

# 2016 FOOD AND FLAVOR EXPECTATIONS

In 2016, authenticity will continue to influence culinary trends in four areas: localism, health and wholesomeness, global and international cuisine, and culinary quality. Each of these areas will also drive industry innovation within specific product categories. Below is what we predict for the appetizers, desserts and ice cream, pizza and snacks categories.



## SNACKS

**What's Next?** Everything is becoming a snack! Look for more offerings that combine spicy, salty and savory with international flavor flare.

**Opportunities:** Products that explore the theme of "crave-able with benefits" through the addition of protein, multi grains and cleaner ingredient statements.



## LOCALISM

Choosing the foods we eat has evolved into a moral or conscientious choice. Factors such as the producer, the artistry in preparation and even the source integrity of the ingredients come into play. From regional livestock breeds to heritage seeds, localism speaks to the "real" story behind the foods our consumers are seeking.



## APPETIZERS

**What's Next?** Interest grows in global shapes and forms as well as flavors. Samosa, empanada, dumplings, skewers and more.

**Opportunities:** Going bigger and bolder than ever before with layered flavors and unique, yet sensible international mash-up combos of carrier and filling. Exploration of flavors outside of generic "Asian" and "Mexican" is a Millennial requirement.



## HEALTH AND WHOLESOMENESS

Consumer demand for more wholesome food options with fewer and more simple ingredients is accelerating as the idea of "if it's better for the planet, then it must be better for me" continues. For 2016, functional foods consumed for a purpose other than satiety will win. Consumers opt to buy new products touting "free from" claims, no artificial anything and the promise of the ethical treatment of animals.



## PIZZA

**What's Next?** Casual-dining expansion will continue to accelerate. The brands that feature truly unique points of difference will be winners.

**Opportunities:** Natural-casing, curled pepperoni, a focus on specialty flours and their milling and featuring bold global flavors in the form of marinated and smoked meats.



## GLOBAL/INTERNATIONAL CUISINE

Our consumers are touring the world one meal at a time through international culinary adventures. And, ever since Sriracha was named "ingredient of the year" in 2010, culinary adventure seekers have been searching for the next hip condiment. So much in fact, the term "The Sriracha Effect" is now used to describe the wild proliferation of bottled condiments and indigenous spice blends as chefs seek to find lightning in a bottle once again. For 2016, ghost peppers, gochujang, harissa, sumac and dukka from North Africa will become stars.

## CULINARY QUALITY

Every component of a new product has to be elevated to a level of quality that exceeds the customer's ever-increasing culinary expectations. Doing it the way you've always done it simply isn't good enough anymore. From chef-driven, fast-casual chains to over-the-top, fresh-food delivery programs, the quality of the prepared foods our consumers demand has never been so high.



## DESSERTS/ICE CREAM

**What's Next?** Continued exploration of bite-sized mash-ups with a focus on flavors and forms. Bonus points are awarded for incorporating childhood nostalgia and/or modern twists on beloved classics.

**Opportunities:** Expansion of cookie-flavored crusts with premium and indulgent offerings that focus on ingredients with a story.