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# FUTURE MENUS 4

TOP FOODSERVICE TRENDS  
2026

# FUTURE MENUS 4

**IN 2026, THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY IS ALL ABOUT MAKING THE MOST OF WHAT YOU HAVE – DOING MORE WITH LESS, FINDING REAL VALUE, AND MAKING EVERY DISH COUNT.** *Diners are craving food that feels genuine and tells a story,* **WITHOUT THE EXTRA FUSS. WITH TIGHTER BUDGETS, MENUS ARE GETTING SIMPLER, LOCAL INGREDIENTS ARE TAKING CENTRE STAGE, AND SMART USE OF RESOURCES MATTER MORE THAN EVER.**

People still want to enjoy their meals, but they're looking for comfort and connection, not just the next big trend. Authenticity is everything: guests want to know where their food comes from and why it matters. Health now means real benefits and good ingredients, not empty buzzwords.

Technology is helping kitchens run more smoothly and making dining more convenient, but the heart of hospitality – the human touch – remains just as

important. Gen Z is setting the pace with their focus on value for money, creativity, and experiences that feel personal and real.

For chefs and restaurant owners, **Future Menus 4** is about practical innovation: do what works for your team, tell your story honestly, and serve quality and value for money in every bite. Consider this your toolkit...



# GET #PREPPED FOR TOMORROW WITH UNILEVER FOOD SOLUTIONS



#Prepped for tomorrow

Unilever Food Solutions (UFS), accounting for 20% of Unilever's Foods Business Group, operates in over 75 countries as a dedicated supplier for the foodservice industry. At our core, we are a business of chefs for chefs. The expertise of our global network of over 250 in-house chefs informs everything we do and establishes our strategy around three key pillars: high-quality products, industry inspiration and best-in-class services.

We recognise the high demands professional chefs place on food products and ingredients to streamline kitchen operations. We specialise in high-quality products that improve profitability, enhance consistency, and help unlock on-trend flavours. Our leading-edge portfolio features power brands like Knorr Professional and Hellmann's. We excel in creating product recipes that perform exceptionally in professional kitchens and outshine the competition.

Keeping menus trendy and inspiring is a constant challenge for chefs, especially with the ever-evolving influences of social media trends, shifting consumer demands, and economic factors. Our annual Future Menu Trends initiative highlights major global culinary trends, demonstrating how chefs can bring these trends to life in their own kitchens, enhancing both creativity and profitability. We also strive to support chefs by offering an ever-growing selection of unique and classic recipes available on our website.

We understand the pressure and skills required by professional chefs to run a successful kitchen. Our culinary training programmes supply chefs with best-in-class services and food industry tools for professionals in the foodservice industry. From the basics of Food Safety to advanced World Cuisines, we've got it covered. We also aim to improve kitchen environments by fostering a positive culture. Our Positive Kitchens initiative addresses challenging conditions commonly encountered, providing tools, training and inspiration for efficient team management, effective communication and overall wellbeing.

UFS is constantly pushing to better serve the food service sector by taking a digital-first approach. Our mission is to foster global relationships with professional chefs and culinary communities, encouraging growth and creativity.

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# CULINARY



# ROOTS

**Culinary Roots continues the passion and respect for indigenous heritage and culture into 2026, with a new energy about it. Tradition is not just preserved, but celebrated, and food is fuel for fresh creativity. In 2025, the focus was on resurfacing heritage dishes and paying them the reverence they deserve. This year takes a lighter, more joyous tone: ancestral recipes and ancient techniques are made more accessible and relevant to today's diners.**

The appeal is in tasting something real. Gen-Z diners are increasingly drawn to ingredients and dishes

with history, like ancient grains and ancestral stews that tell stories of places, people, and time. Rising political instability is encouraging people to celebrate what's close to home, while concerns for the climate have people looking for super-local, resilient, sustainable ingredients. At the same time, younger generations are creative and open to new interpretations.

Full-service restaurants are the natural homestead for Culinary Roots, where chefs get personal and support local suppliers. Keep note of the growing trends for foraging and one-pot stews, as well as

increased use of kunafa (beyond Dubai chocolate!) and buckthorn – ingredients with deep cultural histories and community ties.

Culinary Roots goes beyond nostalgia. It's about reimagining heritage as a living, joyful, delicious journey.

# CULINARY ROOTS

**Heritage is Hypey** – Indigenous ingredients and ancient grains are premium, pride of place on modern menus.

**Low and Slow is in Style** – Tagines, koshari, egusi soup. Family style and fire cooking.

**Spices are Personal** – DIY dry rubs, Indonesian bumbu kits. Spices are hands-on and hyper local.

**Chefs as Storytellers** – Think Gen-Z remixing grandma’s recipes.

**Cuisine = Identity** – Oaxacan, Andean, and Emirati food are booming as diners crave authenticity. Africa emerges as the next area of discovery.

## TRENDING CUISINE

The distribution of cuisines indicates a volatility in regional cuisine interest.

**Basque**  
A Southwestern European cuisine spanning Spain and France.

**Oaxacan**  
A southern Mexican cuisine.

**Emirati**  
A diverse span of the UAE.

**Algerian**  
North African cuisine.

**Sichuan**  
From the southwestern Chinese province.

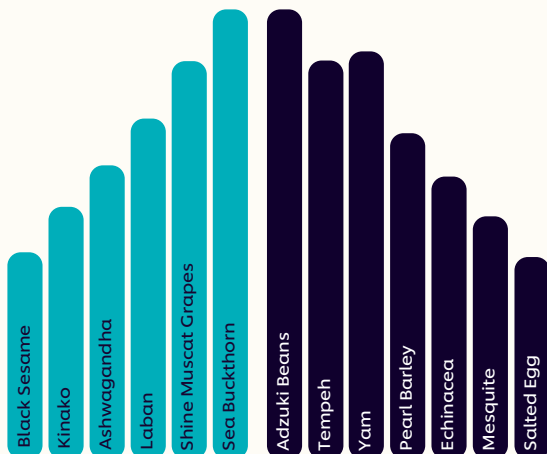
**Andean**  
A range from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile.



**KEY** ■ Trending ■ Emerging

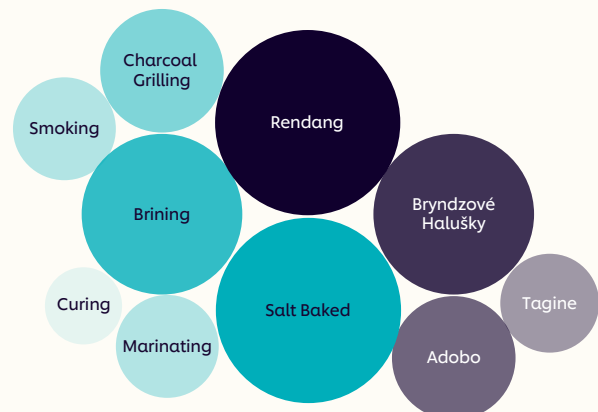
## TRENDING AND EMERGING INGREDIENTS

Local, often foraged, provenance with functional benefits.



## TRENDING AND EMERGING TECHNIQUES

Viral trends and tactile cultural connection.



# INGREDIENTS TO WATCH

## CULINARY ROOTS

WRITTEN BY Ryan Cahill

WANT YOUR DISHES TO ATTRACT ATTENTION? CONSIDER THESE TRENDING INGREDIENTS IN YOUR *Culinary Roots* RECIPES.



**Culinary Roots is about tapping into our heritage dishes. It's a celebration of local history and an opportunity to shine a spotlight on the recipes that are intrinsically linked to our identities – something which has become increasingly important for younger generations.**

**For 2026, there are some stand-out ingredients that are making their mark within Culinary Roots. Consider incorporating these into your Culinary Roots creations to grab the attention of diners...**

### Yuzu

Yuzu is a Japanese citrus fruit, which is both sour yet floral. It offers a fragrant twist to sauces, desserts, cocktails, and dressings, often in place of lemon or lime for a more unique flavour profile. Its versatility and exotic aroma make it a firm favourite globally.

### Turmeric

Turmeric is an earthy, golden root used for centuries in South Asian and Middle Eastern cooking. Now known internationally for both its flavour and health benefits, it often appears in lattes, soups, sauces, and wellness bowls. Its deep colour and anti-inflammatory properties have made it a staple in Culinary Roots, and the possibilities of its use continue to grow and develop.

### Black Sesame

Regularly used across East Asian and Middle Eastern cuisine, Black Sesame offers a nutty and roasted flavour. It's regularly used in ice-cream and Tahini-style spreads, savoury crusts and plant-based milks and is often utilised for texture and a hint of bitterness to both sweet and savoury dishes.

### Tamarind

Tamarind is a tangy, somewhat sweet pulp used in cuisines from Thailand to Mexico to India. It adds Umami and a lightness to chutneys and sauces across diverse culinary traditions. Its global versatility and bold flavour make it a go-to for chefs crafting cross-cultural Street Food and sauces.

### Tempeh

Tempeh is a fermented soybean product from Indonesia, rich in protein and gut-friendly probiotics. Its firm texture and nutty flavour make it ideal for grilling, stir-frying, or marinating in global Street Food formats. Tempeh fits perfectly into plant-based and fusion menus, bridging Southeast Asian tradition with modern health trends.

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

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

HERE, UFS EXPERTS OFFER SOLUTIONS TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS TURN A PROFIT – *time and time again!*



**Behind the beautifully garnished plates and the Instagrammable ambiance lies the cold, hard reality: food establishments often run on razor-thin profit margins.**

**However, our research suggests that operators are getting smarter – there's a growing focus on extracting value from cheaper ingredients. Think tinned fish, upcycled pastries, fermented foods and tiered twists on global favourites.**

**These simple suggestions might just be the key to turning a profit...**

## 1. Versatile Concepts

Fried chicken is a global favourite, but its preparation and presentation vary widely. From the U.S. drive-thru, casual Asian or Latin American, to elevated European dining, this dish offers a unique opportunity for operators to maximise profitability while meeting diverse consumer expectations. The beauty of fried chicken lies in its adaptability. By leveraging one common ingredient – chicken – and pairing it with a signature sauce like gravy, operators can create multiple menu applications that fit different cost and labour models. This approach ensures consistency, scalability, and strong margins.

## 2. Tiered Applications

There are three simple ways to approach fried chicken recipes. First up, a basic application concept which is simple, low-labour and cost-effective. An example would be classic fried chicken served

with ready-to-use gravy (e.g. Knorr Chicken Gravy). The profit advantages include minimal prep time, easy execution, and high throughput for QSRs and canteens. Simple customisations include gluten-free flour or plant-based swaps for dietary needs. Next up is an elevated application with a concept that adds creativity without sacrificing efficiency. This could be fried chicken thighs topped with kimchi slaw or a fried egg for a premium twist. There's slightly higher labour but increased value, making it ideal for casual dining and grab-and-go formats. Incorporate regional flavours like curry-infused gravy for borderless appeal. Finally, we have highly skilled applications – refined, chef-driven dishes for premium markets. This could be brined chicken breast with pickled radish, beet puree, and herb-enhanced gravy. Here, you have a higher ticket price offsetting the labour, perfect for full-service restaurants.

An appealing add-on could include gut-health ingredients or “better-for-you” positioning to attract health-conscious diners! These solutions are designed for scalability, supporting central production kitchens and multi-unit chains. They offer flexibility to work across quick-service and full-service restaurants as well as retail distributors. With a clear tiered structure, they also enhance profitability by helping operators choose concepts that best align with their business model.

### 3. The Power of Data

Profitability is mastered off the plate. Data is the lifeline of a sustainable restaurant. By analysing sales patterns, you can forecast customer flow and plan your purchases more

accurately, reducing waste and avoiding stockouts. Researching ingredient prices when developing recipes helps you to understand your food cost percentage. And don't ignore the past! Instead, look back and use historical data to determine peak dining times and staff.

### 4. The Unsung Hero of Profitability

By using a consistent, high-performing base – like Knorr products – chefs can reduce prep time and labour, maintain flavour integrity under varied conditions such as heat lamps and high-acid environments, and create endless variations with minimal additional cost, such as adding herbs, spices, or fermented elements.

### 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 like dehydration and pickling, every little adjustment can make a difference. Running a profitable and sustainable restaurant might be a challenge, but for those who do it right, the rewards – financial and otherwise – are oh-so-satisfying.



# PULLED BEEF ON BREAD



WITH  
BRAISED HOLLANDAISE FOAM  
& COLOURFUL GARROT SALAD



# PULLED BEEF ON BREAD WITH BRAISED HOLLANDAISE FOAM & COLOURFUL CARROT SALAD

BY JAMES BROWN

This dish brings together slow-cooked comfort and refined technique in a way that celebrates the Culinary Roots trend. Tender, richly flavoured pulled beef celebrates time-honoured braising methods, while the bread base grounds the dish in rustic simplicity. The braised hollandaise foam adds a modern lift to a classic sauce, and the vibrant carrot salad introduces seasonal freshness and natural sweetness. Rooted in tradition yet thoughtfully reimagined, this dish reflects a renewed appreciation for heritage flavours presented with contemporary flair.

## INGREDIENTS

### Pulled Beef

2,500 g beef shoulder or chuck

2lt **Garde D'Or red wine sauce**

1lt **Knorr Professional Beef Bouillon**

10 g sweet paprika powder

2 g cumin

20 g **Knorr Professional Beef Bouillon Powder**

5 g black pepper

30 ml oil for searing

### Colourful Carrot Salad

1,000 g colourful carrots (yellow, orange, purple)

100 ml orange juice + zest of one orange

20 ml white wine vinegar

40 ml olive oil

15 g honey

10 g salt

2 g pepper

20 g fresh herbs (chervil, parsley)

### Braised Hollandaise Foam

500 ml **Knorr Garde D'Or Hollandaise**

100 ml braising stock reduction (from the pulled beef)

10 ml white wine vinegar

10 ml **Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours**

5 g salt

### Bread Base

510 slices rustic bread or brioche (approx. 60–80 g each)

Optional: 20 ml oil for toasting



**JAMES BROWN**

Executive Chef

Unilever Food Solutions UK & Ireland

**Knorr Garde D'Or  
Hollandaise**



## METHOD

### PULLED BEEF

- 1 Season meat with Beef Bouillon salt and pepper, sear on all sides.
- 2 Add Knorr sauce and spices.
- 3 Cover and braise at 140 °C convection for approx. 4–5 hours.
- 4 Remove, shred with two forks, and mix with some jus.

### BRAISED HOLLANDAISE FOAM

- 1 Gently heat Garde D'Or Hollandaise Sauce.
- 2 Stir in braising stock reduction and vinegar, season to taste.
- 3 For foam: blend with cream or lecithin and foam up in ISI siphon (keep warm).

### COLOURFUL CARROT SALAD

- 1 Peel carrots and slice into fine strips.
- 2 Mix dressing from orange juice, zest, vinegar, oil, honey, salt & pepper.
- 3 Marinate carrots, fold in herbs.

### TO ASSEMBLE

- 1 Lightly toast the bread.
- 2 Spread pulled beef on top.
- 3 Top with braised hollandaise foam.
- 4 Serve carrot salad on the side or as a topping.
- 5 Garnish with microgreens or crispy onions.



# TRUFFLE SCRAMBLED MELT





# TRUFFLE SCRAMBLED MELT

BY **WESLEY BAY** AND **PINAR BALPINAR**

Scrambled eggs, cooked to a luxuriously soft texture, are elevated with earthy truffle and sharp cheddar. Sauteed mushrooms add a firm, meaty bite, while fresh rocket provides a peppery lift. A Mediterranean-inspired aioli, made with pungent garlic, creamy mayonnaise, bright lime juice, and the salty, briny umami of powdered bottarga ties the dish together. The combination of marine flavours with fungi and egg echoes Southeast Asian breakfast traditions, demonstrating how ingredients from one region can complement the flavours of another.



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



**PINAR BALPINAR**  
Innovation and Marketing Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Türkiye

## INGREDIENTS (10 portions)

20 Eggs	<b>Mediterranean Aioli</b>
60 g Truffle paste	250 g <b>Hellmann's Mayonnaise</b>
200 g <b>Hellmann's Mayonnaise</b>	20 g Bottarga, powdered
300 g White cheddar, shredded	5 g <b>Knorr Garlic Puree</b>
100 g Arugula	8 g <b>Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours</b>
300 g Mixed mushrooms, sauteed	
20 slices of rye bread	

## METHOD

- 1 Whisk the eggs with the truffle paste and scramble softly until creamy.
- 2 For the aioli, mix all the ingredients together.
- 3 Toast bread slices lightly.
- 4 Spread the toast with the Mediterranean aioli, add the scrambled eggs, sauteed mushrooms, white cheddar, and arugula.
- 5 Close the sandwich and grill until the cheese melts.
- 6 Slice and serve warm.

## Hellmann's Mayonnaise

Hellmann's Mayonnaise delivers the rich, creamy taste that chefs and customers know and love.



# MUSHROOM AND BLACK GARLIC TORTELLINI



IN A CHEESE SOUP  
WITH APPLE SALSA



# MUSHROOM AND BLACK GARLIC TORTELLINI IN A CHEESE SOUP WITH APPLE SALSA

BY **FRANK JACOBSEN, ERIC CHUA AND BENSON XIE**

The humble inspiration for this dish is a comforting mac and cheese. A cheese soup is the heart of the dish – using a silky and creamy cheese sauce with added umami from chicken stock and aged hard cheese, emulsified into a glossy soup. This holds freshly made mushroom and black garlic tortellini, bringing earthy flavours as well as a touch of warmth and acidity to cut through the cheese. Breadcrumbs are also added to the tortellini for texture, and to reference a traditional mac and cheese. This warming dish is then garnished with a vibrant aromatic truffle oil and acidic fresh apple salsa, elevating the senses.



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Lead Chef  
and Culinary  
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**ERIC CHUA**  
Executive Chef  
and Future  
Platform Chef  
Lead, *Unilever  
Food Solutions,*  
South East Asia



**BENSON XIE**  
Chef Lead,  
*E-Platform China*

## INGREDIENTS (5 portions)

<b>Fresh Pasta Dough</b>	30 g Olive oil
400 g Tipo	3 g Truffle oil
00-Wheat flour	25 g <b>Knorr</b>
2 Whole eggs	<b>Professional</b>
4 Egg yolk	<b>Mushroom Bouillon</b>
6 gm Fine salt	<b>Powder</b>
<b>Tortellini Filling</b>	1000 ml <b>Knorr Garde</b>
150 g Dried shiitake	<b>D'Or Cheese Sauce</b>
mushrooms, soaked	75 g Aged
250 g Fresh	parmesan cheese
mushroom mix	25 g <b>Knorr</b>
5 g Black garlic	<b>Chicken Bouillon</b>
20 g Chopped chives	80 g Fresh apples
50 g Breadcrumbs	10 g Fresh green herbs
	20 g Lemon juice
	400 ml Water

## METHOD

- 1 For the fresh pasta dough mix the ingredients together until smooth, then put in the fridge and let it rest for at least 3 hours.
- 2 Chop the mushrooms and black garlic and fry in olive oil until lightly golden, then add in the mushroom bouillon. Add chives and breadcrumbs and leave to cool, season with salt to taste and Szechuan pepper as an option.
- 3 Roll out the pasta dough and make tortellini dumplings with the mushroom filling. Boil in lightly salted water.
- 4 Heat up the cheese sauce, and adjust the consistency with water/chicken bouillon. Blend in the aged cheese with a mixer and adjust the taste to your liking.
- 5 Cut the apples into small cubes and marinate with the fresh herbs, citrus juice and truffle oil.
- 6 Serve the dumplings in the cheese soup and top with fresh apple "salsa".

**Knorr Professional  
Mushroom Bouillon  
Powder**



# FALAFEL AND PORTOBELLO MUSHROOM BURGER





# FALAFEL AND PORTOBELLO MUSHROOM BURGER

BY **JIRAROJ NAVANUKROH**  
AND **MAURITS VAN VROENHOVEN**

Healthy, vegetarian, and full of texture, this burger is inspired by the nourishing staples of Middle Eastern and Greek cuisines. The patty is made from falafel and fried until crispy, then topped with a juicy portobello mushroom seasoned with umami-rich vegetarian chicken powder to add a satisfying meatiness. These elements are paired with sweet onions dusted in citrusy sumac and a traditional tzatziki, creamy and bright with citrus and herbs. Crunchy pickled vegetables bring a tangy acidity that balances the flavours, creating a wholesome, satisfying, and moreish meal.



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



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

## INGREDIENTS

### Falafel Burger

300g Soaked chickpeas, drained  
60g White onion, in pieces  
6g **Knorr Garlic Puree**  
3g Salt  
2g Cumin  
1g Chilli powder  
18g Olive oil  
4g Fresh mint  
7g Fresh coriander  
7g Fresh parsley

### Tzatziki

150g Greek yogurt  
50g **Hellmann's Mayonnaise**  
10g Dill  
10g Parsley

### 3g **Knorr Intense Flavours Citrus**

5g **Knorr Garlic Puree**

### Portobello "Patty"

2 Portobello mushrooms, sliced

### **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder** for seasoning

### Sumac Onions

100g Red onion, sliced in half rings  
1/2 tbspn Sumac  
1/2 tbspn Red wine vinegar  
1/2 tbspn Olive oil  
2g Parsley, finely chopped  
Large pinch of Salt

### Pickled Vegetables

100g Green chillis  
200g Carrot  
200g Turnip  
3 Garlic cloves  
200 ml Water  
100g Vinegar  
20g Sugar  
3g Salt

### Burger Assembly

150g Fresh mixed micro herbs  
4 Brioche buns

## Hellmann's Mayonnaise

Hellmann's Mayonnaise delivers the rich, creamy taste that chefs and customers know and love.



## METHOD

- 1 Prepare pickled vegetables: Boil water, add vinegar, sugar, and salt. Add the vegetables and store them in the fridge for a couple of days.
- 2 Prepare the falafel burger: Place all the ingredients for the falafel into a food processor and pulse until well-combined but not completely pureed. Shape into the desired size using a ring. Freeze the falafel for a couple of hours before deep-frying.
- 3 Deep-fry the falafel at 175°C for 8–10 minutes.
- 4 Prepare the sumac onions: Mix all ingredients together until combined.
- 5 Prepare the tzatziki: Mix all ingredients together until combined.
- 6 Pan-fry the portobello slices and season with Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder.
- 7 Toast the brioche burger buns.
- 8 To build the burger: Spread tzatziki on the bun, add pickled vegetables and micro herbs, falafel, top with portobello mushroom, sumac onion, and more micro herbs. Top with the other half of the burger bun.



# STREET FOOD



# COULTURE

**This year, Street Food Couture continues to elevate – but with a renewed sense of focus and intention. In 2025, diners took a keen interest in the gourmet ingredients going into their dishes. In 2026, they’re moving deeper, seeking to appreciate the craftsmanship, skill, and regional pride of the chef behind the plate – and the story it tells.**

The friendly price point gets younger people into the premium cuisine of the Street Food Couture scene. Amid this generation’s time poorness, economic challenges and tightening budgets, they’re seeking affordable

luxury: ‘real food’ that engages them with the wider world, while also feeling healthy and sustainable. Street Food Couture thrives in quick-service restaurants that are nimble and adaptable for the proprietor, and fast and accessible for the diner. Think fast service, smaller portions, freshly made dishes, lighter sauces, and ingredients sourced close to home. They feel like authentic and thoughtful places to eat, as shown by the recent rise in interest in K-food, skewer cooking, and Indian chaat.

Street Food Couture goes beyond the person and the end plate. It’s a story of process, craft, and shared joy that

celebrates the chef and opens up a world of eats.

# STREET FOOD COUTURE

**Street Classics Reimagined with Crafted Precision** – Take globally loved street staples, like bao, burgers, and rice rolls, and elevate them with premium proteins, artisan condiments, and refined plating.

**Bold Global Fusion Without Losing Authenticity** – Incorporate traditional recipes from cuisines such as Greek, Filipino, and Middle Eastern, while staying true to their origins.

**The Rise of Ingredient Icons for Social-First Menus** – Visually striking and flavour-packed hero ingredients: ube, smoked sea salt, hot honey, and heritage pork to create menu items with instant Instagram and TikTok appeal.

**Technique-Driven Theatre at Every Service Point** – Street cooking methods (wok hei, spit roasting and skewer grilling) in open kitchens.

**Sustainable Street and Planet-Friendly Crowd-Pleasers** – Adapt sustainable, high-impact ingredients (e.g., finger millet, black turtle beans, orange tomatoes) into familiar street formats, such as loaded fries and sliders.

## TRENDING CUISINE

Middle Eastern and African cuisine is gaining recognition in general terms like shawarma.

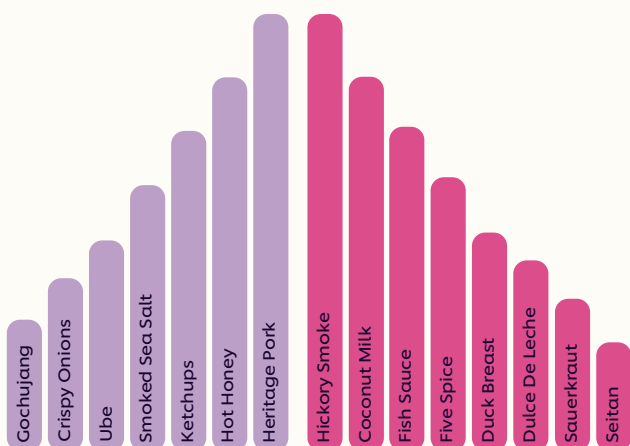
- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Greek</b>          | <b>Persian</b>        |
| <b>Latin American</b> | <b>Middle Eastern</b> |
| <b>Pan Asian</b>      | <b>Filipino</b>       |
| <b>Argentinian</b>    | <b>African</b>        |
| <b>Sri Lankan</b>     |                       |
| <b>Vietnamese</b>     |                       |



**KEY** ■ Trending ■ Emerging

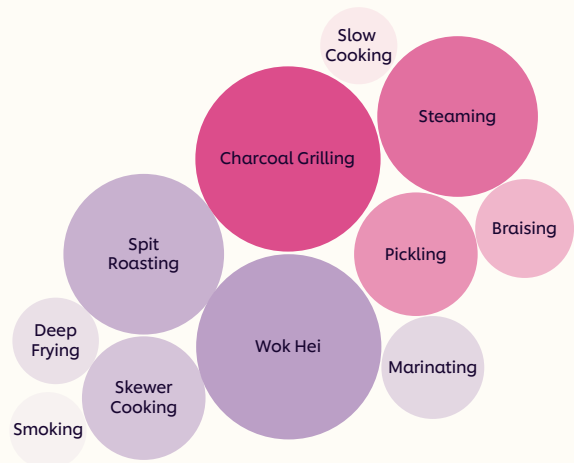
## TRENDING AND EMERGING INGREDIENTS

Novel and interesting ingredients are among the fastest-growing searches, with rapid YoY increases in ube, Gochujang, and smoked sea salt. But also in condiments (hot honey, ketchups) and desserts (chia seeds, biscoff).



## TRENDING AND EMERGING TECHNIQUES

North African cooking techniques of skewers and charcoal grilling are becoming popular.



# INGREDIENTS TO WATCH

## STREET FOOD COUTURE

WRITTEN BY Ryan Cahill

WANT YOUR DISHES TO ATTRACT ATTENTION? CONSIDER THESE TRENDING INGREDIENTS IN YOUR *Street Food Couture* RECIPES.



**Street Food has been around for over a thousand years, and yet it continues to evolve year on year. New flavours, textures and cuisines mean trends within Street Food are ever-changing, offering exciting new culinary experiences for diners who are after a straight-forward meal.**

**For 2026, there are a few key ingredients that are making their mark on the Street Food trend. Consider incorporating these into your Street Food couture creations to grab the attention of diners...**

### Ube

Already a Street Food staple in many Southeast Asian countries, Ube is a root vegetable known for its bold, striking purple colour and its sweet, nutty flavour. The ingredient has frequently cropped up in desserts, filled buns, lattes, and ice-creams and continues to attract the attention of diners.

### Chilli Crisp

With origins in China, Chilli Crisp is a crunchy, spicy condiment made with chilli flakes, garlic, and oil. It brings a perfect balance of heat, Umami, and texture to any dish. It's become an increasingly popular ingredient to elevate noodles, dumplings, and even burgers with a kick.

### Smoked Sea Salt

Smoked sea salt infuses dishes with a subtle smoky aroma without the need for actual smoke or fire – perfect for those looking to introduce this flavour profile.

### Hot Honey

You're probably not surprised to see Hot Honey on this list – it's cropping up everywhere. Hot Honey combines the classic sweetness of honey with a spicy chilli kick. It's perfect for drizzling over fried chicken, pizza, or roasted nuts. This sweet-heat combo is a rising star in Street Food.

*We understand that using ingredients that are more sustainable is important, especially when the fastest-growing generation (Gen-Z)*

*are paying close attention to how restaurants and business owners are improving the planet. With that in mind, the following two ingredients are sustainable and perfect additions to Street Food dishes.*

### Finger Millet

This ancient cereal grain has quickly become a Street Food staple. Common in India where it's used in Ragi Dosa or Porridge-style snacks, it adds a rustic and earthy bite to dishes like wraps, Dosa-style crepes, sliders and buns. It's also naturally gluten-free, rich in fibre and a source of plant-based protein, making it perfect for people with intolerances or following vegetarian/vegan diets.

### Orange Tomatoes

Orange Tomatoes are ideal for high-flavour dips, Street Food-style relishes, burger stacks, or smash sauces. But as well as being packed with flavour, they're also vivid and visual, helping to turn dishes into something memorable and striking – especially for younger audiences who are keen to create social media snaps of their meals.

# TAKE STREET FOOD TO THE NEXT LEVEL

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

**TAKING PRACTICAL FOOD OFFERINGS AND TRANSFORMING THEM INTO VIBRANT DINING EXPERIENCES, THE STREET FOOD REVOLUTION IS IN FULL SWING. HERE IS HOW YOU CAN EMBRACE IT AND BE PART OF IT, ALL WITHIN *your own culinary world.***



**Responding to a growing demand for bold flavours and innovative presentations on a budget, the art of Street Food has globally expanded into one of the leading creative powers of gastronomy. Street vendors are reinventing their classic recipes by incorporating gourmet ingredients, modern cooking techniques and cultural fusions.**

**At the same time, the use of social networks has allowed these local businesses to get worldwide recognition, inviting diners to explore new flavours and share their experiences, generating a community around Street Food. Suddenly, what once emerged out of necessity has become an artistic expression that celebrates a region's culinary diversity and creativity.**

**The beat of the street is one we can all move to – and here are seven adaptable ideas that will help bring that energy into any space.**

### 1. Themed Pop-Up Events

Hosting temporary events that celebrate different types of dishes from around the world allows you to embrace variety as the essence of Street Food, which can help attract new audiences and maintain the interest of regular customers.

### 2. Interactive Experiences

Being able to watch food being prepared is appealing for diners, particularly when it comes to the techniques used in creating their Street Food favourites. Provide memorable experiences with workshops where customers can learn how to prepare typical dishes.

### 3. Rotational Menus

A menu that changes regularly reflects the daily evolution of the Street Food offerings – featuring new recipes or specialities from different regions. This can encourage customers to return and try something new.

### 4. Creative Pairings

Offer drink recommendations that complement Street Food dishes. This can enhance the dining experience and increase sales.

### 5. Customisable Options

Bringing in diners' personal preferences, Street Food allows customers to customise their dishes and choose ingredients or spice levels, giving them a sense of control over their satisfaction.

### 6. Collaborations with Local Artists

At the heart of Street Food is culture – and culture comes in all shapes and sizes. Invite local artists to showcase their work in your business, which can help bring their audience and enrich the consumer experience.

### 7. Loyalty Programs

A rewards program that offers discounts or free meals after a certain number of purchases will increase loyalty and encourage customers to return.

# BANH MI MELT





# BANH MI MELT

BY **BRANDON COLLINS** AND **PINAR BALPINAR**

Banh Mi is a beloved Street Food with a rich history. This version introduces a grilled element, finished with mayonnaise for a golden, crispy crust. An aioli infused with kaffir lime leaves adds an earthy citrus note, while pickled carrot and daikon bring a bright, tangy contrast to the chargrilled chicken, which is enhanced with umami flavours from soy and chicken stock. A drizzle of crispy chilli oil adds a final touch of warmth and depth.



**BRANDON COLLINS**  
**EXECUTIVE CHEF**  
Unilever Food Solutions,  
North America



**PINAR BALPINAR**  
Innovation and Marketing Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Türkiye

## INGREDIENTS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1.2 kg Grilled chicken filet or grilled chicken thigh cooked sous vide | 400 ml <b>Hellmann's Mayonnaise</b>                      |
| <b>Pickled Vegetables</b>  | 15 ml <b>Knorr Professional Chicken Jelly Bouillon</b>   |
| 200 gm Carrot julienne   | Zest and juice of 1 lemon (or the zest of a kaffir lime) |
| 200 gm Daikon julienne   | 20 pcs (2 cm thick) Sourdough bread                      |
| 120 ml Rice vinegar  | 500 g Provolone cheese, grated                           |
| 120 ml Water   | Crispy chilli oil  |
| 25 gm Sugar  | 500 g Cucumber sliced thin                               |
| 5 gm Salt  | 3 pcs Jalapenos, sliced                                  |
| <b>Kaffir Lime Mayo</b>  | 1 Bunch cilantro   |
| 5 pcs Kaffir lime leaves   | 150 g <b>Hellmann's Mayonnaise for Grilling</b>          |
| 3 pcs Garlic   |  |
| 15 g Ginger, grated  |  |
| 60 ml Soy sauce  |  |
| 15 ml Toasted sesame oil   |  |

## METHOD

- 1 Add all ingredients for the kaffir lime aioli to a blender and blend till well-combined.
- 2 Spread kaffir lime mayo on the slices of bread.
- 3 Add grated provolone.
- 4 Add grilled chicken.
- 5 Drizzle with crispy chilli oil.
- 6 Add pickled vegetables.
- 7 Add cucumber slices.
- 8 Add jalapenos and cilantro leaves.
- 9 Add grated provolone.
- 10 Close with a slice of bread spread with the kaffir lime mayo.
- 11 Spread the Hellmann's Mayonnaise on the outside of the sandwich and grill on both sides till golden brown.

## Hellmann's Mayonnaise

Hellmann's Mayonnaise delivers the rich, creamy taste that chefs and customers know and love.



# SPIGY FRIED CHICKEN BAO BURGER





# SPICY FRIED CHICKEN BAO BURGER

BY **THAIS GIMENEZ** AND **EVERT VERMANDEL**

This burger perfectly captures the Street Food Couture trend evolution - where everyday favourites are elevated through bold flavours and unexpected form. Juicy, spice-kissed fried chicken tucked into a toasted, pillowy bao bun brings together the best of handheld satisfaction with refined textural contrast, while the colourful carrot salad adds brightness and balance. This playful fusion dish reflects the contemporary street food scene's shift toward chef-driven creativity: familiar comfort delivered with high-impact presentation, global inspiration, and flavour that feels both accessible and impactful.



**THAIS GIMENEZ**  
Executive Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions,  
South America



**EVERT VERMANDEL**  
Executive Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions,  
Netherlands

**Knorr Professional  
Blue Dragon Sweet  
Chilli Dipping Sauce**



## INGREDIENTS

### Fried Chicken & Marinade

2kg chicken pieces  
1l **Hellmann's Professional Mayo**  
2 tbsp **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**  
4 tbsp Malt Vinegar  
2 tbsp **Knorr Garlic Puree**

### Fried Chicken Coating

600g Plain flour  
120g Cornflour  
2 tbsp Salt  
4 tsp Black pepper  
4 tsp Smoked paprika  
2 tsp Garlic powder  
2 tsp Onion powder  
2 tsp Dried oregano  
1 tsp Cayenne pepper

### Bao Buns & Fillings (Sweet Potato Mayonnaise, Kimchi Cabbage)

10 bao steam buns (9/10 cm diameter)  
1 red cabbage  
Korean Gochujang paste  
500g kimchi  
100 ml rice vinegar  
100 ml honey  
500ml **Hellmann's Professional Mayonnaise**  
150ml **Knorr Professional Blue Dragon Sweet Chilli Dipping Sauce**  
1 kg sweet potatoes  
15g sesame seeds  
30ml **Knorr Intense Umami Flavours**

### Colourful Carrot Salad

1,000 g colorful carrots (yellow, orange, purple)  
100 ml orange juice + zest of one orange  
20 ml white wine vinegar  
40 ml olive oil  
15 g honey  
10 g salt  
2 g pepper  
20 g fresh herbs (chervil, parsley) Shape

### Bread Base

10 slices rustic bread or brioche (approx. 60-80 g each)  
Optional: 20 ml oil for toasting

## METHOD

### FRIED CHICKEN

- 1 Whisk all the marinade ingredients together.
- 2 Add chicken, coat well, cover and refrigerate 4-24 hours.
- 3 Combine all ingredients for fried chicken coating - plain flour, cornflour, salt, black pepper, smoked paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, dried oregano, cayenne.
- 4 Remove chicken from marinade (leave a light coating). Dredge in seasoned flour, pressing to create "craggly" bits.
- 5 For extra crispy, double dredge: dip back into marinade and again into seasoned flour.
- 6 Heat oil to 170–175°C. Fry in batches without overcrowding.

### KIMCHI CABBAGE

- 1 Shred the red cabbage and mix with the kimchi.

### SWEET POTATO MAYONNAISE

- 1 Cook the sweet potato until soft.
- 2 When cool, blend with gochujang, rice vinegar, honey, Hellmann's Professional Mayonnaise, Knorr Blue Dragon Sweet Chilli Dipping Sauce, Knorr Intense Umami Flavours.
- 3 When smooth chill the mixture in the fridge until needed for assembly.

### BAO BUNS

- 1 Toast the bao buns lightly on the flat side until golden.
- 2 Spread each half generously with sweet potato mayonnaise.
- 3 Spoon the kimchi and red cabbage mixture on the bottom & top with the fried chicken.
- 4 Top the chicken with a little more kimchi cabbage.
- 5 Top with the Bao bun top and serve sprinkled with toasted sesame seeds.

### TIPS

- 1 Add 1 tbsp baking powder to the flour for extra lift and crackle.
- 2 Rest coated chicken 10 minutes before frying to help crust adhere.
- 3 A splash of pickle brine in the marinade adds tang (Nashville-style).
- 4 Hold finished chicken on a rack at 75°C for up to 20 minutes for service.



# CARROZZA MELT

## VOL. 2





# CARROZZA MELT VOL.2

BY **BRANDON COLLINS** AND **PINAR BALPINAR**

The carrozza is an overlooked classic from Campania, also popular in New York, a deep-fried, mozzarella-filled twist on the grilled cheese sandwich. This elevated version combines mild, stretchy mozzarella with Spanish manchego for a nutty, fresh depth, complemented by sweet red peppers, grassy oregano, and rich, spiced chorizo. Pickled cucumbers add a bright, balancing contrast. The bread carries a Spanish influence through a romesco-inspired aioli made with sweet peppers, nutty almonds, pungent garlic, smoky paprika, and a touch of acidity. It's coated in a crumb mixture before deep-frying, ensuring maximum crunch with every bite.



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



**PINAR BALPINAR**  
Innovation and Marketing Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Türkiye

## INGREDIENTS (10 portions)

400g Mozzarella	<b>Crispy Coating</b>
200g <b>Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise</b>	200g Self-raising flour
5g Oregano	150g Panko
300g Manchego cheese	100ml Water
400g Chorizo, sliced	<b>Romesco Aioli</b>
150g Cucumber pickles, sliced	250g <b>Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise</b>
200g Roasted red pepper, strips	100g Roasted red pepper puree
20g White sandwich bread	50g Almonds, ground/paste
	5g Garlic, grated
	10ml Vinegar, sherry or apple
	50g Sugar
	1g Smoked paprika

## METHOD

- 1 Assemble the sandwich.
- 2 Spread romesco aioli on each bread slice.
- 3 Layer mozzarella, manchego, chorizo, roasted red pepper, and pickles.
- 4 Close with a second bread slice.
- 5 Dredge the sandwich in Knorr Crispy Coating Mix.
- 6 Roll in Knorr Panko for extra crunch.
- 7 Pan-fry or deep-fry at 170°C until golden brown and cheese is melted inside.
- 8 Drain excess oil, cut diagonally, and serve hot.
- 9 Blend roasted red pepper puree, almonds, garlic, vinegar, and smoked paprika into a paste.
- 10 Fold into Hellmann's Mayonnaise until smooth.

## Hellmann's Mayonnaise

Hellmann's Mayonnaise delivers the rich, creamy taste that chefs and customers know and love.



# BIRRIA TACO MELT





# BIRRIA TACO MELT

BY **DAVID GUEVARA** AND **PINAR BALPINAR**

Birria is a traditional barbacoa-style cooking method from Western Mexico, combining succulent stewed meat cooked until shreddable in a spiced, sour, acidic broth, which is then cooked into a broth that also provides a consommé for dipping the meat into. Here, these elements all stand on their own but an addition of cheese and a smoky beef mayo add silkiness and salt. This is freshened up with staple Mexican ingredients including lime juice, pickled jalapeños and red onions. All of which is then grilled to add char, a melted cheese finish evocative of the quesadilla cooked on the plancha at all good tacquerias.



**DAVID GUEVARA**  
Executive Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Mexico



**PINAR BALPINAR**  
Innovation and Marketing Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Türkiye

## INGREDIENTS

### For Beef Birria

2000 g Beef chuck or brisket

### 60 g Knorr Garde D'Or Red Wine Sauce

1200 ml Water  
150 g White onion  
20 g Garlic, chopped  
3 pcs Bay leaf  
2 pcs Cloves

### For Chilli Paste

20 g Dried chipotle peppers, canned  
60 g Tomato paste  
20 g Apple cider vinegar  
3 g Oregano, Mexican preferred  
2 g Cumin, ground  
3 g Smoked paprika

### For Birria Dip Sauce

100 g Hellmann's Mayonnaise  
250 g Birria braising liquid, reduced  
5 g Smoked paprika  
5 g Lime juice  
100 g Hellmann's BBQ Sauce

### For Birria Tacos

120 g Pulled beef birria, prepared, shredded  
400 g Cheddar cheese, shredded  
300 g Corn kernels, charred  
250 g Red bean paste  
150 g Jalapeno pickles, sliced  
150 g Red onion, julienne  
10 pcs Flour tortillas (20–22 cm)

**Hellmann's Barbecue Sauce 4.8kg**



## METHOD

### BEEF BIRRIA

- 1 In a rondeau or large pot, sweat onion and garlic in a little oil until golden.
- 2 Add the chilli paste and saute briefly to release aromas.
- 3 Add the beef pieces, bay leaf, cloves, and cinnamon stick.
- 4 Pour the Knorr Garde D'Or Red Wine Sauce over the beef.
- 5 Bring to a boil, then reduce heat.
- 6 Cover and simmer on low heat for 3 to 3.5 hours (or 150°C in the oven), until beef is tender and shreddable.
- 7 Remove the meat from the pot and shred it with a fork. Strain the cooking liquid and set it aside.
- 8 If necessary, reduce it slightly — the sauce should be smooth and pourable, but not watery.
- 9 Combine one-third of the sauce with the shredded meat, and reserve the remaining sauce for the birria sauce.

### CHILLI PASTE

- 1 Place the canned chipotle peppers, tomato paste, apple cider vinegar, oregano, cumin, and black pepper in a blender or food processor.
- 2 Blend until you achieve a smooth, thick paste.
- 3 If the mixture is too thick, add a small splash of water or some of the adobo liquid from the can to adjust the consistency.
- 4 Transfer the paste to a clean container and refrigerate until ready to use.

### BIRRIA DIP SAUCE

- 1 In a mixing bowl, combine Hellmann's Mayonnaise, the reduced birria liquid, smoked paprika, lime juice, and Hellmann's BBQ Sauce.
- 2 Whisk until the mixture is smooth and fully emulsified.
- 3 Taste and adjust seasoning if needed, then cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

### BIRRIA TACOS

- 1 Spread a thin layer of bean paste on tortillas.
- 2 Add pulled beef, cheddar, corn, jalapenos, and red onion.
- 3 Fold tortillas and grill on both sides until golden and cheese is melted.
- 4 Serve hot with birria dip sauce and lime wedges.



# CREATING A POSITIVE KITCHEN ENVIRONMENT

WRITTEN BY Anna Cafolla

**A HEALTHY, HARMONIOUS WORKING ENVIRONMENT IS THE *key to success.* HERE'S HOW TO ACHIEVE IT.**



**Despite what *The Bear* or shouty reality TV chefs might have you think, the modern kitchen is not a place defined by intimidation, drama and relentless hours. The chefs of today pride themselves on building successful teams and producing exceptional food – dishes from a kitchen that's all about respect, collaboration and work-life balance simply taste better.**

**Creating a positive kitchen environment is about more than just smooth service. You want a kitchen team to feel like they have ownership, clarity and trust. From giving staff a voice to knife-sharp organisational skills, defining success and work-life balance: four top chefs explain how to foster positive vibes in the kitchen.**

### 1. Give Your Team a Voice

For chef Brandon Collins, everyone deserves to have a say. "It's not necessarily a democracy in the kitchen, but give them the freedom to have some ownership, to buy into your vision," he advises. "Encourage your staff to share ideas on menus, stations and daily operations – something they can all take pride in. This shared responsibility not only motivates the team, but also lightens the pressure on leadership."

### 2. Lead With Respect

A calm, respectful kitchen is a more effective workplace. "For so long in this industry, we treated people like they were a number, or they were just another person to peel the potatoes or make the mash or steam the vegetables," says Brandon. "When I started in the industry, it was all about getting a good plate of food to the pass, and it was quite hard," says chef James Brown. "If you put a foot

wrong, you were told in an aggressive way. I think it's become more mature. Emphasise clear communication and constructive feedback. Respect builds trust, and when your team knows they can rely on you, they'll support each other and maintain focus under pressure."

### 3. Set Clear Goals

Be transparent about what success looks like, whether that's consistency or career growth for your team. "I think you've got to be really clear about what the end goal is, what we are trying to achieve and how we want to arrive there," advises James. "Outline expectations, standards and opportunities for the kitchen, removing any uncertainty and strengthening a professional feeling."

#### 4. Keep the Kitchen Flowing

Think of the kitchen as a well-choreographed performance, where every role has purpose – so states chef Thais Gimenez. “The kitchen flows beautifully when it’s organised, like a ballet, and everybody knows their tasks,” she says. “The vibe becomes efficient and positive. Provide prep lists, assign clear responsibilities and ensure open communication is consistent.”

#### 5. Promote Work-Life Balance

Treat every member of the brigade with equal respect, regardless of rank. For chef René-Noel Schiemer, everyone should feel like they’re on the same level. “We keep time, and don’t work 10 or 15 hours in the kitchen,” he says. “We work nine hours together and then go home, keeping a balance for families.” Limit excessively long shifts and simplify processes where possible. Chef René-Noel Schiemer suggests basic sauce

bases and pre-prepared components that save time and allow chefs to focus their energy on quality dishes – exactly when and where it matters: “This approach keeps the kitchen organised, efficient and overall, positive.”



# SEVEN QUICK STEPS TO STRENGTHENING YOUR TEAM

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

**EVERY TEAM IS ONLY AS STRONG AS THEIR WEAKEST PLAYER, SO A KEY PART OF BUILDING A BUSINESS IS *uplifting every member* ON THE JOURNEY. DISCOVER THE POWER IN BOOSTING YOUR TEAM AND THEIR SKILLSET WITH THE HELP OF CHEF JOANNE LIMOANCO-GENDRANO.**



**Even with the best ingredients and a high-tech setup, success is not guaranteed without a team that knows exactly what to do with it. Our research found that in 2026, there'll be a shift from a focus on ingredients to a growing appreciation for the skill and craftsmanship of the chef involved in creating food.**

**With over 20 years of experience in the business, Unilever Food Solutions' Executive Chef for Gulf & Indian Ocean Islands, Joanne Limoanco-Gendrano, knows what makes a perfect team. Part positive management, part supporting development – because if they succeed, so will you!**

**Here are Joanne's seven quick steps to strengthen your team:**

## Time in Training

Rushing into service without detailed training is a big mistake, so it's important to invest time and money.

This doesn't just mean showing them how to cook, but watching them cook the dish and creating a service simulation before you open. Repetition allows staff to correct errors before real-world cooking.

## Basics Beyond Cooking

Fundamentals like hygiene, safety, and service etiquette are just as critical as recipes. Having a well-rounded crew that knows a bit about every part of the process helps kitchens run smoothly.

## Mentors and Buddies

Pairing staff together encourages learning, accountability, and continuity, all while making sure things operate more sustainably. It also reduces reliance on a single person and builds a culture of shared responsibility.

## The Power of Multitasking

Encouraging the team to explore different interests and teaching them skills outside of their own daily

responsibilities builds long-term investments and interest in their roles.

## Keep Staff Motivated Through Development Programmes

Initiatives that combine routine work with extra-curricular programmes and certifications can allow people to grow within the business and take over certain tasks in the future.

## Simplicity Is Key

A tighter, focused menu makes it easier for staff at all levels to succeed. Having fewer dishes means faster training, more consistency and strong resilience to mistakes.

## Inspire, Don't Copy

Encouraging staff to utilise their own creativity in reinterpreting trends is a win-win situation. You are fostering a sense of encouragement and pride in their craft, and evolving your business by having the whole team lead into the future.

# BORDERLESS



# CUISINE

**In 2026, Borderless Cuisine takes another confident step, with a sharp focus on authenticity, craft, and respect. The year ahead builds on diners' growing interests in combining global flavours in a way that's respectful, refined, and creative, but taps more into their desire to see the chef's skills and cultural fluency at work. It's not 'fusion' for the fun and show of it, but a way to see real and exciting culinary exchanges on a plate.**

The appeal for many diners lies in the sense of discovery. In a world of political uncertainty, migration, and global shifts, Borderless Cuisine

offers solidarity through food. Diaspora communities continue to unlock access to hyperlocal ingredients and techniques – see the growing tastes for matcha or hojicha and curiosity for cuisines from Oaxacan food in southern Mexico to Chongqing cooking, a spicier sub-category of Sichuan. Younger generations are eager for meaningful experiences found in dishes that are inventive yet still grounded.

Borderless Cuisine thrives in full-service restaurants, where chefs have the space to explore and experiment with menus.

Heritage recipes are reinterpreted with modern flair, and there are bold combinations of familiar and lesser-known ingredients. Asian flavours continue to lead, but the range is widening into diverse regions, from Andean to Algerian.

Borderless Cuisine goes beyond fad. These dishes are not random mash-ups, but authentic and delightfully eclectic ways to find something this generation is craving most: cultural connection.

# BORDERLESS CUISINE

## Anchored Plates, Global Sparks

– Creative dishes with local roots, from za'atar-laced marinades to ube-infused desserts.

## Technique is the Passport –

Charcoal grilling, brining, wok hei.

## Borderless but not Identity-Less

– Not a melting pot, but a mosaic where each piece retains flavour and meaning.

## TRENDING CUISINE

### Oaxacan

A Southern Mexican cuisine.

### Andean

A range from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile.

### Algerian

North African cuisine.

### Emirati

A diverse span of the UAE.

### Basque

A Southwestern European cuisine spanning Spain and France.

### Sichuan

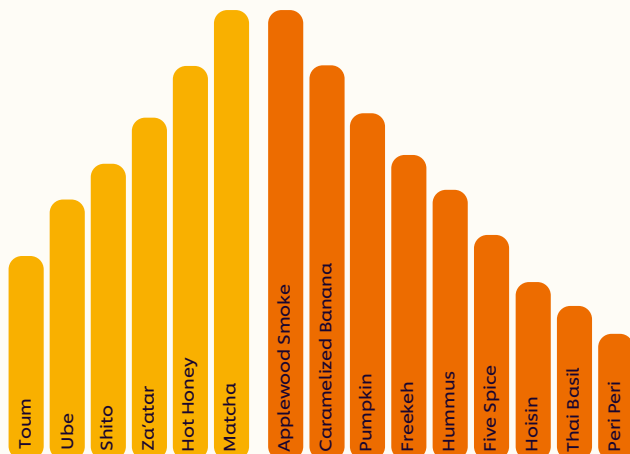
From the Southwestern Chinese province.



**KEY** ■ Trending ■ Emerging

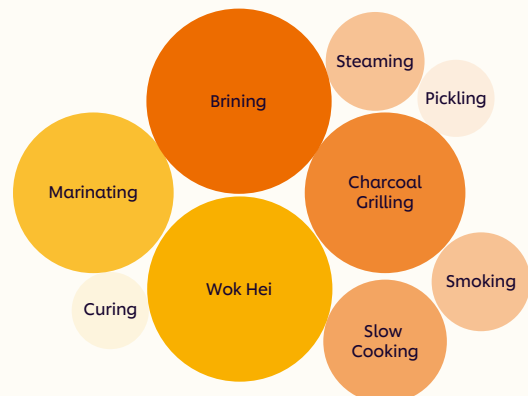
## TRENDING AND EMERGING INGREDIENTS

Ingredients dominate this trend: ube and shito, as well as more established matcha.



## TRENDING AND EMERGING TECHNIQUES

Techniques coming to greater prominence: brining, charcoal grilling, marinating.



# INGREDIENTS TO WATCH

## BORDERLESS CUISINE

WRITTEN BY Ryan Cahill

WANT YOUR DISHES TO ATTRACT ATTENTION? CONSIDER THESE TRENDING INGREDIENTS IN YOUR *Borderless Cuisine* RECIPES.



**Borderless Cuisine centres around the unity of global flavours. It's a celebration of international dishes, combining techniques and ingredients from around the world and bringing them to some of our favourite dishes.**

**For 2026, there are some standout ingredients making their mark within Borderless Cuisine. Consider incorporating these into your Culinary Roots creations to grab the attention of diners:**

### Kimchi

Fermentation continues to be at the forefront of culinary trends, and Kimchi is undeniably the fermentation staple. A Korean side dish, which is usually made from cabbage and radish, Kimchi is bold, tangy, and spicy with a distinct flavour which has become a common element of many dishes.

### Miso

Another fermented favourite, this soybean paste from Japan is known for its Umami flavour. While it was first used as a base for soups, it's now regularly found in glazes, marinades, dressings, and even desserts to introduce a savoury twist.

### Tahini

This creamy paste made from ground sesame seeds is much-loved in the Middle East. Its nutty richness makes it the perfect addition to salad dressings, desserts and smoothies, perfectly complementing both the sweet and the savoury.

### Pomegranate

Pomegranate may seem like an unlikely rising ingredient, but as curious chefs find new ways to stretch the possibilities of this fruit, its popularity increases. Pomegranate can add freshness and acidity to salads, stews, meat dishes, and desserts. It's great in juice form too. Its vibrant colour also helps to give dishes an aesthetic boost.

### Harissa

A North African chilli paste, Harissa is often made with roasted red peppers, garlic, and spices like cumin and coriander. More recently, its smoky, spicy flavour has gone mainstream and it is now used to elevate roasted vegetables, meats, and pasta dishes.

# HOW TO CAPTURE GEN-Z DINERS

WRITTEN BY Rhys Thomas

WHY REVIVING *tradition and storytelling* THROUGH  
FOOD IS SO IMPORTANT TO THIS GENERATION.



**Gen-Z is a very intentional dining generation. With the cost of living rapidly inflating, and markets saturated, they hark for a special experience with each meal. For them, this is often felt through a human connection and historical learning of the food they are engaging with.**

In the world of restaurants and food, diners are perhaps our most fickle customer base. Sometimes this is driven by trends; other times, it is shaped by society, economics, or the conditions we live in. As new generations become our guests, it's critical to understand what will inspire them, not just through their palate, but also through their minds and hearts.

According to new research, nearly two-thirds of Gen-Z diners view going out for food as a special occasion, even in casual and QSR environments. They also crave new experiences, like trying new cuisines, dishes, and flavours. That means when they do choose to dine out, it's often somewhere new, and getting them to return takes more than just good food.

The good news? Loyalty is paramount. The same study found that two-thirds of Gen-Z would drive further to eat somewhere they like rather than settle for something local. So the question is: how do you earn that loyalty?

Executive Chef for UFS Thailand, Jiraroj Navanukroh, says the answer lies in the experience. "They take photos of their food," he explains. "So presentation is vital. Maybe reimagine how a dish looks: highlight beautiful, satisfying ingredients." In other words, Gen-Z eats with their eyes first. But that doesn't mean you can skip the story.

"A picture paints a thousand words," says the UFS Philippines Executive Chef, Kenneth Cacho. "But those words still need meaning." He expands: "That means honouring traditional techniques, even if ingredients evolve." For Gen Z, overloaded with options, emotional and cultural connections matter. "Education plays a vital role. We have to show the history of a dish, what it should be, and how our version responds to that history. That's where the connection forms."

This also speaks to purpose. Today's diners want to feel that you stand for something. Whether you're a brand or a chef, your identity matters. Gen-Z can eat anything, anywhere, they need a reason to believe you do it best. That's why your menu should reflect a clear philosophy. You don't need to over-explain it – but the concept has to be felt.

Chef Kenneth also raises an important point about ethics, especially in the age of "borderless cuisine." Gen-Z grew up with global flavours, but telling those stories requires care and responsibility.

"Sinigang is a great example," he says. "It's a soup soured by a fruit – like Tamarind. If I don't have Tamarind, using vinegar isn't authentic. To make it responsibly, I'd need to use another fruit." In this case, the story of Sinigang is that it's fruit-soured. The fruit may change with the seasons, but cutting corners risks losing the very tradition Gen-Z wants to connect with.

# ADOBO FRIED CHICKEN





# ADOBO FRIED CHICKEN

BY **KENNETH CACHO**

This inventive twist on a Filipino classic reimagines the beloved adobo—often thought of as the unofficial dish of the Philippines—in crisp, modern form. Boneless Cornish game hen is marinated in rice wine vinegar and soy sauce, each bite infused with that tangy, Savoury depth, before being fried to crackling perfection. A smooth roasted garlic puree lends richness, while a split butter-soy gravy adds a luxe umami sheen. Bright watercress and roasted beets, lightly pickled for balance, cut through the intensity with freshness and gentle sweetness. On the side, green onion potato fritters offer a satisfying crunch and aromatic lift, rounding out a dish that celebrates the bold harmony of flavours that define Filipino cuisine.



**KENNETH CACHO**  
Country Executive Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Philippines

## INGREDIENTS

### Marinade

100ml Rice wine vinegar  
25ml Brewed soy sauce  
25g Garlic, minced  
1g Bay leaves  
0.5g Black, freshly ground pepper  
5g **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**  
400g Halved and deboned whole half side Cornish game hen

### Breadcrumbs

200g Breadcrumbs

### Pickled Roasted Beets

100ml Distilled vinegar  
100g White sugar  
2pcs Bay leaves  
2g Coriander seeds  
12pcs Pepper  
2pcs Star anise  
10g **Knorr Aromat**  
Beetroots, baked, peeled, and cut

### Roasted Garlic Puree

300g Garlic, boiled for 10 minutes  
50g Extra virgin olive oil  
Thyme  
25g **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**  
150ml Cooking cream

### Green Onion Potato Fritters

10g Green onions, roughly chopped  
10g Parsley, roughly chopped  
1 Egg  
1 Potato (shredded)  
200 ml Water  
Nutmeg  
White ground pepper  
12g Baking powder  
50g All-purpose flour  
12g **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**  
10ml Cooking cream  
Vegetable oil, for frying

### Split Butter And Soy Gravy

100g Brown chicken stock  
10g Brewed soy sauce  
5ml Worcestershire sauce  
75g Unsalted clarified butter

### Garnish

Picked watercress  
Green leeks, fine julienne

**Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**



## METHOD

- 1** To prepare the marinade, combine ingredients in a mixing bowl. Whisk until well-blended and aromatic, then pour over the deboned chicken. Marinate in the refrigerator for at least four hours.
- 2** Remove from the marinade and pat dry thoroughly. Vacuum-seal and cook sous vide at 68°C (154°F) for one hour, then cool. Coat the chicken evenly with the breadcrumbs and follow the pack instructions. Deep fry at 180°C (350°F) until golden brown and the internal temperature reaches 74°C (165°F). Drain on kitchen paper and keep warm.
- 3** For the pickled roasted beets, bring rice vinegar, sugar, salt, and chosen aromatics to a boil in a saucepan. Simmer gently for about 15 minutes to allow the flavours to infuse, then pour the hot pickling liquid over the roasted beets. Let the beets marinate for two days in the refrigerator.
- 4** To prepare the roasted garlic puree, heat garlic cloves, oil, and fresh thyme in a pan to 170°C (338°F), frying gently until the garlic turns golden and aromatic. Strain and transfer the garlic to a Thermomix or blender. Blend with cream at 70°C (158°F) for three minutes until velvety smooth, then emulsify with a small amount of the reserved garlic oil.
- 5** For the green onion-potato fritters, blend green onions and parsley with egg until fine. In a separate bowl, bring water to a boil, remove from heat, and stir in shredded potato to form a smooth mash. Once cooled slightly, mix with the herb-egg blend to create a soft dough. Roll and cut into bite-sized portions, then deep fry at 180°C (356°F) until golden and crisp. Drain on paper towels and hold warm.
- 6** To prepare the split butter-soy gravy, combine chicken stock, soy sauce, and Worcestershire sauce in a saucepan and bring to a gentle boil. In another pan, saute sliced leeks in butter until fragrant and nutty. Blend the leek-butter mixture until smooth, then strain and fold it into the warm soy-stock base. Allow the mixture to split naturally and create a rich, glossy sauce.
- 7** To serve, assemble the plate and garnish with fresh watercress and fine julienne leeks.



# CRISPY THAI FISH AND CHIP BURGER





# CRISPY THAI FISH AND CHIP BURGER

BY **Jiraroj Navanukroh**  
AND **MAURITS VAN VROENHOVEN**

Fish and chips is a classic dish synonymous with Great Britain, and this version reimagines it as a convenient burger with a Thai-inspired twist. A British-style batter gives the fresh fish a Savoury crunch, complemented by thinly sliced potato straws seasoned with Knorr Chicken Powder for extra depth of flavour. The Thai influence shines through in the tartar sauce, enriched with coconut, coriander, and lime to add a citrusy, tropical sweetness. A vibrant slaw of mango, carrot, and cucumber dressed in a chilli-lime vinaigrette cuts through the richness, bringing bright, spicy notes that make the dish both familiar and refreshingly unique.

## INGREDIENTS

### Fish Burger

400g White fish filet  
(100g x 4 pcs)

### Batter

120g All-purpose flour  
120g Milk  
120g Cold water  
4g Baking powder  
5g Salt

### Coconut Lime Tartar Sauce

100g **Hellmann's  
Real Mayonnaise**  
50g Full  
coconut cream

### 10g Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours

10g Capers, chopped  
20g Shallots, chopped  
15g Pickles, chopped  
10g Coriander leaves,  
roughly chopped  
10g Parsley, chopped

### Mango, Carrot, Cucumber Slaw

100g Unripe  
mango, julienne  
100g Carrot, julienne  
100g Cucumber,  
julienne

### Chilli Lime Vinaigrette

100g **Knorr Intense  
Citrus Flavours**  
40g Thai fish sauce  
40g Sugar  
20g Thai red  
chilli, chopped  
20g Garlic, chopped

### Crispy Potato Straws

300g Potatoes  
suitable for fries  
5g **Knorr Professional  
Chicken Bouillon  
Powder**  
4 Hamburger  
potato buns

### Burger Assembly

8g Coriander leaves  
12g Green  
lettuce leaves



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



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

## Hellmann's Mayonnaise

Hellmann's Mayonnaise delivers the rich, creamy taste that chefs and customers know and love.



## METHOD

- 1 Prepare the tartar sauce by mixing all ingredients together until combined.
- 2 Prepare the vinaigrette by mixing lime juice, fish sauce, sugar, red chilli, and garlic. Stir well and adjust seasoning to taste.
- 3 Put mango, carrot, and cucumber in a mixing bowl. Add the chilli lime vinaigrette, toss well, and set aside.
- 4 For the potato straws: Clean the potato, cut into small julienne, wash, dry, and deep-fry at 160°C for about 2-3 minutes until golden and crispy. Remove and drain well, then season with KCP.
- 5 Prepare the coating batter by mixing all-purpose flour, milk, cold water, baking powder, and salt together until combined.
- 6 Dip fish in flour, then into the batter. Deep-fry at 185°C for 6-7 minutes until cooked and golden brown. Set aside.
- 7 To assemble the burger: Toast the potato bun. Spread coconut lime tartar sauce on the bun, then add green lettuce leaves and slaw. Add the fried fish, crispy potato straws, and a little more coconut lime tartar sauce. Top with the other half of the potato bun.



# SCOTCH PEKING DUCK EGG





# SCOTCH PEKING DUCK EGG

BY **JAMES BROWN**

Crisp, rich and unapologetically hybrid, the Peking Duck Scotch Egg embodies the Borderless Cuisine trend - where culinary traditions collide to create something entirely new. Combining the aromatic depth and lacquered intensity of classic Peking duck with the comforting familiarity of a British Scotch egg, it delivers both discovery and comfort in every bite. Succulent duck, a soft yolk centre and a crunchy coating come together in a bold example of how chefs are blending global influences to create menus that feel worldly, modern and irresistibly craveable.

## INGREDIENTS

### Scotch Peking Duck Egg

10 Duck or Hen Eggs (boiled for 5 minutes and peeled)

1.2kg Shredded Duck Mix

20g Ground Five Spice (toasted)

300g Cheddar Cheese

1.5kg Panko Breadcrumbs

500g Flour

3 Eggs (beaten)

15g **Knorr Chicken Bouillon Powder**

### Picked Cucumber & Onion Salad

200ml Cider Vinegar

150ml Water

35g Sugar

8g **Knorr Vegetable Bouillon Powder**

6 Spring Onions (finely diced)

2 Cucumbers (peeled into ribbons)

### Dipping Gravy

80g **Knorr Poultry Gravy**

15g **Knorr Ginger Puree**

150ml **Knorr Soy Sauce**

350ml Water

100ml Honey

40g Green Chillies (chopped)



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

**Knorr Professional  
Gluten Free Gravy  
Granules for Poultry**



## METHOD

### SCOTCH EGG

- 1 Carefully wrap the soft egg in the duck mix (adjust consistency with raw egg & breadcrumbs if needed)
- 2 Breadcrumb the outside of the duck-wrapped egg, using the raw egg to help coat it
- 3 Deep fry the breadcrumb egg at 170°C for 8-10 minutes or golden brown
- 4 Drain the egg and put to one side

### DIPPING GRAVY

- 1 Bring the water, soy & ginger to the boil
- 2 Whisk in the Knorr Gravy granules
- 3 Remove from the heat & whisk in the honey and chopped chillies

### PICKLED CUCUMBER & ONION SALAD

- 1 Bring the vinegar, water, sugar and Knorr Vegetable Bouillon Powder to the boil and then simmer for 2 minutes
- 2 Remove from the heat and allow to cool
- 3 Add the cucumber and spring onions (and coriander as an optional addition!)

### TO ASSEMBLE

- 1 Serve the Scotch Peking Duck egg, alongside the Pickled Cucumber & Onion Salad, with a little dish of the Dipping Gravy.



A top-down view of a Barley Greens Bowl. The bowl is filled with a mix of green and red leafy vegetables, sliced green tomatoes, pieces of salmon, and other ingredients. It is garnished with fresh microgreens and several colorful edible flowers in shades of purple, yellow, and orange. The bowl sits on a light-colored, textured ceramic plate. To the left of the main bowl is a small white bowl with a blue floral pattern containing a vibrant green dressing. Above the main bowl is another small white bowl containing a smooth, light-colored dressing. The entire scene is set against a dark, metallic, brushed metal background.

# BARLEY GREENS BOWL

**WITH MATCHA YUZU DRESSING**



# BARLEY GREENS BOWL WITH MATCHA YUZU DRESSING

BY **FRANK JACOBSEN, ERIC CHUA AND BENSON XIE**

Matcha is used in this recipe to bring an earthy, grassy element to a hearty salad using a variety of Japanese-centred ingredients. The base of the salad is cooked barley, which is nutty and has a satisfying bite. A traditional green salad complements this with fresh crisp leaves. Additions include soft tofu for a silky tender mouthfeel, along with roasted shiitake mushrooms, which add a meatiness to the dish. Cucumber ribbons offset this with freshness. Two dressings are added, one uses yuzu and honey to bring citrus and sweetness, the other brings black garlic and soy to add sour savoriness, resulting in a well-balanced and satisfying dish.

## INGREDIENTS

900 g Barley, cooked  
250 g Mesclun green salad  
500 g Soft tofu cubes  
450 g Roasted shiitake mushrooms  
100 g Goji berries  
250 g Cucumber ribbons  
30 g Perilla / green mint  
5 g Matcha powder

## Dressing

400 g **Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise**  
50 ml **Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours**  
25 ml Rice vinegar  
5 g Matcha powder  
20 g Honey

## METHOD

- 1 Mix all the ingredients together to make a salad. Top off with a sprinkle of matcha.
- 2 Serve with the dressing on the side.



**FRANK JACOBSEN**  
Lead Chef and Culinary Advisor, Unilever Food Solutions, Denmark



**ERIC CHUA**  
Executive Chef and Future Chef Platform Lead, Unilever Food Solutions, South East Asia



**BENSON XIE**  
Chef Lead, E-Platform China

## Hellmann's Mayonnaise

Hellmann's Mayonnaise delivers the rich, creamy taste that chefs and customers know and love.



# DINER



# DESIGNED

**Diner Designed is moving forward with a renewed sense of clarity. In 2025, the trend for personalised meals leaned on technology, 'build-your-own' formats, and theatrical, interactive dining. In 2026, it's finding balance, with tastes shifting towards simpler but still enjoyable, thoughtful, dynamic-feeling meals, while restaurant service is smooth and efficient.**

The approachable format gives diners what they crave: a sense of choice in a world of both endless overwhelm, and where much feels curated for them. They want food that bends a little to their needs.

Maybe that means swapping a topping or adjusting a sauce, or a dish that matches growing concerns for health and dietary preferences without dipping on taste or quality. These moments of control make dining feel empowering and fun.

Quick-service restaurants are a natural fit for Diner Designed-eating. For operators, a small degree of flexibility creates big value: it builds loyalty, generates buzz, and adds a premium feel without heavy cost. For diners, it transforms everyday eating: Customisable bowls or open kitchens with counter seating for an exciting glimpse of the process

while keeping things quick. Think of the growing appeal of hot-pot restaurants and elevated salad bar concepts that let everyone create their own version of the perfect meal.

Diner Designed goes beyond the plate, and while you might still snap that pic for Instagram before you pick up your fork, the focus has shifted: to ownership of the experience, a sense of choice and connection that makes eating out both routine and memorable.

# DINER DESIGNED

**Customisable Plate-Building Becomes Core to Menus**—Modular dishes where diners can select proteins, sauces, sides, and garnishes.

**Ingredient Stations as Theatre and Efficiency Drivers**—Front-of-house preparation: live carving, sauce finishing, topping assembly

can act as both entertainment and a way to showcase freshness and skill.

**Hybrid Menu Items**—Blending crowd-pleasing bases (burgers, bowls, flatbreads) with rotating seasonal or global-inspired toppings.

**Data-Informed Flavour Rotation**—POS data, online reviews, loyalty programme insights for faster, evidence-based menu tweaks.

## TRENDING INGREDIENTS PER REGION

### Middle East

Lemoncello, pistachio, chia seed, kombucha, lychee.

### North America

Dill pickle, biscoff, crispy onions, raw fish.

### Europe

Hot honey, hickory smoke, peri peri, nduja.

### South East Asia

Beetroot, ube, maple, pistachio.

### Africa

Boba, espresso, maple, beetroot.



**KEY** ■ Trending ■ Emerging

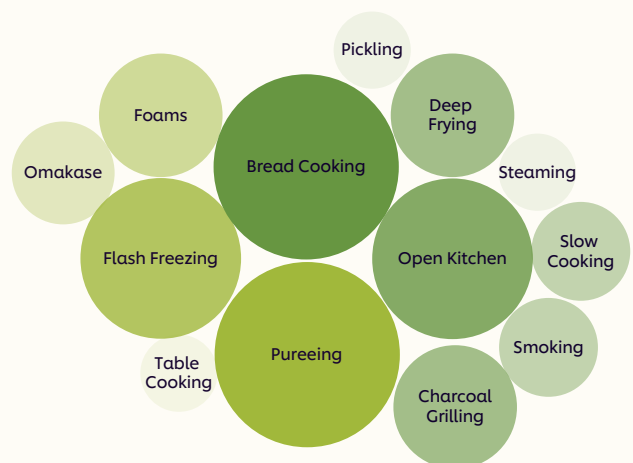
## TRENDING INGREDIENTS

Bright Colours such as ube and beetroot, and intense flavours such as dill pickles and smoked sea salt are showing significant growth. Small but mighty customisations.



## TRENDING AND EMERGING TECHNIQUES

New ways of eating, through omakase and communal eating through table cooking and Korean BBQ. Techniques are among the strongest growing topics—foams, purees, and flash freezing.



# DIPPINGS AND TOPPINGS: A GUIDE TO PERSONALISATION

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

**IN A TIME WHEN THE IMPORTANCE OF CHOICE PLAYS A KEY ROLE IN ATTRACTING NEW DINERS, CHEF BRANDON COLLINS SHARES HIS SECRETS TO EXPLORING MENU PERSONALISATION – *minimum effort, maximum impact.***



**There was a time when the ultimate restaurant experience was about consistency, but as digital connections allow diners to become increasingly aware and vocal in their preferences, the trend of personalisation has a growing role in the hospitality industry.**

**Our research found that customisable plate-building becoming core to menus is the number one most significant point within the Diner Designed trend. Dining has become less about giving strict rules and instructing your guests of every move, and more about providing them with the perfect building blocks to a memorable experience that can never be replicated. With Gen-Z audiences at the forefront of this movement of choice, restaurants are having to respond to the growing individual needs of their future customers. Here, Unilever Food Solutions' Corporate Executive Chef Brandon Collins has tips and tricks on how to embrace this evolution without putting extra pressure on the restaurant and its staff.**

## **Sauces and Condiments**

One of the easiest ways to embrace customisation is offering a variety of sauces, dressings, or vinaigrettes. People love to dip and drizzle! You don't need new recipes – just use sauces you already have on the menu, and make larger batches, like moving from a quarter to a gallon. This allows you to offer a personal experience without adding complexity. The sauces are stable, so nothing goes to waste, and it actually helps service run more smoothly while giving guests the flavour flexibility they want.

## **Toppings and Extras**

Offering toppings and additional ingredients gives diners control and accommodates preferences. We know Cilantro divides opinions, so letting people choose whether they want to include it ensures everyone enjoys the dish. The same applies to other menu items: guests can swap or combine ingredients from different dishes. But the key is using what you

already have. People are creating their own experience in their own sandbox, so the dishes will naturally vary. By monitoring what components are popular, you can inform future menu development and make new dishes easier for staff to execute while keeping customisation simple and appealing.

## **Cooking Technique**

Cooking techniques are another way to let people customise. A chicken tender can be fried, roasted, or griddled, all using the same equipment. For bigger proteins like short ribs, you can offer a braised version or a grilled Galbi-style option using the same components. It also accommodates dietary preferences – someone may avoid fried food in favour of roasting. Technique variation adds perceived choice and enhances the dining experience while keeping preparation practical and efficient for the kitchen.

# DINER-DESIGNED ON A BUDGET, ACCORDING TO FOUR CHEFS

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

**AWAY FROM HIGH-TECH, HIGH-COST SOLUTIONS, EMBRACING THE DINER-DESIGNED TREND CAN BE A GREAT WAY TO ECONOMICALLY EVOLVE YOUR BUSINESS AND OPEN DOORS TO NEW AUDIENCES. TO INSPIRE YOUR NEXT MOVE, FOUR UNILEVER FOOD SOLUTIONS' CHEFS SHARE THEIR STORIES ON THIS *major food trend.***



**Offering diners an opportunity to tailor their own culinary adventures is an important step in responding to the evolving cultural movement of embracing individuality and choice. Our research shows that ordering apps, QR codes and self-service kiosks are now accepted and appealing norms in quick-service and casual restaurants.**

**But while ideas that embrace technology, AI or visual experiences can be costly, you can also do it in ways that are both cost-effective and creative. With different global perspectives, these four UFS chefs are here to share their stories that will help you in crafting your own version of a Diner Designed experience.**

## **Eric Chua Keeps It Simple**

It's important not to overcomplicate things – any menu can embrace that personal feeling with some slight tweaks. Whether it's organising it according to personality types, zodiac signs or birth months, you create a deeper sense of connection with the person that is tasting it. Even just naming it in a way that builds that personal connection is the simplest way to do it. This does require research, but you should be analysing your customer profile anyway – you're operating within your own neighbourhood.

## **Pick and Choose with René Noel Schiemer**

Although this trend is often seen as expensive, there are many cost-effective ways to do it. The easiest one is to make the core dish vegetarian or vegan and then offer five add-ons, like fish, chicken, beef... so you have this base that is simple

and affordable while still giving diners choice. Protein is the most expensive part, so this approach also saves money and reduces waste, all the while creating that key element of flexibility. By keeping the foundation straightforward and letting people personalise with toppings or extras, you can achieve an experience without overcomplicating or overspending.

## **Joanne Limoanco-Gendrano Embraces Education**

I have seen a lot more front-of-house people getting involved in food preparation – even just the simplest action of pouring things or cracking something in front of the diner can create such a buzz. Fine dining started this, with high-end meals like Steak Tartare conceptualised around the experience of grinding it in front of the customer. Today, this approach has trickled down into all levels of the food industry. Whether it's giving a choice of several ready-made sauces or a Dim Sum cart service where you

mix a sauce on the spot – spicy or not – and people can see it. I recently saw a modern Middle Eastern place doing mini shawarmas, sliced and wrapped tableside and pressed over coals. You could even choose to add fries – it's a little window of choice, but a meaningful one nonetheless.

#### Thaís Gimenez Makes Subtle Moves

I think it's all about the experience – and this can be done on a budget by using data smartly. If a customer always orders well-done beef or celebrates their anniversary at your place every year, you already have the information to anticipate their needs. Have the child's chair ready, suggest the meat the way they like it, or note the occasion. Even small tweaks, like presenting the same ingredient with a different technique – braised tomatoes instead of seared tomatoes – creates a new experience at no extra cost. It's about using what you already know

about your customers, changing the wording or preparation slightly, and making them feel seen. That's personalisation, that's Diner Designed, without needing expensive tech or major investment.



# NEW RULES OF DINING

## ACCORDING TO GEN-Z

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

**JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER CREATIVE INDUSTRY, THE CULINARY WORLD IS IN A STATE OF FLUX AS IT SHIFTS ITS FOCUS TO THE FUTURE GENERATION OF BIG SPENDERS. DEFINED BY THEIR OWN RULES AND A CLEAR SET OF PREFERENCES, GEN-Z PRESENTS** *the next big challenge.*



**With fast-growing global spending power, Gen-Z are on their way to becoming every brand's target customer. Our research shows that 84% of Gen-Z eat during their commute, and snacks have become a vital part of their working day.**

**Both the richest and the largest generation in humanity's history, they are the future – both literally and metaphorically. In terms of their evolving spending power, long-term growth for any business is impossible without considering their clearly defined choices. But, what do they expect when dining out?**

**Four of Unilever Food Solutions' global chefs dig into their own real life experiences and share insights for getting the future customer on your side. From portion sizes to choice of techniques, these are the steps to future-proofing your culinary business.**

**Brandon Collins,**  
Corporate Executive Chef (US)

One of the biggest things with Gen-Z is that they're not eating large portions. They go out with friends, sit together, and order multiple small dishes rather than big entrees. Shareable, affordable plates work best, and adding small, easy-to-make mocktails helps because they generally aren't drinking alcohol. They love international flavours in familiar forms – like Kimchi in Risotto balls or Butter Chicken on Nachos – and playful, approachable twists on classic dishes.

**Joanne Limoanco-Gendrano,**  
Executive Chef (PH)

Gen-Z like to have a hand in what they eat. They want choices – what sauce goes with their dish, which side or carb, even little details like sprinkles on fries. Having an interactive element to the dish is important, too. A little Instagram friendly moment, whether it's opening a container, pouring a sauce, or a presentation that creates a visual experience.

**James Brown,**  
Executive Chef (UK)

Gen-Z decide where to eat very quickly – they look on Instagram, and if it looks cool, they go there. They're immediate, informed, and positive, so you have to strike that balance. If you're unsure, ask them first, then refine those findings with your experience. For snackable dishes, you don't always need new items – half portions from other things on the menu, a small salad or snack section, maybe some fresh juices... it has to feel authentic and practical, not forced.

**René Noel Schiemer,**  
Culinary Consultant (DE)

Tapping into Gen-Z isn't easy, but it helps to meet them where they are. In workplace restaurants, they often skip the canteen for trendy Street Food or bowls, so offering fresh, visually-appealing, fitness-or speciality-focused dishes draws them back. Location also matters, so understanding local preferences and offering creative, approachable options is key.

# LAHMAGUN-STYLE QUESADILLA





# LAHMAGUN-STYLE QUESADILLA

BY **WESLEY BAY** AND **PINAR BALPINAR**

Inspired by lahmacun, this Middle Eastern style flatbread takes the form of a quesadilla, topped, folded, and grilled to perfection. Traditional lahmacun flavours shine through in the Savoury beef mince, rich tomatoes, warm paprika, fragrant mint, creamy yogurt, and the deep spice of harissa and garlic. The addition of cheese brings a sweet, caramelized richness, while grilling creates a warm, comforting dish that blends Middle Eastern spice with the indulgent melt of a quesadilla.



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



**PINAR BALPINAR**  
Innovation and Marketing Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Türkiye

## INGREDIENTS

### Mince Meat Filling

750 g Beef mince meat  
225 g **Knorr Professional Tomato and Basil Sauce**  
35 g Paprika  
30 g **Knorr Professional Beef Bouillon Powder**  
5 g Za'atar  
10 pcs Flour tortillas (25-30cm)

500 g Sweet white onions, thinly sliced  
500 g Shredded cheddar

### Harissa Dip

400ml plain yoghurt  
50 g Harissa paste  
Handful chopped mint  
2 tspn Knorr Garlic Puree

## METHOD

- 1 Combine the beef mince with the Knorr Professional Tomato and Basil Sauce, the paprika, the Knorr Professional Beef Bouillon Powder and the Za'atar.
- 2 Spread the mixture evenly on a flour tortilla.
- 3 Add the thinly sliced white onion on top.
- 4 Add the shredded cheddar.
- 5 Fold and bake until golden brown on both sides on a plancha.
- 6 Mix all ingredients for the harissa dip.

**Knorr Professional  
Tomato and Basil Sauce**



# BUTTERMILK FRIED CHICKEN





# BUTTERMILK FRIED CHICKEN

BY **KENNETH CACHO**

This nostalgic American diner classic makes a hearty Southern-style buttermilk fried chicken, souped up with seasoned home cook techniques. Juicy chicken legs are marinated in tangy buttermilk and fried until golden, creating a crispiness that makes for some serious fork-raking ASMR. Alongside, rich and velvety mashed potatoes are whipped with cheese for a creamy, indulgent finish, while buttered corn and tender yet crisp root vegetables lend natural sweetness and depth. Dousing it all is a silky mushroom gravy that's earthy and full of warmth. A plate that perfectly balances crunch and comfort.



**KENNETH CACHO**  
Country Executive Chef  
Unilever Food Solutions, Philippines

## INGREDIENTS

### Buttermilk Marinade

1kg Chicken legs, bone in  
250ml Buttermilk  
10g Thyme  
2g Pepper  
20g **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**

### Fried Chicken Batter

180g Seasoned self-raising flour  
Vegetable oil  
Unsalted butter  
Fine parsley, chopped

### Cheesy Mashed Potatoes

75g dry mashed potatoes  
300ml Water  
50g Butter  
Nutmeg  
100g Melting processed cheddar cheese  
5g **Knorr Professional Vegetable Bouillon Powder**  
White ground pepper

### Buttered Corn And Root Vegetables

50g Canned corn  
50g Carrots, diced (¼" x ¼")  
50g Broccoli florets  
50g Celery, diced (¼" x ¼")  
50g Cauliflower  
50g Butter  
5g **Knorr Professional Vegetable Bouillon Powder**

### Creamy Mushroom Gravy

50g Unsalted butter  
150g Fresh white mushrooms, quartered  
25g All-purpose flour  
0.25g Black, freshly ground pepper  
20g **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**  
500ml **Knorr Chicken Paste Bouillon**  
Dark molasses  
10g Worcestershire sauce  
100ml Cooking cream

### Garnishes

Finely cut chives  
Wedge of lemon

**Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**



## METHOD

### MARINATION

- 1 Marinate the chicken legs in a mixing bowl with marinade ingredients for at least four hours, ideally overnight. For added umami, add a small amount of Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder.

### BREADING AND FRYING

- 2 Remove the chicken from the buttermilk, allowing excess to drip off. Coat each piece evenly with seasoned self-raising flour. Heat vegetable oil to 170°C (338°F) and deep fry the chicken until golden brown and cooked through, with an internal temperature of 75°C (165°F). Drain on paper towels. In a separate pan, melt butter until foamy, add parsley, and briefly fry before pouring the parsley butter over the chicken.

### CHEESY MASHED POTATO

- 3 To prepare the cheesy mashed potatoes, begin with freshly made dry mashed potatoes. Stir in unsalted butter, freshly ground nutmeg, white pepper, and Knorr Professional Vegetable Bouillon Powder. Next, fold in melted processed cheddar cheese until fully incorporated. Keep warm until serving.

### BUTTERED CORN AND ROOT VEGETABLES

- 4 To prepare the buttered corn and root vegetables, blanch the diced carrots, celery, broccoli florets, and cauliflower until just tender but still crisp. In a saute pan, melt unsalted butter and add the blanched vegetables along with drained canned corn. Saute briefly until heated through, then season with Knorr Professional Vegetable Bouillon Powder and toss well to coat in the butter.

### CREAMY MUSHROOM GRAVY

- 5 For the creamy mushroom gravy, melt unsalted butter and saute quartered white mushrooms until golden brown in a saucepan. Stir in all-purpose flour to form a roux, then gradually whisk in the rest of the ingredients. Simmer until thick and smooth, adjusting seasoning to taste.

### GARNISHES

- 6 Serve with a garnish of finely chopped chives and a lemon wedge.



# CRISPY PORK TRIO

## INGREDIENTS

### Chicharon

1000g Pork belly, skin on  
15g **Knorr Garlic Puree**  
2 Bay leaves  
10g Salt or **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**  
5g **Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours**  
1 Lime zest, peel  
Water to cover



### Fried Garlic Pepper Pork Thai-Style

1000g Pork collar, cut into strips  
40g **Knorr Intense Smoke Flavours**  
60g **Knorr Professional Sweet Chilli Dipping Sauce**  
10g **Knorr Professional Ham Bouillon Paste**  
2g Ground black pepper  
80g breadcrumbs  
30g Water  
10g Cooking oil  
120g Garlic, chopped and fried for topping



### Pork Chops Tonkatsu

4 pcs Pork loin chops  
5g **Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder**  
2g Ground black pepper  
125g AP flour  
2 Eggs, beaten  
500g Panko breadcrumbs  
5g White sesame seeds, toasted  
200g Cabbage, sliced  
20g Red radish, sliced  
1 Lemon, cut into wedges



## METHOD

### CHICHARON

- 1 Cut pork belly into 2-inch strips and score the meat side.
- 2 Boil with Knorr garlic puree, bay leaves, Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours and lime zest and salt for 40–50 minutes.
- 3 Once the water evaporates, continue cooking to render the fat.
- 4 Fry in its own fat until dark golden and bubbly.
- 5 Drain and serve with chimichurri.

### FRIED GARLIC PEPPER PORK THAI-STYLE

- 1 Place the sliced pork in a bowl. Add Knorr Intense Smoke Flavours, Knorr Professional Sweet Chilli Dipping Sauce and Knorr Professional Ham Bouillon Paste, ground black pepper and cooking oil.
- 2 Mix well and let it marinate for about an hour.
- 3 Add breadcrumbs and water into the marinade bowl. Combine well.
- 4 Heat oil in a pan over medium heat. Fry the pork until golden brown on both sides. Remove and drain excess oil.
- 5 Fry the garlic until golden brown. Set aside for garnish.
- 6 Serve fried pork with fried garlic, steamed sticky rice, and nam jim jaew dipping sauce.

### PORK CHOPS TONKATSU

- 1 Season pork loin chop with Knorr Professional Chicken Bouillon Powder and ground black pepper.
- 2 **Breading:** Mix flour with beaten egg and cold water into a thick batter, dip the pork coat with panko and sesame seeds.
- 3 Heat oil to 170–180°C. Fry each cutlet for 3–4 minutes per side until golden brown and crispy.
- 4 Let rest on a wire rack or paper towel to drain excess oil.
- 5 Slice into strips then serve with shredded cabbage, red radish, lemon wedges and micro greens.

**DIPPING**



**SAUCES**

# DIPPING SAUCES

## INGREDIENTS

### Nam Jim Jaew

150 g **Knorr Intense Umami Flavours**

100 g Fish sauce

20 g **Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours**

150 g Water

150 g Palm sugar

25 g Dried chilli powder

25 g Ground roasted rice

25 g Shallots, finely sliced

25 g Fitweed leaves, finely sliced

25 g Spring onion, finely sliced

### Mala Mustard Mayo

250 g **Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise**

30 g **Colman's Mustard**

1 tspn Mala chilli oil

1/2 tspn Sichuan peppercorn powder

Pinch of Ground black pepper

1 tspn **Knorr Professional Vegetable Bouillon Powder**

### Citrus Gochu Sawsawan

150 g Sugar cane vinegar

40 g **Knorr Intense Umami Flavours**

60 g Sugar

1 g Ground black pepper

50 g Garlic, chopped

10 g Gochujang

2 g **Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours**

5 g Red chilli, sliced

50 g Red onion, chopped

5 g Spring onion, finely sliced

### Chimichurri Lime Mayo

50 g Parsley, chopped

10 g Garlic, chopped

2 g Dried chilli powder

5 g **Knorr Professional Vegetable Bouillon Powder**

3 g Red chilli, seedless, chopped

2 g Ground black pepper

45 g Red wine vinegar

150 g Olive oil

5 g **Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours**

1 g Dried oregano

200 g **Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise**

Salt, to taste

### Lime Ssamjang Mayo

200 g **Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise**

100 g Ssamjang paste

30 ml **Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours**

5 g Garlic, chopped

5 g Sesame oil

5 g Garlic, sliced

3 g Toasted sesame seeds

3 g Spring onion, sliced

### Spicy Honey Mustard Mayo

180 g **Hellmann's Mayonnaise**

20 g Mustard

25 g Honey

35 g Sriracha sauce

Honeycomb for garnish

## METHOD



### NAM JIM JAEW

Classic Thai dipping sauce, especially popular in Northeastern Thai cuisine. It's known for its bold, tangy, smoky, and slightly spicy flavour profile. This sauce goes well with grilled or fried meat.

- 1 Combine the Knorr Intense Umami Flavours, fish sauce, palm sugar, water and Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours.
- 2 Add the ground rice, dried chilli powder, spring onion, shallots and fitweed leaves to the sauce.
- 3 Mix well and serve with fried meat or grilled meat.



### CITRUS GOCHU SAWSAWAN

A vibrant dipping sauce bringing together the tangy brightness of Filipino sawsawan with the bold, Savoury, and spicy depth of Korean chilli paste. Perfect when paired with crispy pork.

- 1 Mix all ingredients well in a bowl. Adjust seasoning to taste.
- 2 Serve as a dipping sauce for grilled or fried meat.



### LIME SSAMJANG MAYO

A creamy fusion dip — combining the bold heat of Korean gochujang, nutty sesame oil, and garlic with the bright citrus zing of lime, blended into smooth mayo for a spicy, tangy, and refreshing twist.

- 1 Combine all ingredients together and season to taste.
- 2 Garnish with sliced garlic, sesame seeds, and spring onion.



### MALA MUSTARD MAYO

A fiery blend of Sichuan peppercorns, chilli oil and tangy mustard, mellowed with creamy mayo to balance the heat and bring a smooth, rich finish to every crispy bite.

- 1 Combine all ingredients together and season to taste.



### CHIMICHURRI LIME MAYO

A vibrant blend of fresh green herbs, garlic, chilli and tangy vinegar topped on creamy lime mayo offering a bold contrast of richness and brightness in every bite.

- 1 For chimichurri: In a mixing bowl, add chopped parsley, chopped garlic, chilli flakes, chopped bird's eye chilli, oregano powder, olive oil, red wine vinegar, ground black pepper, Knorr Professional Vegetable Bouillon Powder and Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours. Stir to combine. Taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. Set aside.
- 2 For lime mayo: In a mixing bowl, add Hellmann's Real Mayonnaise, Knorr Intense Citrus Flavours and a bit of salt. Stir to combine. Taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. Set aside.
- 3 For serving: Put lime mayo into a dipping sauce bowl, then top with chimichurri. Serve with chicharon.



### SPICY HONEY MUSTARD MAYO

Spicy honey mustard mayo delivers a creamy, tangy-sweet kick with a hint of chilli heat that's perfect for dipping or spreading.

- 1 Combine all ingredients together, season to taste.
- 2 Garnish with honeycomb and cayenne pepper.

## Hellmann's Mayonnaise

Hellmann's Mayonnaise delivers the rich, creamy taste that chefs and customers know and love.



# HOW TO DESIGN THE PERFECT MENU

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

BRINGING TOGETHER ARTISTIC VISIONS WITH BUSINESS MINDSETS,  
THIS GUIDE FOLLOWS IN *the steps of success* AS FOUR CHEFS  
SHARE THEIR OWN INTERPRETATIONS OF A PERFECT MENU.



**Creating a menu requires a complex mix of considerations, but the goal is always to build a sense of tension between creativity and profit.**

**Capturing delicious flavours and contemporary trends without breaking the bank is what every business strives for.**

**But how do you get there? Even if perfection feels unattainable, these four Unilever Food Solutions chefs are here to help.**

**Eric Chua,**  
Executive Chef (SG)

It's all about listening to your diners, knowing what they're looking for and creating a menu that is suited for their dining habits. It's also making sure you regularly check your POS systems and analyse the data. If a dish doesn't perform well, it's time to remove or tweak it. Sometimes you may have the perfect dish, but it's just that your price point is too high.

**Frank Olivarius Jakobsen,**  
Head Chef & Culinary Advisor (DK)

Look for ingredients that allow big variation and maximise your prep time while maintaining quality and flavour. Cut down on ingredients and focus on professional, high-quality items that can be used in multiple ways, like turning potato flakes into a mash, soup, purée, or foam. Combining products creatively matters, too. Mixing bouillons with concentrated flavours or bases allows chefs to develop unique signature dishes while keeping preparation simple. Ultimately, menus should be adaptable, efficient, and inspiring, giving chefs the flexibility to change dishes while delivering taste, value, and a strong, memorable experience.

**Joanne Limoanco-Gendrano,**  
Executive Chef (PH)

When approaching menu engineering, it's really important to keep things tight – mastering 10 to 15 items rather than having a huge menu. A big menu makes you more vulnerable to mistakes, cost issues, and inventory complications, whereas a tighter menu allows

you to manage profitability and ensure quality sourcing. It also makes it easier to adjust items that aren't moving.

**Thaís Gimenez,**  
Executive Chef (BR)

It's a balancing game where cost, technique, and ingredient choice have to live in harmony. Expensive or rare ingredients can create unique experiences, but focusing on local, seasonal, and indigenous products allows for cost-effective menus while still offering sophistication through technique. Using data about diners can further enhance the experience: knowing preferences, habits, and past visits allows chefs to offer subtle variations or customised dishes.

# TOP TIPS FOR PLATING

**IT'S NOT EASY TO KNOW WHERE TO START WITH THE BIG FINISH.  
THESE SIMPLE EASY-TO-ACHIEVE TIPS WILL BRING YOU**  
*one step closer to plating perfection...*



## DINER DESIGNED

### Customisable with Colour & Contrast

Bold, eye-catching colour is one of the easiest ways to create a dish that feels modern and shareable. Incorporating trending ingredients like ube (with its vivid purple hue), pistachio (a fresh, muted green), or hot honey (a rich, amber glaze) can instantly elevate a plate's visual impact. These ingredients not only bring flavour but also serve as natural colour enhancers, helping dishes stand out on social feeds and menus alike. Think about layering contrasting colour to create a plate that pops.

### Showcase Choice Visually

Customisation is most powerful when it's practical. Instead of hiding optional elements, present them proudly. Think sauces in mini pitchers, spice blends in tiny ramekins, and toppings in small ceramic bowls or on curated side boards. This not only empowers diners to tailor their dish to their taste but also enhances the visual storytelling of the meal. It makes for a more memorable dining experience.

## BORDERLESS CUISINE

### Techniques for Textures

Combine techniques visually: charcoal-grilled proteins with a creamy sauce, or crispy wok-seared vegetables alongside a creamy ube mash. The textural interplay makes the blended cuisines feel exciting and cohesive. It also goes a long way in showing just how much effort has gone into each individual dish.

### Utilise Plates that Reflect Culture

Present meals in serving dishes that reflect the cultural origins of the recipe. For example, Korean bibimbap should be served in stone dolsot bowls and Indian curries should be served in stainless steel thalis. Italian antipasti on wooden boards and Mexican salsas and stews in molcajetes. These simple serving suggestions will go a long way in creating authenticity for diners.



## STREET FOOD COUTURE

### The Beat of the Street

Diners love the theatre of street food. You only have to have a quick scroll on TikTok or Instagram to see street food accounts going viral due to this category's open approach. Where possible, keep cooking visible to bring the vibe of grills, woks, and skewers. You want to invite diners in and involve them in the culinary process as much as possible.

### Messy Sharers

The relaxed nature of street food means it's perfect for messy sharing. With that in mind, look to design dishes that can be passed around, pulled apart, or dipped together. This unique, informal feel is why street food has become so popular.

## CULINARY ROOTS

### Highlight the Craft

Technique is one of the easiest ways to showcase your prowess as a chef. With that in mind, let char marks, fermentation vessels, or botanical garnishes be visible so diners can fully see the effort that went into the creation of your dish. It won't go unnoticed.

### Highlight Ingredient Integrity

Keep hero ingredients recognisable rather than overly processed and celebrate their natural shape, colour, and form – especially ingredients that are native to the location of the dish. This trend really celebrates the traditional feel, so authentic ingredients and presentation are paramount.

# BEYOND THE PLATE:

## HOW A DISH TELLS A STORY

WRITTEN BY Dino Bonačić

**LOOKING OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARIES OF A PLATE, DINERS ARE HUNGRY FOR THE STORIES THAT INSPIRED THEIR FAVOURITE MEALS. AS STORYTELLING BECOMES AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE BUSINESS, UNILEVER FOOD SOLUTIONS' CHEFS SHARE THEIR ADVICE ON *creating meaningful connections* WITH YOUR AUDIENCE.**



**Whether it's a recipe that's been passed down through generations or an innovative technique that references an important cultural moment – storytelling has an inherent connection to culinary artistry. Except now, the stories behind the meals aren't just a niche interest of a few, but a widely utilised approach in building a lasting relationship with your diners – especially Gen-Z.**

**Our research shows that this group are valuing local, authentic and connected experiences that reflect who they are and what they believe in.**

**Here, six Unilever Food Solutions chefs share their advice on how to bring storytelling into your world.**

### **Technique Tales** by Eric Chua

Ingredients can be risky to anchor a story on – if I highlight Australian Wagyu and suddenly can't source it, I've created a problem. But technique is different: it sparks imagination and gives diners an immediate sense of flavour and experience. Even with ready-made or CPU dishes, the language of technique can transform perception. Descriptions like '48-stroke wok fry' or '100-second steamed cockle' add precision, intrigue, and a sense of craftsmanship. Technique-based storytelling not only differentiates a brand but also communicates quality and intent in a way diners instantly understand.

### **Beyond the Head Chef** by Thaís Gimenez

Too often, cooks contribute ideas, ingredients, and techniques yet only the head chef gets the recognition. Seeing the names of

different team members next to their dishes, alongside the origin of the ingredients, adds emotion, authenticity, and recognition. It shows diners that the whole kitchen team has creativity worth celebrating, while also building anticipation for who might be behind tomorrow's dish. That kind of transparency and appreciation is a powerful form of storytelling.

### **More Than a Menu** by Brandon Collins

Storytelling in food is deeply personal. That's why chefs can be so protective – it feels like walking into the dining room exposed, because the dish is everything we've worked for. Menus, too, should carry that same personality. When I read a menu, I can tell a lot about the chef behind it – their influences, age, or confidence. Personality comes through not just in the food, but in the way it's described, the choices of words, even the structure.

Whether it's fine dining or fast food, that storytelling – the chef's voice – should always be there.

### **The Power of Local**

by Joanne Limoanco-Gendrano

Beyond personal narratives, ingredients, or techniques, storytelling can also come from cultural pride. Dishes that carry a local stamp resonate deeply, because communities want to celebrate their own stories. At the same time, local trends can also spark inspiration. The key is not to copy but to adapt creatively – it helps in staying relevant while still telling their own story.

### **Transparency, Trends, and Simplicity**

by Frank Jakobsen

Diners want to know what's in their food, why it's good for them, and how it fits their needs. For Gen-Z, storytelling happens through TikTok, music, and visuals – they connect food to culture and convenience, focusing on dishes that are eye-catching, easy to eat, and shareable. Simplistic, direct language works better than corporate buzzwords.

### **Head Meets Heart**

by Kenneth Cacho

Too many menus copy trends or lean on over-detailed sourcing claims without real depth. Beyond emotion or ingredients, culinary classics can become a rich source of storytelling. Take double-fried Korean chicken: the method itself tells a story of crispness, science, and tradition. When chefs go deeper in understanding temperatures, starches, and textures, they create dishes with consistency and soul. Authenticity paired with technique ensures the story is not just told, but felt in every bite.



# MASTERING SOCIAL MEDIA

## WITH GUNGUN CHANDRA HANDAYANA

WRITTEN BY Ryan Cahill

FOR MANY, SOCIAL MEDIA CAN FEEL LIKE A DIFFERENT WORLD. THIS TOOLKIT OFFERS SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS TO *help turn clicks* INTO CUSTOMERS.



**With over 350k followers on Instagram alone, chef Gungun Chandra Handayana has mastered the social foodsphere. His straight-forward yet informative approach matched with delicious-looking food has established him as a go-to for food-first content.**

**In an era where social media can be the making or breaking of a business, it's important to strike the right balance with your content. Here, Gungun pulls back the curtain to reveal how he achieved social media success and helps you on your way to achieving the same.**

"Crafting compelling food videos for social media requires attention to every detail from voice to visuals," Gungun says. "Together, the following elements transform a simple food video into a powerful storytelling tool that captivates audiences and elevates the chef's digital presence."

### 1. Determine the Voice-Over

A clear, pleasant, and engaging voice-over sets the tone, guiding viewers through the experience with warmth and clarity.

### 2. Video Content

A trending menu/food that's currently viral and popular. Featuring a trending dish adds instant relevance and appeal.

### 3. Caption or Subtitle

A clear and concise video caption so the message conveyed in the video can be understood even when watching the video without sound. Captions or subtitles should be interesting and informative.

### 4. Trending Background Sound

Use a trending song. Pairing the video with a trending background sound enhances emotional connection and boosts discoverability.

### 5. Video Length

With a maximum length of 55 seconds, the first three seconds are crucial for grabbing attention and encouraging viewers to stay until the end.

### 6. Video Cover

A consistent and visually appealing video cover, complete with attractive fonts and colours, reinforces brand identity.

### 7. Video Title

Finally, a clickbait-style title that sparks curiosity can dramatically increase views and engagement.



Find more useful  
information on our website.  
Scan the QR code here.



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