asia. Patrons can mix and match to create their own unique blends, making each dish distinctly theirs.

Flavour profiles: Provide diners with a choice of dynamic flavour profiles (e.g., spicy, tangy, sweet) that they can incorporate into their dishes. This helps cater to individual palates and encourages experimentation.

Build your own options: Offer a selection of base ingredients for salads or wraps, allowing diners to choose their preferred proteins, vegetables and grains. This not only caters to dietary preferences but also engages customers in the creation of their dish.

Seasonal specials: Rotate seasonal ingredients and limited-time offerings that encourage repeat visits. Diners will appreciate the freshness and the opportunity to try new combinations.

Feedback loop: Encourage diners to provide feedback on their personalised dishes, allowing the restaurant to refine offerings and build a closer relationship with its clientele.

Encourage sharing: Create a “custom dish of the week” that diners can share on social media. This can incentivise them to try new combinations and helps promote your restaurant organically.

WRITTEN BY

Eric Chua
Executive Chef, Singapore,
Vietnam, Cambodia and
Future Platform Chef Lead
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South East Asia & South Asia



HOW TO MAKE A RESTAURANT PROFITABLE (AND KEEP IT THAT WAY)

Ah, restaurants – those tantalising temples of gastronomy where dreams are plated and credit cards weep. It’s easy to get caught up in romanticising about the industry, imagining yourself as that chef passionately crafting dishes that people rave about to their friends. But behind the beautifully garnished plates and the Instagrammable ambiance lies the cold, hard reality: restaurants operate on razor-thin profit margins. So how do you ensure your business remains profitable? Below are five tips to follow.

A restaurant’s profitability isn’t just about what’s on the plate – it’s about what happens behind the scenes. Every day you have to contend with unpredictable realities like: how many diners are going to show up today/tonight; suppliers gone AWOL with that essential order of ingredients; staffing issues and those unplanned power outages that melt your frozen inventory along with your profit.

Even the best-run kitchens face a constant battle with unpredictability, so it’s important to mitigate the risk with reliable strategies that underpin your profit margin.

WRITTEN BY
Thaís Gimenez
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, Brazil

1 Menu Engineering: The Art and Science of Profitable Plates

A profitable menu is more than a collection of dishes; it’s a masterclass in balancing creativity and economics. Here’s what it takes:

- **Understand your stars:** Some dishes fly off the menu and make you money. Others are passion projects that barely break even but showcase the chef’s soul. Striking a balance between profitable crowd-pleasers and soulful culinary art is the key.
- **Practise ingredient wizardry:** Great chefs don’t just cook; they maximise every ounce of every ingredient. From turning carrot tops into pesto to using beef trimmings for broth, efficiency is the secret sauce.
- **Adopt food trends (wisely):** Menu trends that align with your brand and audience can generate buzz – and revenue. Use this *Future Menus* book to find the one, or ones, that best fit your menu.

2 Harness the Power of Data (Yes, Data!)

Data might not sound sexy, but it’s the lifeline of a profitable restaurant. Here’s why:

- **Predicting demand:** By analysing sales patterns, you can forecast customer flow and plan your purchases more accurately, reducing waste and avoiding stock shortages.
- **Tracking costs:** Integrate recipes, ingredient prices and yields into your system to understand your food-cost percentage (the magic number that tells you if you’re making money or just feeding people for free).
- **Scheduling efficiency:** Use historical data to determine peak dining times and staff rostering accordingly.

3 Equipment: A Professional Kitchen's Best Friend (or Worst Enemy)

Let's talk gadgets. Sure, you'd love a kitchen fitted out like a spaceship, but practicality matters.

- **Multitasking marvels:** Convection ovens, sous-vide machines and high-powered processors can streamline operations and reduce prep time. Efficiency is your sous-chef.
- **Energy efficiency:** Lowering your energy bill is great for both the planet and your bottom line. Modern equipment with energy-saving features is worth the investment.
- **Training matters:** Even the best tools are useless if your team doesn't know how to use them properly. A well-trained team is more efficient than the fanciest mixer.

4 People Make the Professional Kitchen

Speaking of staff: they're the beating heart of your restaurant. But let's be real – the restaurant industry isn't exactly known for work-life balance. A happy, healthy team is a productive one. Here's how to keep your kitchen running smoothly:

- **Proper training:** Teach your cooks how to follow recipes and portion sizes accurately. Consistency reduces waste and ensures quality.
- **Mental health matters:** Burnout is real. Treat your team like humans, not machines. Healthy hours and a positive environment lead to better food service and reduced staff turnover. If you don't know about it already, check out the Positive Kitchens movement. UFS is a founding member. It's a free resource offering tools, training and advice tailored for the food service industry (go to ufs.com/futuremenus for more).
- **Creative problem-solving:** A well-supported team can focus on creative ways to reduce waste, optimise workflows and improve profitability.

5 Profitability Is a Daily Grind

Achieving profitability isn't a one-time milestone; it's an ongoing effort. Efficiency, creativity and adaptability are your best friends. From rethinking your mise en place to embracing new preservation techniques (hello, dehydration and pickling!), every little adjustment can make a difference.

It might be a challenge, but for those who do it right, the rewards of running a profitable restaurant – financial and otherwise – are oh so satisfying.



EVOLVING

EXPECTATIONS

Rafael Larue, CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER AT TRANSFORMATION COMPANY LIVIT DESIGN, OFFERS INSIGHTS INTO THE EVOLVING EXPECTATIONS OF DINERS.



Despite diners globally having different habits – from the food they eat to how they eat it – the expectations of their dining experiences are often the same and in a world where almost anything seems possible, expectations are greater than ever.

Livit Design is a world-leading “transformation company”. Its global clientele list includes an array of household names. Its view of the global culinary landscape has enabled it to foresee the shifting expectations of diners and what might be causing these shifts.

Rafael Larue, Chief Creative Officer and Partner at Livit Design, shares some insights and tips on how to achieve optimal personalisation in food service today.

Tell us a little bit about Livit Design.

Livit is the world’s largest food and beverage transformation company. The reason we call ourselves a “transformation” company is that we don’t fit neatly into any one category. We’ve tried labels like “design firm” and “consultancy”, but our work spans everything from design to operations and culinary innovation. We offer services from brand strategy and guest experience to interior design, kitchen design and even the small details like table settings. We handle projects end-to-end, especially for scalable concepts that aim for replicable success. We work in markets like the US, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and Europe. This gives us visibility into emerging trends around the world. For instance, we may see trends in China that will soon reach the US, or observe shifts

in the US that might influence European brands. This global perspective helps us stay ahead of trends.

What are some of the biggest changes you’ve noticed in global diner expectations?

Diners today want everything on their terms and they want it all at once. This isn’t necessarily a time of new trends but rather an expansion of existing ones. For instance, people expect convenience and quality, even from high-end brands. Fine dining delivery, once unheard of, is now common. Diners expect to engage with brands through multiple channels and options and they seek experiences that are fast, high-quality and tailored to them.

Where do these heightened expectations from diners come from?

It’s a mix of natural progression and the impact of Covid. Trends like customisation were already emerging, but Covid accelerated everything as brands had to adapt quickly to survive. Additionally, consumer awareness has grown. Younger generations consider more than just taste – they think about food as fuel, brand values and sustainability. They seek a connection with brands that align with their values.

“Personalisation is key to everything we’re seeing within dining right now.”



“Unreasonable hospitality” has become a popular term in recent years, thanks to the book by Will Guidara. What are your thoughts on this term?

I think that’s the direction the industry is moving towards – personalising experiences to an unprecedented level. While not every brand has the resources to offer hyper-personalised services, the overall trend is for brands to provide elevated, tailored experiences that go beyond traditional expectations. “Unreasonable hospitality” might sound extreme, but as guest expectations rise, a certain level of personalisation is becoming the standard. Ultimately, brands must adapt to meet these expectations within their capabilities. As we continue down this path, “unexpected hospitality” will likely become the new baseline.

How are you addressing these changing diner expectations in your work?

We focus on flexibility in the guest journey, adapting to different dining channels and purchase paths. Today’s brands need to be more than just guest-centric – they have to be “people-centric”, balancing guest, employee and corporate needs. We also simplify processes to attract and retain staff, especially where labour shortages exist. We aim to create workplaces that foster pride and belonging, making employees feel part of something meaningful.

What do you foresee for dining experiences in the next 5-10 years?

I think we’ll see a blend of convenience and experience, with a focus on delivering highly personalised interactions. For example, in some restaurants in Asia, even the décor is customised in real-time based on the guests present. Technology is enabling a level of individual experience we’ve never seen before, where each visit could feel like a unique, one-time experience. This trend towards tailored experiences will likely continue to grow.

Any final thoughts?

Personalisation is key to everything we’re seeing within dining right now.





GAGGAN

**RESTAURANT GAGGAN TAKES
experience DINING TO THE
NEXT LEVEL.**

ANAND



India's Gaggan Anand is Asia's most awarded chef. In his restaurant, Gaggan in Bangkok, which opened in 2019, he shows his rebellious and experimental side even more than in his previous restaurant. In Gaggan, the guests dance, sing and eat grilled Thai street rat. Is the latter actually true? On that subject, the chef leaves his guests guessing. "We are an extremely radical restaurant", Gaggan says in a personal interview.

At Gaggan – ranked number nine on The World's 50 Best Restaurants and number three on Asia's 50 Best Restaurants – guests must abandon their ideas of fine dining. Experience is taken to the next level. It's like visiting the theatre, with two different performances. The restaurant has 14 seats. Guests sit next to each other in two lines that flank the sides of the kitchen, with a direct view of the action. Dishes are accompanied by music, there is a light show and singing and dancing by the kitchen team as well as the guests.

22 dishes

"I created the dishes and came up with the concept," says Gaggan. The show is like a movie that you think you know the end of, but then it turns out completely different. The only predictable thing is the fact that the 22 dishes that are served do not disappoint. They still form the biggest wow factor.

Gaggan previously made a name for himself by presenting traditional Indian dishes in a completely new way. Instead of classic approaches, he combined the flavours and spices of India with modern cooking techniques, leading to surprising and unusual taste experiences. "In today's Gaggan, guests taste my memories," he says. Memories from India, but also from his visits to countries around the world. From a broccoli cookie melting in your mouth to – in the middle of dinner – a dessert waffle, with foie gras and coffee.



Street rat and brains with beet juice

The culinary experience at Gaggan also includes humour. For example, Gaggan says he serves his guests Thai street rats. "We catch them, feed them every six hours, for 21 days, with grass. We bleach them, then steam them. We serve the brain of the rat with beet juice. From street to table."

Gaggan's "yoghurt explosion" is also served. This masterpiece consists of a bubble of yoghurt filled with intense flavours. When you place the bubble in your mouth, it explodes, creating a flavourful experience. "Whenever I have travelled somewhere, I know my experiences will be reflected in my new menu."

The top chef learned a lot about molecular gastronomy from Ferran Adrià at El Bulli restaurant, which was voted best restaurant in the world several times. "Adrià is a great example for me, but most of my inspiration comes from life. By travelling, by meeting people and by learning about different cultures."





DINER DESIGNED SAUCES

CHEF ERIC CHUA SERVES UP *dressing* SUGGESTIONS THAT BRING PERSONALISATION TO THE FOREFRONT.

WRITTEN BY

Eric Chua
Executive Chef, Singapore, Vietnam,
Cambodia and Future Platform Chef Lead
Unilever Food Solutions,
South East Asia & South Asia



- 1 **Balinese Sambal Matah Honey Mayo:** The vibrant flavours of Bali really shine in sambal matah honey mayo, a delicious fusion that brings together traditional Indonesian sambal and the creaminess of mayo. This dressing starts with finely chopped shallots and fragrant lemongrass, infused with red chilli and kaffir lime leaf. A hint of shrimp paste and fish sauce adds depth, while fresh lime juice brightens the mix. To balance the savoury elements, we've stirred in zesty Dijon mustard and a touch of honey and finished with a sprinkle of black pepper. This dressing is perfect for drizzling over salads, grilled meats or even as a dipping sauce for your favourite appetisers.
- 2 **Koh Kong Sauce:** Drawing on a Cambodian classic, this zesty lemongrass fish sauce combines the heat of red and green chillies with the fresh, citrusy notes of lemongrass and lime juice. A delightful balance of spice and tang, fragrant cilantro leaves and the subtle warmth of green peppercorns add depth, while garlic, shallot and ginger provide a rich aromatic base. A touch of sugar rounds out the flavours, enhancing the natural sweetness of the ingredients. The sauce's tangy and spicy notes work well with grilled chicken or fish, or use it as a dipping sauce for fresh or fried spring rolls.
- 3 **Coconut Peanut Sauce:** Vietnamese coconut peanut sauce combines the nutty goodness of peanut butter with the smooth texture of mayonnaise, enhanced by the subtle heat of chilli powder. Infused with chicken seasoning powder and a touch of sugar, it offers a perfect balance of savoury and sweet. The addition of condensed coconut milk provides a luscious creaminess, while a hint of lime juice adds a refreshing tang. Finished with the nutty aroma of sesame oil and a sprinkle of crushed peanuts, this sauce is perfect for drizzling over salads, grilled meats or fresh spring rolls, offering a unique blend of flavours.
- 4 **"Sisig" Dressing:** A Filipino twist to an all-time favourite: sisig dressing. This vibrant blend captures the essence of the Philippines with its creamy mayonnaise base, enriched by the zesty kick of calamansi and vinegar. Infused with liquid seasoning and a hint of red chilli, it delivers a perfect balance of heat and tang. Fresh garlic cloves and a dash of pepper round out this flavourful dressing, perfect for adding a taste of the tropics to salads, grilled meats or even as a unique dip. Add it as a topping in tacos or wraps for a unique twist or drizzle over rice bowls for added flavour.

5 Curry Kapitan Mayo: Curry Kapitan Mayo is a Malaysian-inspired dressing that transforms any dish with its rich and exotic flavours. This unique creation is crafted from a traditional rempah, a fragrant spice paste that forms the heart of many Malaysian dishes. The rempah features a harmonious blend of red onion, ginger, lemongrass, garlic, turmeric powder and chilli paste, all brought to life by the distinctive zest of kaffir lime leaves. These ingredients are expertly combined with creamy mayonnaise, creating a perfect balance of spice and smoothness. The result is a versatile dressing that enhances salads and sandwiches and serves as a delightful dip.

6 Nam Yum Mayo: Discover Nam Yum Mayo, a vibrant Thai dressing that brings together the rich creaminess of mayonnaise with the bold, zesty flavours of traditional Thai cuisine. This unique blend features the tangy brightness of lime juice paired with the savoury depth of fish sauce, creating a harmonious balance of sweet, salty and sour. The addition of sugar and chicken seasoning powder enhances its umami profile, while fresh garlic and cilantro roots infuse it with an aromatic punch. Perfect for drizzling over salads, grilled meats or as a dipping sauce. Enjoy a taste of Thailand with this versatile and tantalising dressing!

7 Salted Egg Sauce: Singaporean salted egg emulsion – a unique, delightful fusion that elevates any dish with its rich and savoury profile. This dressing combines the creamy texture of classic coleslaw dressing with the bold, umami flavour of salted egg. Infused with aromatic curry leaves and a kick of spicy chilli padi, it's a perfect blend of tradition and innovation. Whether you're dressing up a salad or using it as a dip, this emulsion promises an unforgettable taste experience that captures the essence of Singaporean cuisine. The sauce even works well when paired with roasted vegetables, enhancing the taste of roasted broccoli, cauliflower or potatoes.

8 Honey Mala Sauce: Singapore's honey mala dressing – a captivating burst of flavours that will elevate your dishes to new heights and is highly addictive. This dressing blends the luscious sweetness of rock sugar honey sauce with the bold, fiery essence of mala liquid seasoning. Finished with a splash of lime juice, it offers a perfect balance of sweet, spicy and tangy notes. Ideal for those seeking a dynamic and exciting taste experience, this dressing is sure to enhance any culinary creation. It pairs exceptionally well with a variety of dishes, whether enhancing the freshness of Asian slaws with bold flavours or providing a captivating contrast to the mildness of tofu.

Some of Chef Eric's Diner Designed flavour selections:

- Sichuan mala
- Green chilli
- Bulgogi
- Gochujang
- Roasted corn
- Salted egg
- Ponzu sauce
- Togarashi
- Kaffir lime
- Tahini





HERO INGREDIENT

INTRODUCTION TO FERMENTATION

CHAMPIONED BY CHEFS INCLUDING DAVID ZILBER AND SAM BLACK, FERMENTATION IS MUCH MORE THAN JUST THE *future* OF FLAVOUR...



Imagine transforming simple ingredients into culinary masterpieces that burst with flavours you haven't experienced before – that's fermentation. In chemistry, fermentation is defined as the transformation of sugar into other substances by microorganisms in the absence of oxygen. But in the kitchen, fermentation is an artful skill that, when harnessed, helps propel foods and their flavours into the culinary stratosphere. "It allows us to experiment and channel our inner child as it can be very personalised and creative," notes Unilever's Research and Development Director, Sarah Lieder. Though there isn't one simple recipe for fermenting, some hero ingredients to include are water, salt, yeast and sugars, which help create an environment that allows the key element to evolve. Beyond these conditions, the most important component of fermentation is time.

The history of fermentation goes back thousands of years and has roots in cultures across the world – from ancient China to North Africa and Greece. Initially, though, fermentation was used as a form of preserving foods with short natural expiry dates, like milk, fish or meat. But as early as 7000 BC, people began using the process for creating new drinks or dishes. However, the health benefits of fermentation weren't properly understood until the 1900s, when scientists discovered the positive impact of good bacteria in fermented milk on the human digestive system.

Since then, fermented dishes have become embraced not only for their flavours but also for the fact that they can make certain ingredients, such as fibrous vegetables, easier for the human body to digest. Kimchi, sauerkraut, miso, sourdough, yoghurt and cheese – all of these kitchen staples are the result of fermentation and the same goes for many popular alcoholic drinks, as the process breaks down glucose found in fruits and vegetables to form a natural source of the alcohol ethanol.

Though part of the mass food production industry for decades, the popularity of home fermentation has been on a steady incline over the past decade as wider audiences started valuing the active probiotic cultures

in fermented foods. Coincidentally, the complex flavours crafted by this process began penetrating even the most prestigious culinary circles. Not only does it make food more nutritious, but fermentation also has the job of elevating the aroma and pushing the boundaries of what a certain ingredient can taste like. "The sensation and new flavour profiles, but also textures—they trigger interest and curiosity. We know how something tastes, but how are we going to bring fermentation in the kitchen? That's where I see it evolving," explains Evert Vermandel, Unilever Food Solutions' Global Lead Innovation Chef. Both Vermandel and Lieder are excited about the prospects of fermentation in battling food waste, too. With products like vinegars and fermented sauces, the process offers a possibility of extracting good flavours from ingredients that are past their prime and building personalised flavours on top of them. "The possibilities are almost limitless", says Lieder.

What began as a means of survival is today a tool in crafting new pathways in both haute cuisine and home cooking, connecting the past, present and future of food. More than just a trend, fermentation is an exciting way of pushing culinary boundaries into uncharted territories.

AN EVOLVING PROCESS

10,000 BC

THE BIRTH OF
FERMENTATION

In north Africa, milk of camels, sheep, goats and cattle becomes the first products to be fermented in an effort to **extend their poor longevity**.

In ancient China, a beer-like beverage called **kui** is invented, made by mixing rice, honey and the fruits of grape and hawthorn plants.

THE 7000 BC
FIRST BREWS

6000 BC

AGE LIKE
FINE WINE

The earliest examples of ancient wine production takes place in Georgia, where grapes were **fermented to create** an alcoholic beverage.

5500 BC

BIG
CHEESE

Born as a happy accident later discovered in Egyptian tomb murals, **cheese** emerges through the practice of storing milk in containers made from the stomachs of animals.

500 AD

FERMENTATION
FOR ALL!

Fermentation becomes widely spread **across different cultures** as a means of preserving foods.

SOY 500 BC
GOODNESS

Innovation in Chinese medicine recognises the sterilisation qualities of **fermented soybeans** when treating infected wounds.

2000 BC

PASS THE
PICKLES

In the Middle East, the first documented pickling of **cucumbers** occurs.

DAILY BREAD

3500-3000 BC

The ancient Egyptians also discover that mixing flour and water together and leaving it to sit for a few days causes wild yeasts to start fermenting, resulting in the birth of the first leavened **bread**.

1856

SAFETY FIRST

Louis Pasteur, the father of microbiology, officially develops a process that helps preserve food and drinks by heating them up and therefore killing harmful bacteria. Called **pasteurisation**, it becomes an essential part of the fermentation process.

THE
MAGIC OF MILK

Russian zoologist and bacteriologist Élie Metchnikoff discovers the benefits of **bacteria in fermented milk** for the human digestive system.

1900s

1970s

PROBIOTIC
GLORY

Developed over decades, **probiotics** become widely available as scientists create supplements with live bacteria and yeasts that support human digestion.

THE
FUTURE
IS
NOW!

Microbial fermentation is the basis of both culinary advancements and pharmaceutical products including vaccine components, anti-infectives and many others.

TODAY



THE FUTURE OF FLAVOUR

Taking the art of fermentation one step further, the culinary world has recently started embracing a new take on traditional methods. Using advanced tools and knowledge from food and biological sciences, we can step up from traditional methods and get (safely) access to the full potential of nature's texture and flavour diversity. Scientists search for new cultures that generate desired flavour and textures. Balancing the contribution of different microbes in a culture blend and finding optimal process conditions is the key to generating new fermented food concepts. Fermentation is turning into a creative tool. It allows chefs to create exciting textures and flavour profiles and give access to alternative protein sources, making it easier to serve customers with delicious textures and flavours.

Though still very much in the process of discovery, there is great potential in precision fermentation becoming part of the patchwork of gastronomy. The final products of this technique include proteins and fats with both a positive impact on both the body and the environment, making them a solid alternative to animal products. On the one hand, they can have higher amounts of protein and other nutrients. On the other, the excessive agricultural footprint of traditional ingredients can be relieved across the world.

Just like some of the other advanced culinary methods that were once considered revolutionary, it changes the way people look at ingredients and questions the impact of food on both the individual and their community. And just like the original mission of fermentation, its main goal is preservation – of food, of us and of the planet.

From left: Chef Philip Li and Chef Chris Zhong, *UFS China*.



TOP TIPS!



Whether you're an expert with fermentation or just beginning your journey with this magical process, here are some top tips that will ensure both success and safety when experimenting with different ingredients. No lab coat required!

1 QUALITY INGREDIENTS

Using fresh and organic raw vegetables ensures the best results, as they have natural yeasts that encourage the natural fermentation process.

2 STRONG HYGIENE

Always use clean vessels and utensils to avoid contamination of bacteria. Simple yet efficient, classic Mason jars are a great option for home fermentation, as glass doesn't stain or include any chemicals.

3 NON-IODISED SALT

Non-iodised salts, such as sea salt, are a crucial component for fermentation because they don't contain additives that could potentially inhibit the process.

4 UNIFORMITY IS KEY

When cutting your vegetables, make sure to stick to uniform sizes to guarantee even fermentation and consistent results.

5 STARTER BRINE

For beginners, using a starter brine like salt, whey, or vinegar can help kickstart the fermentation process. This is especially useful for dishes like sauerkraut and kimchi.

6 STAY BELOW THE BRINE

All ingredients should be submerged below the brine to prevent mould growth and ensure proper fermentation.

7 NOT TOO HOT, NOT TOO COLD

Monitoring temperature is important, as fermentation works best at room temperature. Excessive heat or cold as well as temperature fluctuations can affect the process and the final product by preventing microbial growth.

8 WAIT IT OUT

Fermentation is a slow process, which means patience is of the essence. Allow enough time for the flavours to fully develop – rushing the process will lead to disappointing results.

Happy fermenting!



AUTHENTIC ITALIAN RISOTTO

This authentic Italian risotto with various premium toppings allows guests to personalise their meal in an interactive and immersive way. Rather than simply offering a set dish, this concept invites diners to engage in the creation of their own risotto masterpiece, selecting from a range of high-quality, fresh toppings that reflect the rich flavours of Italy. This hands-on approach transforms the meal into a multisensory experience, where diners can take part in crafting a dish that reflects their individual preferences.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



"IT'S ABOUT MAKING THIS DISH FEEL PERSONAL, INTERACTIVE AND IMMERSIVE SO DINERS CAN TRULY CONNECT WITH THE FLAVOURS AND EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF *customisation.*"

— **JAMES BROWN**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

Again, this dish offers diners a fully customisable, interactive meal experience. This dish invites guests to take part in putting together their own vibrant, flavourful combination selecting from a variety of rich, savoury fillings and classic table staples – allowing for endless personalisation. This makes each dish a unique, engaging experience that deepens the connection between the diner and the food they create.

To get this recipe and the many other *Future Menus* recipes, go to ufs.com/futuremenus



“THIS DISH ALLOWS DINERS TO BE THE ARCHITECTS OF THEIR OWN MEAL, CHOOSING FROM A VARIETY OF RICH, BOLD FILLINGS AND *classic* ACCOMPANIMENTS.”

— **JAMES BROWN**
Executive Chef
Unilever Food Solutions, UK & Ireland

VENEZUELAN CACHAPA PANCAKES



From left: Chef James Brown, UFS UK & Ireland; Chef Eric Chua, UFS South East Asia and South Asia; and Chef Thaís Gimenez, UFS Brazil.



 Unilever Food Solutions

CITATIONS

STREET FOOD COUTURE

The Forge (2024) *Trend Setter 3.0, Street Food Couture*. Chapter 300924.

Google search interest analysis for *Future Menus 2025 report*. Markets: USA, Canada, Brazil, UK, Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines. Duration: August 2020 to July 2024.

Kantar Team (2024) *Global survey in the UFS e-panel*. Global results. Sylvia Schöne and David Ehlers. Report ID: 316412774 | Q8135-54. September 2024.

BORDERLESS CUISINE

The Forge (2024) *Trend Setter 3.0, Borderless Cuisine*. Chapter 300924.

Google search interest analysis for *Future Menus 2025 report*. Markets: USA, Canada, Brazil, UK, Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines. Duration: August 2020 to July 2024.

Kantar Team (2024) *Global survey in the UFS e-panel*. Global results. Sylvia Schöne and David Ehlers. Report ID: 316412774 | Q8135-54. September 2024.

Rise of the Eastern Influence

In the United States, for example, migrants from China began settling from the mid-19th century, bringing their culinary traditions with them. Available at: <https://time.com/4211871/chinese-food-history/>.

Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Cambodia have all funded government-backed culinary diplomacy programmes. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/08/20/food-diplomacy-countries-identity-culture-marketing-gastrodiplomacy-gastronativism/>.

South Korea, for its part, established a successful Korean Cuisine to the World Program in 2009 that aimed to promote Korean cuisine (or hansik) abroad and increase awareness of its health benefits and taste profile. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/12/t-magazine/korean-food-national-royal-cuisine.html>.

Now, 15 years later, hansik has entered the zeitgeist. Korean dishes like bibimbap (a rice bowl dish) and kimchi (fermented vegetables) are easily available in major cities across the West – with Korean food exports to the US rising to 1.74 billion dollars in 2023. Available at: <https://www.koreadailyus.com/korean-food-export-to-u-s-hits-record-high-due-to-increasing-popularity>.

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Squid Game showed tteokbokki. Available at: <https://www.thetakeout.com/best-food-moments-in-squid-game-dalgona-cookie-candy-1850917251/>.

Speaking with NPR, Yang Joo-Pil, an official at the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, explained that his department will “select about 10 food items each year for product placement in dramas.” Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2024/01/25/1226791305/korean-food-is-winning-over-palates-worldwide-including-the-world-of-haute-cuisi>.

On TikTok, the “koreanfood” hashtag has been used on over 860,000 posts. Available at: <https://www.tiktok.com/tag/koreanfood?lang=en>.

Throughout the 2020s, travellers have displayed greater willingness to venture off the beaten track and into new territory, with 40% of travellers opting to explore unfamiliar destinations. Available at: <https://amadeus.com/en/resources/research/destination-x-where-to-next>.

Travel is so high on consumers’ lists of priorities that 64% of global travellers say they aim to reduce other areas of their personal spending to prioritise leisure travel in 2024. Available at: <https://stories.hilton.com/2024trends-culture-experiences>.

Indeed, in 2023, the country’s capital of Seoul saw a 373.6% year-on-year increase in tourists. Available at: <https://english.seoul.go.kr/seoul-awarded-as-the-most-popular-destination-of-the-year/>.

Indeed, Chef Junghyun Park (whose Korean haute cuisine restaurant Atomix, based in NYC, was awarded two Michelin stars in 2021) has argued that his clientele are: “Very open to new cultures.” Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2024/01/25/1226791305/korean-food-is-winning-over-palates-worldwide-including-the-world-of-haute-cuisi>.

Experts, for example, predict that Burmese and Filipino cuisines – from the South East Asian countries of Myanmar and the Philippines – may emerge as new players in the global food space. Available at: <https://middleby.co.uk/how-global-cuisine-is-taking-over-the-uk/>.

POSITIVE KITCHEN CULTURE

Life as a Chef: Global Survey (2023) Unilever Food Solutions Positive Kitchens – Introduction Guide. UFS Global e-panel, August. Total respondents: n=1010.

CULINARY ROOTS

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DINER DESIGNED

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FERMENTATION

Introduction to Fermentation

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