

# Food Trends 2018

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# Food Trends 2018

*The Food Channel*® has released its Top Ten Food Trends for 2018—the 30<sup>th</sup> year in a row that the trends-based company has predicted what will happen next when it comes to food. The trends are based on research conducted by *The Food Channel* in conjunction with *CultureWaves*® and the International Food Futurists.

This report was prepared in 2017 for 2018 trends.

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Image Source: [Alamo Drafthouse](#)

## Screen to Table

Food is now one of the ways fans can engage with a brand—and brands are extending themselves by using food in their promotions, even if they aren't a food brand.

- Alamo Drafthouse, known for creating culinary experiences to pair with its on-screen entertainment, most recently created a menu specifically for the Pixar's Day of the Dead adventure, *Coco*. The menu featured cornmeal-chocolate cookies, Agua Frescas, a chicken mole cast iron bake, and a milkshake made of pie spices and butternut squash.
- Capital One recently unveiled its newest rewards card, *Savor*, designed to exclusively to reward food and restaurant purchases.



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Image Source: [Gluten and Dairy Free Review Blog](#)

## Simple Foodies

We're seeing a movement back to quality simple food that is both fresher/healthier AND more polished/elegant, so consumers can focus on the flavors.

- Simple Mills makes crackers, baking mixes, and ready-to-eat cookies—all from simple, non-GMO, and gluten-free ingredients.
- Limitless Coffee and Tea brews coffee made from “clean beans” to reduce the potential for contaminants and deliver the purest possible coffee.



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## KENTUCKY OWL PARK



Image Source: [Kentucky Herald Leader](#)

## Food Tourism

There is a higher level of consumer appreciation for individual regions and specific cultures that influence pop-culture and the menu. This is creating a tourism industry based around exploring the cultures and foods to which consumers have been exposed.

- Stoli is creating a Disney-like theme park experience to help launch the brand's new American whiskey division, which features Kentucky Owl Bourbon. The attraction is 420-acres, with a distillery, visitors' center, cooperage, bottling center, and a restaurant. The park will expand both in size and function as Stoli continues to add whiskey brands to its stable, with the goal of making it a feature of the Bourbon Trail.
- Flavors of San Juan, based out of Puerto Rico, is a food and culture tours company that is using culinary tours to help bring tourism back to the devastated area and spotlight local flavors and ingredients for travelers.



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Balance your day with **NEW** Infusions B6 Metabolism

100% Arabica coffee blended with a fruit and herbal blend rich in Vitamin B6

**EIGHT O'CLOCK** B6 METABOLISM

Arabic coffee blended with a fruit and herbal blend rich in Vitamin B6

LEARN MORE

Provides support for normal energy yielding metabolism.

The advertisement features a large bag of Eight O'Clock B6 Metabolism coffee on the left and five smaller bags of different flavors (Alert, Super Space, B6 Metabolism, Acai Glow, Relax) on the right. The background is a vibrant purple with a subtle pattern of coffee beans.

Image Source: [Eight O' Clock Coffee](#)

## Innovation in Beverage

Beverages have found solid position as a healthy, portable meal replacement PLUS they actually have a lot of interesting things going on, such as cold-press/brew, and a new focus on non-alcoholic beverages and mocktails.

- Eight O' Clock Coffee offers coffees infused with ingredients such as turmeric, chamomile, or guarana—all meant to create a more complex flavor profile as well as a healthier, more functional version of the drink.
- Hootch & Banter in Fredrick, MD offers craft mocktails, with non-alcoholic menu items such as the Tropical Mule, made with ginger beer, mango, pineapple, and orange juice. The idea is to offer a fresh, light beverage in place of heavier alcoholic ones.



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Image Source: [Eater L.A.](#)

## Underground Dining

Where once underground dining was independent supper clubs and hidden experiences, it has become social media-enabled and more recognized.

- Trudy's Underground BBQ in Los Angeles, which is operated out of a backyard by real estate agent Burt Backman, sells Texas-style BBQ in non-descript take-out containers. Fans direct message him on Instagram to place orders and set up pick-up times.
- *Wolvesmouth*, also in Los Angeles, is an underground supper club intersection of food and art. The restaurant sits in the middle of an art installation at MOCA in Little Tokyo made of trees and coyote pelts. The meal consists of nine courses of vibrant, sometimes disconcerting, food meant to be a stark contrast to the farm-to-table aesthetics for which fine dining has become known.



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**Alan Zilberman** ✓ @alanzilberman

6 Dec

@Wendys do you think Twin Peaks is a TV show or a movie?



**Wendy's** ✓

@Wendys



If we call it a movie, then where do we actually draw the line between television and film. The current line seems to be making one episodic, though the current trend in superhero movies could also be called episodic. Hard to tell.

11:40 AM - Dec 6, 2017

💬 38 ↻ 368 ❤️ 1,796



Image Source: [Fox News](#) (Had to Screen Shot it)

## Generational Influencers on Food

It's no longer one-size-fits-all—people want something beyond senior menus and kids' plates. Gen Z, which is considered one of the most ethnically diverse generations to come up in the U.S., will drive interest in ethnic flavors, as well as clean menus and mobile-first service.

- Wendy's made headlines with its controversial use of what has since been dubbed as "clap-back marketing," humanizing the brand's social media engagement by letting its operators give earnest, sometimes sarcastic answers. Most recently the brand's twitter account began answering consumer's questions about movies and other entertainment, offering authentic banter instead of overt scripting and branding.
- Cultural and ethnic flavors are being fused and crossed with other ethnic profiles, creating multicultural cuisines. Jamaican food, for example, is being crossed with cultures such as Latin, Korean, or Nigerian—and all of that just at the recently opened Kith and Kin in Washington, D.C.



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Image Source: [New York Times](#)

## Do Restaurants Have a Lifespan?

Demand for unique culinary experiences has led to operators and chefs rethinking the lifespan of restaurants, with the new opinion that it's ok for restaurants to have an expiration date—and even necessary for chefs to continue to grow and explore new foods.

- Bobby Flay recently announced that he would be closing his Bar Americain, comparing restaurant tenure to Broadway shows and stating that his had run its course. This ensures that the Bar Americain experience is a limited one.
- The Culinary Institute of America has created a line of revolving pop-up restaurant concepts, the latest of which is The Post Road Brew House. The limited engagement restaurant offers a fresh, pub-inspired menu paired with beers brewed in-house. The restaurant's last run was February through June.



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Image Source: [The Morning Call](#)

## Savory Rules

Sweet has been supplanted by savory, and it seems to be a souring of the American tongue that is to blame. We are more inclined toward tastes of vinegar, sour, and fermented, especially when it comes with a health story. Sour flavors have been making their way into the mainstream through the embrace of cultural flavors, processes and ingredients as well as the health halo that many fermented foods have.

- Roasted, in Bethlehem, PA, offers a menu of savory pancakes such as the Henry—pancakes stuffed with bacon, provolone, caramelized onions, and Brussels sprouts.
- Bantam King in Washington, D.C. offers a Moroccan dessert with a Japanese twist: a chicken skin ice cream sandwich. The treat is based on bastilla, a sweet and savory chicken pie and consists of vanilla ice cream and fried chicken skin between two pieces of white bread and dusted with cinnamon.



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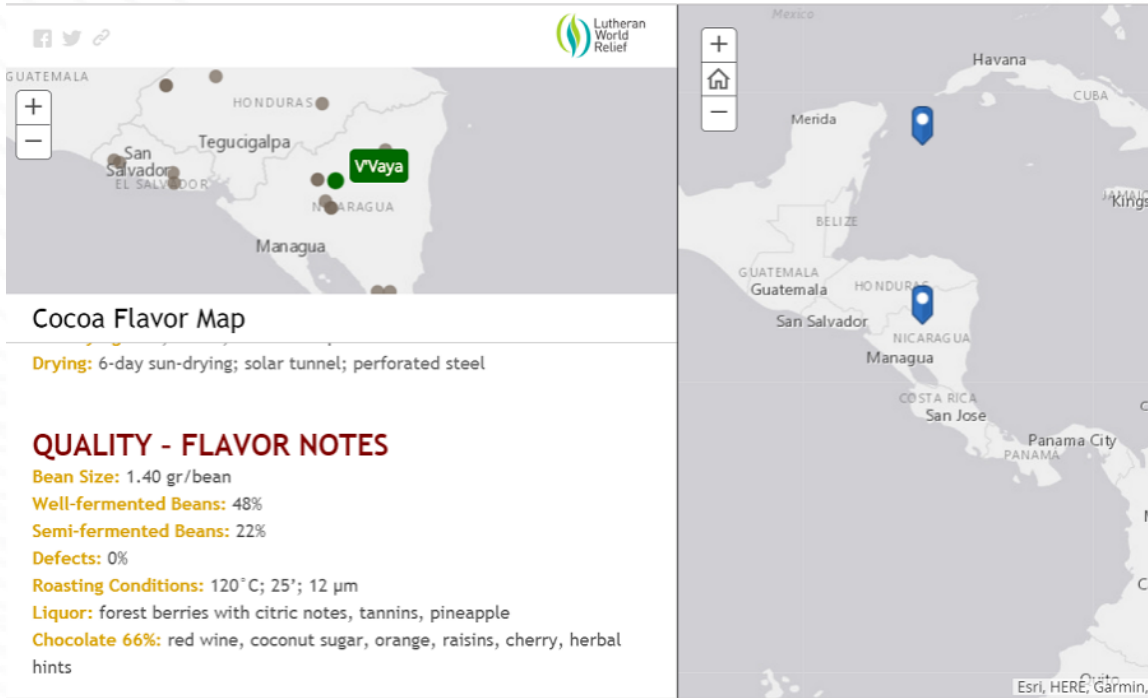


Image Source: [Candy Industry](#)

## Underserved Food Regions Becoming New Regional Flavors

Instead of simply “Southern” flavors, now we have Nashville hot or Carolina sweet. Instead of Northeastern we have Appalachian. This is not just limited to menus, but also what people are planting and growing—raising regional crops in order to explore heritage and heirloom flavors and ingredients.

- Lutheran World Relief created an interactive Regional Cocoa Flavor Map that spotlights the differences in regional cocoa flavors in South America, showing the unique characteristics of cocoa harvested in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras.
- Manicaretti Italian Food Importers, based in Oakland, CA, is one of the first brands to bring farro to the U.S. Manicaretti specializes in Italian regional ingredients and flavors with which consumers may not be familiar, but the importers bypass that particular hurdle by tying unfamiliar terms and ingredients to familiar dishes and terms.



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Image Source: [Forbes](#)

## Buy or Be Bought

E-commerce is changing the shape of food retail. We all heard the collective gasp when Amazon bought Whole Foods, apparently just in time to set the agenda around how brick & mortar can play nicely with e-commerce. Next year's story is about the integration and how we can expect some major changes in how we buy our food.

- Kellogg's recently acquired RXBar, a simple ingredient snack bar company, in order to better cement a foothold in the burgeoning simple foods industry.
- Walmart is preemptively striking back against the potential change that Amazon could wreak on food industry, diversifying its options in the aisle, scoring exclusive brands and products, buying ecommerce brands in order to leapfrog lengthy R&D, and building an online marketplace for all the brands that fall under Walmart's umbrella.





# Contact

*For more food trends, go to [www.foodchannel.com](http://www.foodchannel.com)*

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