



MARKON®

# TRENDS

SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER



**FIBERMAXXING**  
**NONNA-STALGIA**  
**GLOBAL PANCAKES**  
**COLOR MEETS CRUNCH**

**SUMMER 2026**

# AT A GLANCE



## BEYOND PROTEIN

Fiber-forward menus become this summer's most profitable pivot.



## JUST LIKE GRANDMA USED TO MAKE

"Made by hand" cooking signals craft and care.



## FOREIGN FLAPJACKS

Sweet or savory, global pancakes are the new crave!



## GLOBAL SLAWS

The perfect example of how a humble, familiar format can be reinvented to feel modern, global, and craveable.



**HERITAGE IS  
MENU GOLD**

# FUNCTIONAL FOCUS: FIBER

## THE MENU HACK BOOSTING RESTAURANT MARGINS

Driven by TikTok, wellness creators, and a broader cultural shift toward gut-health and longevity, the trend is about deliberately maximizing intake through high-fiber foods, swaps, and add-ins. It's not a fad detox; it's a way of eating that nutrition science has supported for decades.



- **Sweetgreen** is a leader in fiber-forward bowls, using ingredients like broccoli, kale, lentils, chickpeas, and quinoa.
- **Taco Bell's** Veggie Cravings menu focuses on black beans, cabbage, avocados, and tomatoes.
- **Tim Hortons** is jumping into the game with better-for-you options such as whole-wheat breads, oatmeal, and harvest bowls filled with grains, vegetables, and beans.
- **Qdoba** and **Chipotle** are highlighting brown rice, whole beans, and a variety of produce items like peppers, corn, romaine, onions, and tomatillos.
- **Freshii** menus are packed with fiber-rich-foods such as brown rice, quinoa, sweet potatoes, kale, edamame, broccoli, cabbage, and beans.

## HIGH FIBER, HIGH PROFITS



SOUPS

MATZOH BALL  
CHICKEN NOODLE  
MUSHROOM LENTIL

GLOBAL

ITALIAN "GRAVY"  
ARROZ CON POLLO  
ADOBO

ONE DISH

MAC & CHEESE  
TURKEY POT PIES  
GREEN BEAN  
CASSEROLES

CONDIMENTS

JAMS & JELLIES  
PICKLES  
CHUTNEYS

BREADS

BISCUITS  
CORNBREAD  
PARKER ROLLS

DESSERTS

BERRY COBBLERS &  
CRISPS  
LEMON BARS  
STRAWBERRY  
SHORTCAKE

Grandma-inspired" foods are trending because they hit a cultural sweet spot: comfort, nostalgia, authenticity, and emotional storytelling — all things diners are craving right now.

**MADE WITH CARE**

# INTERNATIONAL PANCAKES

## GLOBAL, SWEET, & SAVORY

Diners want adventure, but they want it wrapped in something familiar—and pancakes are the perfect passport because they hit the sweet spot between comfort and discovery. From jiggly Japanese soufflé stacks to crispy Indian dosas, and syrup-soaked Korean hotteok, global flapacks deliver big flavor, bold textures, and instant social-media appeal.



- Japanese okonomiyaki are cabbage-based and often loaded with seafood or shredded pork and topped with an umami-rich sauce. The perfect late-night indulgence.
- Indian dosas are thin, crispy, fermented rice-and-lentil pancakes that can be piled with produce-forward chutneys.
- South American arepas are soft sweet corn cakes, stuffed with cheese and griddled until the edges are caramelized.
- Ethiopian injera are spongy, fermented teff-flour flatbreads used as both plates and utensils for stewed vegetables.
- Crunchy Eastern European latkes are shallow-fried shredded potatoes served with sour cream or house-made applesauce.

**STACKED  
WITH CULTURE**

# CRISP, BRIGHT, BOLD

## SLAW BREAKS OUT

Modern slaws hit the sweet spot between freshness, crunch, global flavor, and operational efficiency. Restaurants are positioning this familiar dish as a low-cost, high-impact way to add color, texture, and brightness to dishes at a time when consumers are craving lighter, fresher, more vibrant plates. Try global favorites like Haitian pikliz, Vietnamese goi gá, Greek lahanosalata, and of course, Korean kimchi—in tacos and sandwiches, rice bowls, cold seafood dishes, and shareable appetizers.



### ASIAN

CABBAGE  
GOCHUJANG  
CILANTRO  
GARLIC

### CARIBBEAN

MANGO  
PINEAPPLE  
CHILE PEPPERS  
ONIONS

### MEDITERRANEAN

LEMON  
PARSLEY  
CARROTS  
GREEN ONIONS

# THE HOT LIST



- World Cup promotions
- Salty beverages
- Wraps 2.0
- Tacomakase
- Grapefruit
- Fire-kissed everything
- Herb-forward salads
- Acid-driven bright flavors
- Vegetable "snow"
- High protein
- Summer sorbets
- Reinterpreted Tiramisu
- Customized musubi
- Tamarind glazes
- Bitter greens
- Dirty-soda coffees
- Pull-apart breads
- Gunpowder masala
- Late-night menus
- Chilled soups

- Upgraded S'mores
- Value-meals
- Ranchziki
- Complex lemonades
- Pickled melon rinds
- Pops of color
- Savory boba garnishes
- Cucumbers
- Boy kibble/girl dinner
- Cacao
- Banana drinks
- Salted egg yolks
- Scallion pancakes
- "Q" textures
- GLP-1 friendly dishes
- Koji
- Grapes
- Crispy-crunchy-crackly
- Sustainable wines
- Mom-themed restaurants



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## FRESH CROP

A weekly rundown of the fresh produce market including prices, supply levels, and quality.

## TRENDS

Forecasts what is on the culinary horizon four times per year.

## SOURCES

Datassential  
Eater  
Flavor & The Menu  
Food Dive  
Foodservice Director  
Insight Symrise  
James Beard Foundation

Nation's Restaurant News  
ProChef Smartbrief  
Produce Bluebook  
QSR Magazine  
Restaurant Business  
Restaurant Hospitality  
Restaurant Smartbrief

