



AAK

Foodservice Digest

Leading trends for foodservice and retail

Exploring *global foods and flavors*

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Welcome!

We're so pleased to welcome you to the second edition of our **AAK Foodservice Digest**.

This time, we're welcoming you on a delicious journey through all the tastiest dishes, flavors and cuisines that will be featuring on menus this summer and long beyond.

Over **80%** of people surveyed are likely to **try new cuisines** when eating out.*

World foods are as in demand as ever – with diners asking not just for new and different dishes from cuisines they're familiar with, but cuisines they've never tried before, and more authentic flavors.

Our own recent survey* of over 650 people across the US, UK and Sweden revealed that the majority of people in all three areas are adventurous when it comes to eating out.

*Via Survey Monkey, we surveyed 656 diners, all aged between 18 and 99, from a balance of genders and incomes, in May 2024. 256 people responded from the US, 200 from the UK, and 200 from Sweden.



Thanks for your interest.

Rachel Neale
Marketing Director,
AAK Foodservice

AAK Foodservice
Making Better Happen™
from plant to brand.

Savor global flavors during the summer of sport

As the world unites to watch the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, it's the perfect occasion to explore new cuisines. As families and friends gather to catch up and celebrate, it's a fantastic opportunity to make new memories over food. Let your diverse and on-trend dishes provide the perfect accompaniment to these special moments.



Flavor favorites around the world

In an ever-evolving culinary landscape, staying ahead of global food trends is crucial for success. From plant-based innovations gaining mainstream appeal, to the resurgence of regional cuisines, understanding these trends not only satisfies consumer demands but also drives innovation and profitability.

Check out this year's top 10 global cuisines, according to Taste Atlas.

The global flavors market, which was valued at

\$15m in 2022

is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.3%... and reach a valuation of approximately

\$23bn in 2023

Source: Spherical Insights



34% of European consumers look for **new foods and flavors most or all of the time**

Source: Euromeat News

Taste Atlas's top global dishes 2023-24

1. Picanha Brazilian beef
2. Roti canai, Malaysian flatbread
3. Phat kaphrao stir-fry, Thailand
4. Pizza Napoletana, Italy
5. Guotic, Chinese dumplings
6. Khao soi noodles, Thailand
7. Butter garlic naan, India
8. Tangboa dumplings, China
9. Shashlik meat kebabs, Russia
10. Phanaeng Curry, Thailand



"It's fun isn't it to read these top tens, stats and figures. We hope they will inspire you to take a fresh look at your menu, to see whether there's anything more you could be doing to stay on trend. We have a wide range of products to help you deliver these dishes and flavors. Check out our website for more information, insights, recipes and trends."

Jennifer Handley, Lion and Whirl Brand Manager, AAK.

Trending flavors in depth

Trending flavors currently encompass the entire globe - with heat and spice high on the list of diner demands.

While more established world tastes are still popular with those eating out, there's space to innovate and elevate these, through making flavors more authentic, or creating delicious new fusion foods.

Read on to find out more about our three current top trends: Asian inspiration, hot sauce supremacy and BBQ evolution.

40% of consumers like dips and sauces with international flavors

Source: T Hasegawa



ASIAN inspiration

The anticipated generated revenue of the **Global Asian Cuisine Market** is

\$233.3bn



Source: Credence Research Inc.

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Street food has been a major trendsetter in both restaurants and at food festivals and markets. Driven by the availability of global travel with exotic destinations more accessible than ever before, food halls and street food markets are an in-demand dining experience.

These concepts are influenced by the markets found in destinations like Singapore and Hong Kong, and Asian flavors are a firm favorite amongst both millennials and Gen Z heading to grab some on-the-go food.

Southeast Asian flavors are top of the chart. According to UK Food Matters Live's '2024 Flavours and Cuisine Trends' report, these include Korean fried

chicken, Japanese katsu, Thai yellow curry, kimchi, gochujang, and black garlic, with more established flavors like matcha, miso, and green tea playing a growing role in European food and drink.

Sharon Wilson, Head of Sales and Customer Innovation at AAK Foodservice, said; **"Asian flavors, and particularly Southeast Asian flavors, are very popular on menus. We're going to see different kinds of Asian flavors come to the fore, driven by demand from younger consumers, who are more experimental. Handheld foods are also on trend right now - with people enjoying bao buns, and other Asian snack-style street foods."**

The BBQ buzz: The evolution of a foodie favorite

Barbecue food has been a staple for consumers, both eating out and at home, over the last few years, but this segment shows no signs of slowing down - with diners hungry for new and diverse barbecue flavors.

According to DMG Research's December 2023 BBQ Sauce Market Insights report:

"There is a rising preference for unique and exotic flavors, such as spicy, smoky, or tangy variations, as consumers look for innovative taste experiences," and: "The market is experiencing a surge in plant-based BBQ sauces, catering to the growing vegetarian and vegan population."

Barbecue food's true strength is in its versatility. As a culinary theme, it lends itself well to any number of proteins, and with a broad range of accompanying BBQ sauce flavors on the market - from mild and sweet, to rich and spicy - it's a crowd-pleasing addition to any menu.

This is shown in a report by research company Net Gather. In their report - BBQ Sauce Market: Insights into Market CAGR, Market Trends, and Growth Strategies - they state:

"The fastest growing application segment in terms of revenue is the commercial sector, as more restaurants, food chains, and catering services are incorporating BBQ sauce into their menus to cater to the growing demand for flavorful and diverse dishes."

Cherilynn Whitehouse, Marketing and Business Development Director for AAK Foodservice, said that barbecue was still very popular with diners, stating: **"Barbecue foods are still prevalent on many menus - but the style of barbecue foods people enjoy has become more diverse. Chefs have taken inspiration from different regions in the US, such as Kansas style, or are inspired by Asian flavors, like Korean barbecue, bringing a fresh angle to this category."**

According to our survey of over 650 people across the US, UK and Sweden

Over **64%** of people enjoy eating barbecue foods



Hot sauce supremacy



Do you enjoy eating hot and spicy foods?

According to our survey, more than

54%

of people in the UK, US and Sweden do!

As with Asian inspiration, the rise of the popularity of hot sauces has been driven by Gen Z and social media, with hot sauce challenges, viral videos, and online indie storefronts driving the trend.

According to KBV Research, the global hot sauce market size is expected to reach \$4.5bn by 2030, rising at a market growth of 6.6% CAGR during the forecast period - so there's plenty of room left in this trend.

For hot sauces, sriracha, which originated in Thailand, and Piri Piri, which originated in South Africa, are both firm favorites across eateries across the world. More Asian flavors are set to catch fire this year - crispy chilli oil from China, Filipino hot sauces like labuyo, and Korean gochujang and bulgogi.

According to market research firm FMCG Gurus' 2023 Flavor, Color, Texture Global Trends report, 82% of consumers around the world are drawn to foods and beverages with hot and spicy flavors. The report states: "Globalization continues to bring different cuisines and flavors from around the world and [has] led to more sophisticated taste buds and interest in exotic and unique flavors."

Jennifer Handley, Brand Manager, AAK Foodservice, said... **"Piri Piri is one of the most popular hot sauces, and it features on menus across the world. Buoyed by the success of restaurants specialising in the cuisine, diners of all kinds love seeing Piri Piri items on menus - whether that's grilled chicken, halloumi or vegetables, or even sides like spicy rice."**

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WORLD frying trends



38%
of consumers
choose snacks
as a way to try
international
cuisine
flavors

Source: T Hasegawa

One piece of kit that's essential for anyone adding world flavors to their menus, or expanding the range of cuisines on offer to their diners, is the deep fat fryer.

Frying lends itself to many of the current world food trends – from street food to small plates, to sharing platters.

Globally-inspired bar snacks and small plates are really popular. Arancini, croquettes, Korean fried chicken are firm favorites, while fried desserts like churros are also all the rage.

Here are a few dishes that are currently trending ...



Karaage

This distinctive Japanese fried chicken is marinated and seasoned before it is fried twice with a delicious crispy, light batter.



Vada Pav

Vada Pav, also called Bombay Burger, is a beloved street food of Mumbai that is now famous across the world.

Vada Pav is made with spiced potato fritters that are deep fried to golden perfection and sandwiched between an Indian bread roll, accompanied by sweet and spicy chutney.



Curry puffs

Curry puffs are deep-fried or baked pastries containing curry and other fillings, which are popular as a street food snack across different parts of Southeast Asia. Karipap is the Malaysian version of the curry puff, with a chicken and potato curry filling.



Xangos

Xangos, or fried cheesecake chimichangas, are a delicious Mexican dessert often served with whipped cream or ice cream. Caterers can even create fusion versions of Xangos, like a Greek version featuring honey and frozen yoghurt.



Beignets

Originating in New Orleans, these pillow-like fried dessert treats are covered in powdered sugar and can be customised with all different kinds of flavored batter and accompanying sauces.

Fried snacks and great accompaniments



Fries reign supreme

Our survey also revealed exactly which kind of fried potato diners loved the most. In each area, French frites or fries, topped the charts.

SWEDEN	French fries: 55%	Sweet potato frites: 14.5%	Skin-on frites: 8.5%
UK	French fries: 31.5%	Triple-cooked chips: 20.5%	Chunky chips: 16%
USA	French fries: 35.16%	Sweet potato frites: 16.8%	Curly fries: 14.06%

Looking for inspiration?

Take a look at some exceptional examples of fried snacks from around the world that can elevate your menu.



Nachos and hot sauce (Mexican)



Spring rolls and sticky sauce (Thai)



Wings with Buffalo sauce or Korean BBQ sauce (US/Asian fusion)



Aloo Samose (Indian-spiced potato pastries) and **yogurt sauce** (Indian)



Calamari and garlic aioli (Spanish/Greek)



Tempura mushrooms with ranch dressing or dip (Japanese/US fusion)



Perkedel Kenteng (Padang-style mashed potato fritters) with **mint sauce** (Indonesian)



Empanadas with soured cream dressing or dip (Mexican/US fusion)



Laura Scott, Brand Manager for Prep high performance frying oils, said: **“Whatever the dish, food tastes its best if it's been fried in the right kind of oil, within its quality window, at the right temperature. Using a high performance frying oil such as Prep or Ex-Seed, which lasts up to three times longer than standard, extended life oil, makes sense for your diners, business and the planet.”**

Incorporating world flavor trends into your menu

There are so many options to choose from when thinking about incorporating new cuisines, dishes or flavors into your menus – the world is your oyster! From adding an Indian street food-inspired starter, to creating a fusion main course by adding a great new sauce to a classic dish, there are a myriad of ways to spice up your menus – literally, if you like!

Here are some tips to help you get started:

Research & consult:

If you're not sure where to get started, some research is a good place. Using trend tools, find out what the current flavors are and research recipe ideas. AAK Foodservice's unique Co-Development process can support you here – we're experts at menu development and incorporating the latest trends customers are craving.

Elevated classics:

A really simple way to add world flavors is by 'elevating' an existing menu through a new sauce or item. This could be as simple as adding a delicious BBQ sauce to a mac and cheese, spicing up a salad with a new Asian inspired dressing, or adding a new glaze to a meat or fish dish to mix things up.

Consider fusion:

Fusion is a great way to add world flavors to your menu, and it's something diners really enjoy. Some examples could be placing Indian-inspired flavors in a vegan burger, or adding a BBQ flavor to a classic British dish.

Add an on-trend sauce:

Diners are savvier about flavor trends than ever before, thanks to social media. If something is trending you think might work well with your menu, adding a ready-made sauce is an easy way to come up with a new dish, fast.

Try some specials:

If you're not sure whether something is going to be a hit, why not incorporate some world flavor special dishes to try them out before they become a permanent feature?

Think about vegans:

Many cuisines around the world lend themselves really well to vegan dishes, especially Asian and Middle Eastern cuisine. When considering adding a new plant-based dish to your menu, don't just think about replicating meat dishes – as vegan diners are often looking for something outside the box to satisfy their cravings.

Keep it healthy:

Salads are a great addition to any menu, as many diners are looking for healthy options when eating out. Outside of the usual Caesar or ranch salads, Asian flavors are really on-trend, with toppings including noodles, kimchi, and ginger and soy-inspired dressings.

Sharing dishes, meze and small plates:

People eating out this summer will be making a social occasion of it, and small plates and sharing dishes are great for chatting over. Not only this, but small plates, meze and sharers are great for introducing world flavors – from antipasti to falafel, paella to platters – they're simple to put together and will look and taste great. Don't forget some dipping sauces!



“Two-thirds of consumers surveyed globally by Innova say that they are open to trying new global cuisines. These can include authentic, adventurous foreign dishes, as well as globally-influenced dishes made with local ingredients. Companies and brands can build consumer excitement about trying international dishes and taking pride in local ingredients.”

Innova Market Insights Top 10 Trends for 2024.

Pizza power!

In the ever-evolving landscape of global cuisine, few dishes hold as universal an appeal as pizza. Its irresistible combination of crispy crust, savory toppings, and gooey cheese has earned it the title of the world's most beloved dish.

From bustling city streets to quaint pizzerias in remote corners of the globe, pizza's influence spans cultures and continents, shaping food trends and preferences everywhere it goes.

A well-chosen sauce is a great way of adding an exciting dimension to pizza, bringing depth and enhancing topping flavors. Why not try adding a Buffalo sauce to a chicken pizza for an American twist?

• Pizza accounts for **21% of dishes** on UK chain menus. Source: Lumina Intelligence

• Out of the **5 billion pizzas sold every year across the world**, more than **half of these are sold in the USA**, but **Norway eats the most pizza** on a person -by-person basis! Source: Dominos

In the United States, **350 slices** are eaten every second.

Source: The Washington Post

Focus on retail

Retailers are taking inspiration from global food and flavor trends to create their own products featuring on-trend flavors, driven by customer demand.

Creating a user-friendly product that the whole family can enjoy is possible by incorporating flavored sauces inspired by global taste trends which the whole family can enjoy.

This can include flavors such as hot sauces like piri piri, habanero or sriracha or classic flavors like garlic or truffle. And through AAK Foodservice's unique Co-Development process, we can support retailers to develop trending and inspired products for a growing retail market.

We have the capability to support your culinary chefs, as well as your new product development, category management, operational, CSR and marketing teams.

Our experts provide practical advice and hands-on support with a wide range of opportunities, from product and category development to ingredient sourcing, sustainability, packaging, processing, and logistics.



“Consumers nowadays are ditching the mundane and seeking bolder, more exciting culinary experiences. Flavored mayonnaise offers a gateway to global tastes and flavors, further propelling its demand in the market.”

Fortune Business Insights, Mayonnaise Market Size, Share and Covid 19 Impact Analysis (2023-2030)



The *air frying* trend

-recreating cooking styles at home



One recent trend that lends itself well to creating global dishes is air frying.

Air frying is a quick, convenient and healthy way of cooking – and it's taken off in a big way.

According to Statista, global revenue in the air fryers market amounts to \$6.38bn in 2024, with market expected to grow annually by 10.16% (CAGR 2024-2029). This is mirrored in the UK, where one third of homes now own an air fryer, according to a study from Leatherhead Food Research.

Air fryer sprays are a great opportunity for retailers – as customers are looking for effective frying oil solutions to create the tastiest food yet.

We can support retailers who are considering developing air frying solutions, due to our oils and fats expertise, and can create specially-formulated air frying oils customers will love using at home.

“It's an exciting time to be working with retailers. Consumers are ready to try new tastes and flavors, there are so many ways to meet their needs. With projects in the pipeline and plenty of ideas to share, we are looking forward to bringing great new flavors and products to the supermarket shelves!”

Claire Dowthwaite, Retail Brand Manager, AAK Foodservice.

Global dishes that are great for air fryers:

Asian: Tofu, spring rolls, glazed belly pork

Mexican: Tacos, empanada, chimichanga

Greek: halloumi skewers, lamb chops

US: Chicken wings, cauliflower wings





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