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MARKETING THAT THINKS INSIDE THE BOX

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Gordon®
FOOD SERVICE



SO YOU WANT TO RUN A RESTAURANT

The podcast that talks with restaurant operators about the trials, triumphs, and technical difficulties of running a successful restaurant in the always-changing, ever-more-competitive food and beverage landscape.

HOSTED BY



Claudia Saric



Zach Mack

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Plan for Success

UPCOMING DATES AND EVENTS

FEBRUARY

04 National Soup Day

Noodles, vegetables, broth or cream, it's a day to warm customers' spirits with a hearty bowl.

11 No One Eats Alone Day

Encourage guests to bring a family member or friend and offer apps, meals and desserts meant to be shared.

14 Valentine's Day

Set your tables for two and plan an air of romance with indulgent drinks, entrées and chocolate treats.

22 Lent begins

Add some seafood menu choices to serve those who give up eating meat during this religious observance.

MARCH

03 Employee Appreciation Day

Name a menu item in their honor and boost morale by publicly recognizing your team members.

24 National Cocktail Day

Mix up full-proof beverages or pour enticing mocktails to add menu flair and profits.

APRIL

16 National Eggs Benedict Day

Poached eggs are the star, but creativity steals the show. Salmon instead of ham, bagels rather than English muffins ... divine.

22 Earth Day

Put the focus on your natural ingredients or commitment to product sustainability.

26 National Pretzel Day

Knots, sticks or buns — there's a place on your appetizer or sandwich menu to add a little twist.

MAY

21 Celebrate Waitstaff Day

Shine the spotlight on your excellent servers. They're a big part of the reason customers become regulars.

28 National Hamburger Day

Use this occasion to try out a new burger idea and see if it's worth landing a spot on your permanent menu.

JUNE

03 National Egg Day

Get cracking on an easy breakfast dish (quiche, perhaps?) that can stay on the menu all day. Or go all out and offer a soufflé.

05 National Veggie Burger Day

Plant-based burgers remain popular. Test them on your menu all week and see if they become a favorite.

11 National Corn on the Cob Day

An ear of corn goes a long way to dress up a plate, but corn in all its forms is a great way to add color to the menu.

22 National Onion Rings Day

Make your own or choose pre-battered options you can fry and serve alongside sandwiches or dinner entrées.

CAPITALIZE ON SPRING HOLIDAYS

St. Patrick's Day - March 17

It's easy being green with minty shamrock shakes, soda bread, corned beef, cabbage slaw and all things Irish.

Easter - April 9

Plan a big spread for brunch or advertise food your guests can take home for their own celebrations.

Cinco de Mayo - May 5

Taco fiestas are great, but ask your Sales Representative how you can help yourself to a celebration of Hispanic culinary traditions.

Mother's Day - May 14

Offer a flower or a dessert special to help families recognize those who bring so much joy and love to their lives.

Father's Day - June 18

Don't mis-steak this opportunity to fire up your char-grill and offer burgers, steaks or barbecue.

Need ideas? Try a combo deal. Offering customers a discount if they bring their Mother's Day restaurant receipt on Father's Day.



Marketing
that thinks

inside the box

*Four walls restaurant
marketing reaches
customers already
at your tables*

Every time a customer enters your restaurant, it opens the door to a concept called four-walls marketing — promoting your business to customers already dining there.

Great four-walls marketing enhances the customer experience, turning the visit into something more for the guest and your bottom line. It can add excitement, increase check average, encourage a repeat visit or build loyalty.

“At a time when customers are hard to get, you simply can’t take for granted a customer who is already there,” said Gordon Food Service® Customer Marketing Manager Geoffrey Bonham.

Getting started

The menu is a great vehicle for marketing inside your restaurant, says Vanessa Snyder. She’s a Gordon Food Service Menu Specialist who advocates for a smaller menu, done well.

“Because of labor shortages and rising prices, you need a menu you can execute consistently,” Snyder said. “A smaller menu means an easier shopping experience for customers and quicker table turns in your dining room.”

Another way to improve customer experience and help stressed servers is to utilize QR codes that link to the menu. As guests are seated, they can



review the menu before the server arrives. If possible, allow them to order drinks or appetizers electronically.

Menu inserts or single-sheet menus

for drinks and desserts are a low-cost, high-reward marketing tool. An insert can feature daily or seasonal specials, as well as tease upcoming promotions.

A drink and dessert menu that stays at the table tempts guests throughout the meal.

Loyalty and beyond

Table tents are another four-walls marketing tool to promote specials and LTOs, but don’t overlook them as an avenue for building a loyalty program. Add a QR code customers can scan to enroll and find out more.

While typical loyalty programs may set you back a free dessert or a discount down the road, they don’t have to cost anything.

“Loyalty programs can be built around exclusivity and experiences,” Bonham said. “You can invite members to a special wine-tasting or chef-demonstration night, and people will often pay to be the first to try a new wine or a special dish.”

Members also can be offered special consideration toward reservations, he explains. Simply hold a couple of tables at your 7 p.m. seating until the last minute for loyalty members. If they call ahead, they skip the line. If not, the table becomes available at 7:05.

Four-walls marketing can be playful, depending on your brand. A game



night, trivia night or vinyl music night — play records by request — are a way to show your creative side.

Build relationships

As people enroll in loyalty programs, reserve tables or engage with servers, be sure to collect customer data. Sevenrooms, a preferred partner with BackofHouse, offers a customer relationship management (CRM) platform to gather insights that can tweak the guest experience.

CRM data works as well for mom-and-pop restaurants as it does for chains. When staff scheduling and high turnover disrupts server-customer



rapport, CRM data picks up the slack. It can remind your team a party for tonight is celebrating a birthday or anniversary, really loves the crab cake appetizer with zesty cocktail sauce, etc.

“Normally, when people think about marketing budgets, they think outside the facility — TV, billboards, social media,” Bonham said. “There, you are in the acquisition game. Getting creative inside your four walls means you can sometimes spend less money, reach people who are already inside your business and are more likely to come back or tell their friends.”





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KEEP CALM AND CONSIDER MENTAL HEALTH

.....
*Helping stressed-out
employees helps
them ... and your
business.*



Ask restaurant operators to list staff health concerns, and cut fingers, oil splatter burns, sore feet, aching backs and fatigue come to mind. Mental health is often overlooked because, well, it doesn't stick out like a sore thumb.

The daily restaurant grind is stressful enough. Worker shortages and short-tempered customers take an extra toll. Ultimately, employee mental well-being affects everyone, and addressing staff mental health can improve their lives and your business.

Working through physical pain earns rock-star praise — emergency room in the morning, back at work by afternoon. Mental health issues get whispers and sidelong glances.

"We have a stigma to overcome," Erin Boyle said. "Mental health is just as important as physical health. If you are struggling with anxiety, depression or PTSD, that's going to have a physical impact."

She's the executive director of CHOW (Culinary Hospitality Outreach and Wellness), and she has seen how mental health challenges can hurt morale, amplify conflict, create unsafe situations, increase absenteeism and cause turnover.

Daily check-ins, team support

The opposite of absenteeism is presenteeism, in which a staffer shows up but doesn't perform effectively. It can signal mental health troubles and create stress for everyone.

Daily check-ins help managers engage with staffers. Start-of-shift or pre-meal meetings are an opportunity to ask about problems or notice changes in appearance or attitude.

"Don't assume a happy face means a happy person," said Sara Patterson, Gordon Food Service® Canada National Human Resources Manager. "Ask the questions, 'How are you?' and 'How's your stress level?'"

Ultimately, a healthy workplace takes a village. Managers are busy. They can explain policies, procedures and ways to seek help, but they may miss early signs of mental health concerns. That's why Boyle encourages empowering the entire team to support one another with an "if you see something, say something" mindset.

WELLNESS CHECK IN

Here are some wellness questions you can ask yourself daily:

- ☐ Did I get enough sleep?
- ☐ Did I take a break from work? Did I press pause?
- ☐ Did I stretch or exercise?
- ☐ Did I spend time with people or pets I like?
- ☐ Did I do something comforting? Watch TV, listen to a podcast, take a bath, etc.
- ☐ Did I ask others for help when needed? Lifting, scheduling, running food, etc.
- ☐ Did I take time to eat?
- ☐ Is there someone or something in my life I'm grateful for?
- ☐ How do I feel at this moment?

These questions can help you start a conversation with a friend, co-worker, or yourself:

- How are you, really?
- What's taking up most of your focus right now?
- Have you ever thought that you should cut down on your drinking or drug use?
- Have you lost interest in the things that you usually enjoy?
- Are you feeling tired or run down?
- Are you having trouble relaxing?
- Are you easily annoyed?
- Do you feel like something terrible might happen?

Once you've asked, actively listen to the answer.

For more support, visit chowco.org/resources.

Leave therapy to the pros

Managers are encouraged to watch for mental health concerns, but not to be a therapist. In fact, laws prohibit managers from asking some medical and health questions. They can, however, make observations. That's a good way to check in on employees.

"Sit them down and say, 'You haven't seemed to be yourself lately. Is there anything we should be doing differently?'" said Lynn Pomeroy, Gordon Food Service Human Resources Manager in Plant City, Florida. "You want to ward it off before it becomes something bigger."

If someone's in obvious stress, Pomeroy says you can refer them to HR or a crisis hotline. A referral or a phone call can save someone's life.

Boyle agrees, citing advice from the I Got Your Back Project in California: "If someone discloses they are suicidal, ask them, 'Can I call the crisis line with you?' Do all the steps in front of them and then say to the person who answers, 'We just want to know how this whole crisis line works.'"

This process shows care and concern, plus it opens an avenue for help if an employee struggles outside of work.

Find the best solution

Finding help is easy. Plenty of places, such as the Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association, offer mental health resources online.

But mental health programs only work if your team wants it. "It would be a waste of money if all your employees want is an extra day off and a Hulu membership," Boyle said.

If your operation has an HR department, they can explain employee assistance programs or clinical therapy options, Pomeroy said. People also can call 988, the three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

CHOW offers a list of mental health resources on its site, and Boyle also points to a checklist of wellness questions from Mental Health America that can provide regular assessments.

It adds up to improved staff health and a better bottom line. The World Health Organization explains that for every dollar spent on mental health, there is a \$4 return in improved health and productivity.

This content is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended as legal, HR, or other professional advice.

What's your mental health temperature?



Rare	Medium Rare	Medium	Medium Well	Well
• Joy	• Content	• Glad	• Irritated	• Destructive
• Happiness	• Proud	• Amused	• Frustrated	• Furious
• Confidence	• Relaxed	• Patient	• Tired	• Scared
• Excited	• Hopeful	• Concerned	• Lonely	• Stressed
• Curious	• Calm	• Grumpy	• Disappointed	• Sick
• Encouraged	• Thankful	• Present	• Discouraged	• Unloved
	• Satisfied			• Shamed



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2023

CULINARY TREND OUTLOOK

A new year means new possibilities
for restaurant menus.

What's new? What's next? Chefs and restaurant operators often ask, so we put the question to our experts: What's on the horizon for 2023 culinary trends?

Our Gordon Food Service® Culinary Specialists weighed in on what operators can expect in the year ahead. They noted some common threads, starting with a reminder that customers want new flavor experiences and are always willing to pay for good food.

"Operators really need to know their customer base and appeal to them, but they also have to be looking at how to attract the next generation of diners," said Houston's Erin Copeland.

Four insights for 2023



Veg-centric sensations.

People are pausing on plant-based foods and rediscovering vegetables as a center-of-the-plate option.

Not limited to vegetarian or vegan, veg-centric can include meat protein in small amounts. The appeal is the flavor notes imparted by aggressive cooking techniques – char-grilling, broiling, smoking, fire-roasting, etc. – and seasonings.

"I go into restaurants locally that have whole pages of veg-centric choices, with fun plays on dishes that would normally contain meat," Derek Seigfried said of the Boston area. "The meat is removed and eggplant is put in its place, or mushrooms are done five different ways to replicate meat. Veg-centric isn't going anywhere with prices inflating in the beef and seafood market."



Mushroom umami.

Earthy mushrooms have chefs looking beyond portobello burgers and button mushrooms on salads and pizza.

"Take oyster mushrooms and coat them in a tempura batter and give them a flash fry as an appetizer served with a gochujang aioli," suggests Kevin Green, from the Detroit area. "Take it up a notch and dust it with a Trade East® rub."

Enoki, oyster, shiitake, black trumpet and hen of the woods mushrooms all add umami to the menu, plus they absorb flavors to varying degrees while adding color to the plate. Green says mushrooms work for all dayparts, including lion's mane powder in beverages.



3

New mashups.

The culinary melting pot continues as people sample unfamiliar cuisines and find similarities. Consider Mediterranean influences on familiar foods. Tomato-based Italian bruschetta becomes Turkish ezme. Traditional pizza becomes a cheese- and egg-filled Georgian bread boat. And it doesn't stop there.

"On our Los Angeles trends tour, we saw a lot of Nikkei cuisine [Japanese-Peruvian fusion], and there are a lot of Japanese and Asian influences we're seeing," Seigfried said. "At Magari in L.A., there was pasta with crab, lemon poppy and yuzu cream sauce. So simple, yet so refined."

One of Copeland's favorites mixes gochujang sauce and peanut butter for a dipping sauce perfect for anything from wings to pot stickers.

4

Sous vide and pre-cooked proteins.

Staffing remains a challenge, so operators are looking at cooked, ready-to-heat options to save labor and time.

"Sous vide pork belly and chicken are time-savers, and our 25 to 30 plus-one proteins have great flavor profiles with little labor and no waste," Green said. "Chicken carnitas and barbacoa can be used in a sandwich, taco or an upscale omelet. They're great for cross-utilization."



Other expectations for 2023

Operators will be looking to solve other menu and back-of-house labor challenges in the year ahead.

Chefs are taking a closer look at pickling and fermenting to stretch the menu. Vinegar-brined veggies and the sharpness of fermented kimchi can elevate menu mainstays.

Newfangled charcuterie-style boards offer a high-margin opportunity as a meal or a shareable. Think of them as an Instagrammable version of the grazing table: cream cheese boards,

pickle boards, seafood boards, veggie boards and even butter boards.

Staffing challenges also are forcing changes on the culinary side. In addition to the use of labor-saving sous vide and pre-cooked proteins, operators are seeking to increase efficiency and allow chefs to focus on creativity.

"Restaurants really need to get the most out of cross-utilization," Seigfried said. "If you have tomatoes, it's time to spread that ingredient to 10 different things on the menu and worry more about executing fewer recipes in better ways."





YIELD
1 3-skewer serving



PREP TIME
10 minutes



COOK TIME
5 minutes



Beef up the center of the plate in an economical way with strips of top sirloin hearts soaked in a Peruvian pepper marinade. Skewer the steak, char-grill and serve with a cheesy sauce to lend a colorful pop of flavor.

ANTICUCHO YAKI SKEWERS

INGREDIENTS

6 oz.	Halperns® USDA Choice Whole Beef Top Sirloin Hearts
1 oz.	Recipe: Anticucho Marinade
2 oz.	Recipe: Huancaína Cheese Sauce
1 Tbsp.	Markon® Ready-Set-Serve® Cleaned Cilantro

PREPARE THE SKEWERS:

1. Cut the beef hearts into 2 oz. strips. Add the anticucho marinade and beef hearts to a storage container and refrigerate overnight.
2. Remove the hearts from the marinade and place on skewers.
3. Heat a char-grill to high. Quickly grill the skewers, about 2 minutes per side.
4. Place a small pool of huancaína cheese sauce on a plate and top with the skewers.
5. Garnish with cilantro.

ANTICUCHO MARINADE

4 oz.	Aji Panca Pepper Paste
4 oz.	Gordon Choice® Canola & Extra Virgin Olive Oil Blend
2 fl. oz.	Gordon Choice Red Wine Vinegar
2 tsp.	Markon Ready-Set-Serve Garlic, minced
½ tsp.	Trade East® Ground Cumin
2 fl. oz.	Gordon Choice Soy Sauce

PREPARE THE MARINADE:

1. Add all the ingredients together and place in a storage container for future use.

HUANCAÍNA CHEESE SAUCE

1 oz.	Gordon Choice Canola & Extra Virgin Olive Oil Blend
3 oz.	Spanish Onions, diced
6 ct.	Roasted Garlic Cloves
4 oz.	Aji Amarillo Yellow Hot Pepper Paste
8 fl. oz.	Evaporated Milk
1 lb.	Queso Fresco Cheese Crumbles
½ oz.	Cheez-It Crackers
to taste	Kosher salt
1 oz.	Agave Nectar

PREPARE THE CHEESE SAUCE:

1. Heat a sauté pan over medium heat and add the oil and onions. Sauté until softened, about 3 minutes.
2. Add the roasted garlic and aji paste. Bring to a simmer, then remove from the heat and let cool.
3. Add the evaporated milk and the aji-garlic onions to a blender. Purée until smooth.
4. Add the queso fresco, Cheez-It crackers and agave nectar. Purée until smooth.
5. Place in a deli container and refrigerate for future use.



YIELD
1 20-oz. serving



PREP TIME
10 minutes



COOK TIME
8 minutes

KIMCHI PPANG PIZZA

INGREDIENTS

8 oz.	Primo Gusto® Deluxe Marinara Sauce
5 oz.	Kimchi, drained
1 ct.	Garlic Herb Focaccia Bread, thawed
6 ct.	Gordon Choice® Sliced Mozzarella Cheese
as needed	Markon® Ready-Set-Serve® Green Onions, thinly sliced

PREPARE THE KIMCHI PPANG PIZZA:

1. Combine the marinara sauce and kimchi.
2. Layer the mozzarella slices on top of the focaccia bread. Spoon the kimchi marinara over the cheese.
3. Bake in a preheated 375°F oven for 5-8 minutes.
4. Remove from the oven, cut and garnish with scallions.



Focaccia elevates the flatbread pizza experience and gives it an international twist. This creation features rich Italian marinara sauce and zesty Korean kimchi. Serve it as a shareable appetizer or an entrée. Either way, it will be love at first bite.



YIELD
1 16-oz. serving



PREP TIME
10 minutes



COOK TIME
15 minutes

PREPARE THE COCONUT CHICKEN CONGEE POT PIE:

1. Thaw the puff pastry on a sheet tray lined with parchment. Cut the puff pastry into a circle the diameter of the desired serving bowl.
2. Add a splash of water to the egg, then whisk to form an egg wash. Brush the puff pastry with the egg wash and bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 15 minutes or until golden brown.
3. In a sauté pan over medium heat, add the oil and sauté the carrots, edamame, green onions and chicken.
4. Add the coconut chicken congee filling and a tablespoon or more of water. Stir until completely warmed through and mixed well.
5. Transfer the ingredients from the sauté pan to a serving bowl. Garnish with green onions and place the puff pastry on top.

COCONUT CHICKEN CONGEE FILLING

½ oz.	Gordon Choice Canola & Extra Virgin Olive Oil Blend
2 tsp.	Fresh Ginger, peeled and minced
1 tsp.	Markon Ready-Set-Serve Peeled Garlic, minced
53 fl. oz.	Hearthstone® Chicken Broth
27 fl. oz.	Unsweetened Coconut Milk
12 oz.	Jasmine Rice (28 oz. cooked weight)
1 ½ oz.	Rice Wine Vinegar
1 oz.	Gordon Choice Granulated Sugar
to taste	Kosher Salt

PREPARE THE COCONUT CHICKEN CONGEE FILLING:

1. Heat a large pot on the stove with the oil. Sweat the ginger and garlic quickly.
2. Add the chicken broth, coconut milk and cooked rice.
3. Boil until the rice breaks down into a porridge consistency, about 30 minutes, stirring frequently.
4. Add the rice wine vinegar, sugar and salt.
5. Allow to cool under refrigeration and reserve for future service.

COCONUT CHICKEN CONGEE POT PIE

INGREDIENTS

1 ct.	Puff Pastry Dough
1 ct.	Gordon Choice® Large Eggs
½ oz.	Gordon Choice Canola & Extra Virgin Olive Oil Blend
½ oz.	Markon® Ready-Set-Serve® ¼" Diced Carrots
½ oz.	Shelled Edamame
¼ oz.	Markon Ready-Set-Serve Green Onions, thinly sliced
2 oz.	Cooked, Smoked Pulled Chicken, thawed
10 oz.	Recipe: Coconut Chicken Congee Filling

Consider this a global spin on comfort food. Congee (pronounced kǎnjē) is an Asian rice porridge, which makes a rich filling for this unique chicken pot pie that's finished with a flaky puff pastry topper.

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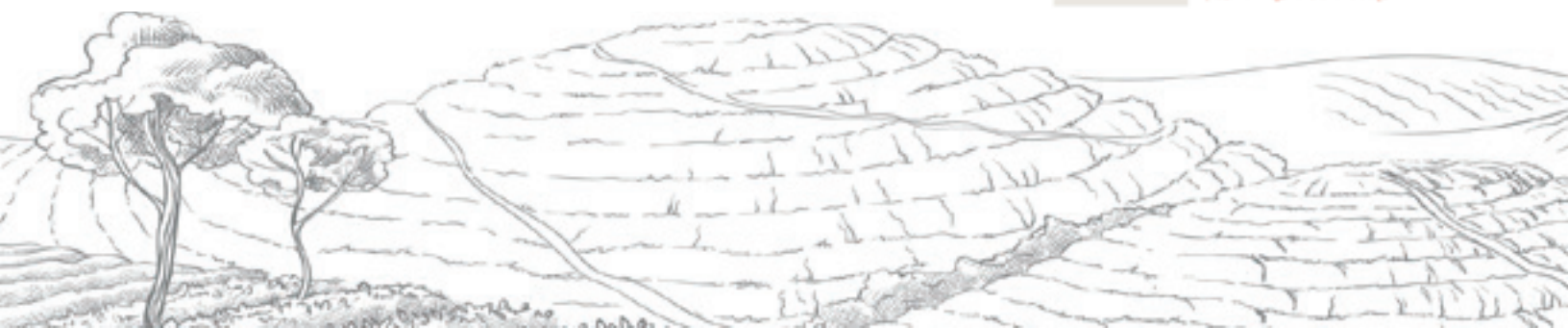
Franco Garbanzo

Franco is a third-generation farmer with 42 years of experience and the first farmer outside of Thrive's founding farming community in Monteverde, Costa Rica. Franco was first connected with Thrive when he attended a meeting with local farmers, during which Thrive introduced a new way of doing coffee together. “We know who is enjoying our coffee, and we see a real benefit of our work, not just better income, but real relationships with real people who love us and care about us.”

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more of our
farmers



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