

Foodservice Updates

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What's old is new

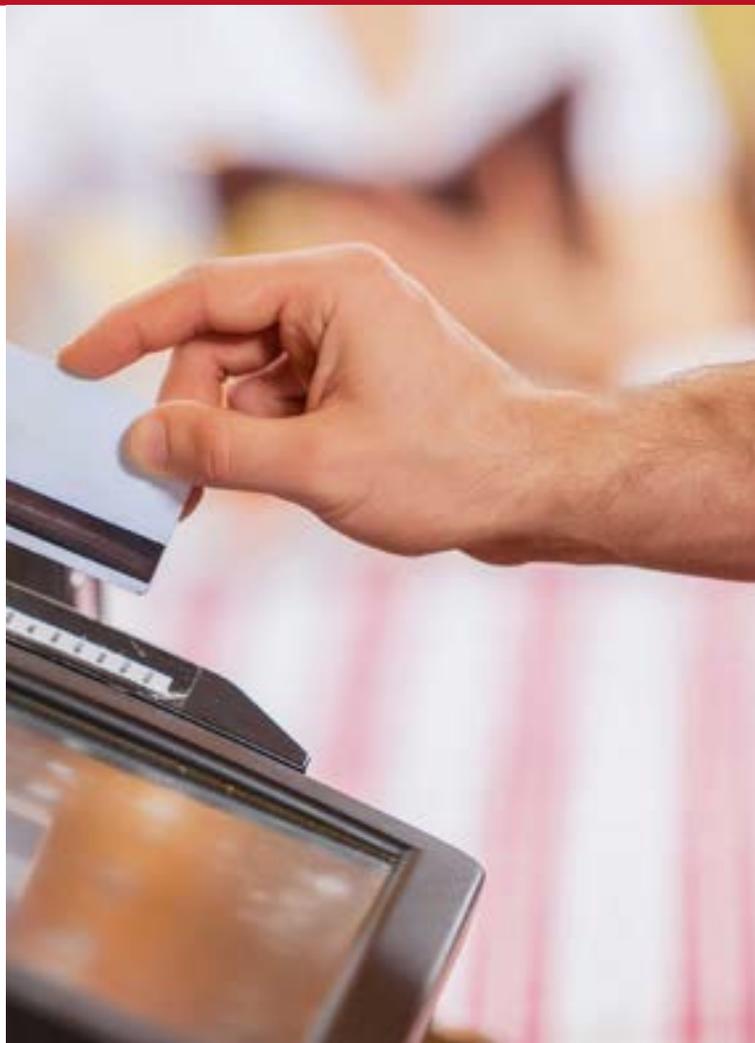
Some aspects of restaurant dining have seemed to become ancient history in the pandemic era. Case in point: It's hard to imagine when the salad bar or buffet line will make a widespread comeback. But the equipment that made those kinds of services possible remains. So, like so many other areas of restaurant service right now, it's time to reinvent it. Campbell's has done just that by updating its self-service soup stations: In the current environment, they suggest placing a warming plate over soup wells and then lining up pre-packaged containers of soup for customers to collect, or (as a space-saving solution that also accommodates longer hold times) using a multi-tiered warming cabinet that can also be placed over existing soup wells and holds containers of soup to-go in various sizes. Both options enable easy soup collection by customers. They also allow easy replenishment of product from the back of the house – either by filling the cabinet with additional pre-poured containers of soup stored in a larger enclosed warming cabinet in the back, or by pouring more servings as needed from tureens behind the counter and adding them to the containers awaiting collection by customers. These new solutions from Campbell's weave in some other benefits related to food safety, waste management and customer satisfaction too. Each soup container can be sealed with a sticker to boost customer confidence in the security of the soup they are about to consume.



Further, the containers allow for precise pouring of soup in various sizes to help prevent accidental overpouring. Finally, serving from pre-portioned containers allows you to offer size options beyond the traditional two. Selling a few size options not only appeals to customers, but it can also help you craft new combo promotions to elevate check totals. Check out Foodservice CEO to find out about all the Campbell's self serve solutions at <https://www.foodserviceceo.com/self-serve-solutions.html>

Does your tech help you drill down on prime cost data?

You know that technology can help you better identify countless areas of inefficiency in your restaurant – but where is the best place to start with it? Using tech to get a precise handle on your prime costs could be it. These expenses represent such a high percentage of your sales – about 61 percent, according to BDO’s “The Counter: Restaurant Industry Scorecard” from 2019. A new eBook from the financial software company Sage Intacct, “Best Practices for Data Driven Restaurants,” says operators should be able to view their cost of goods sold on their dashboard and drill down on specific parts of their inventory and menu categories. This can help them flag potential costs to renegotiate or problem areas to investigate, like an item that is costing too high compared to budget, an ingredient that isn’t being measured accurately, or a menu item that isn’t priced profitably. The eBook also advises the automation of invoice processing – not only to cut back on time-consuming tasks where errors are likely to occur, but also to get real-time insights into food costs.



Just-in-time tech

Preparing food in restaurants has become a juggling act this year – with people behind the scenes regularly throwing new balls into the air. According to a Datassential report, 92 percent of restaurant traffic is now off-premise. Drive-thru orders represent the largest growth category, followed by 23 percent order-ahead, 21 percent delivery and 18 percent to-go. A seemingly quiet kitchen could actually be as busy as a restaurant with a line of customers out the front door. This year, more restaurants will be adopting tools that allow them to monitor the various ways in which orders are coming to them – and adapt more easily to their ebb and flow. A new report on restaurant technology trends to watch in 2021 says smart scheduling and booking technology, as well as automated kitchen operations technology, can help ensure food is ready when customers want it.



Nuggets of wisdom

At a time when restaurant operators are trying to simplify their menus, every ingredient in a restaurant kitchen's inventory needs to work hard. Chicken is one such workhorse because it enhances options in just about every section of your menu. At the same time, the experience of eating chicken in different dishes is just about as varied as it gets, thanks to the wide range of ways it can be prepared and served. It's a children's menu staple that is just as foundational to your salad menu. Fry it and serve it with dipping sauces as a comforting appetizer, shred it into hearty soups or sandwiches, or roast it and serve it with steamed seasonal vegetables as a lighter option.

Food Trends

CHICKEN TENDERLOIN BASKET

Ingredients:

- 6 Tyson FC Homestyle Tenders
- 6 Tyson FC Golden Crispy
- 1 cup Stone Ground Mustard
- 1 cup RTU Gold BBQ Sauce
- 4 cups Diced Raw Potatoes
- 2 cups Sliced Raw Potatoes
- 12 oz Dry Mustard
- 1 cup FC Diced Bacon
- 1 cup Julienne Medium Yellow Onion
- 6 oz Granulated Sugar
- 3/4 cup Cider Vinegar
- 1 cup Diced Celery Ribs
- 2 bunches Chopped Fresh Flat Leaf Italian Parsley
- 1 cup Heavy Duty Mayonnaise
- to taste Salt & Pepper



Instructions:

1. Place diced potatoes in pot with salted water, bring to a boil, reduce heat and let simmer until potatoes are tender.
2. Place FC diced bacon, sliced onion, dry mustard, cider vinegar, water and sugar into a sauté pan, allow onions to caramelize. Add more water as necessary.
3. Mix together all ingredients in large mixing bowl, add in diced celery, chopped parsley and season with salt and pepper. Add in Mayo just to bind together ingredients
4. Slice remaining potatoes on the thinnest setting on meat slicer, add sliced potatoes to Lexan filled with Lukewarm white vinegar and salt. Allow time to sit. Drain off sliced potatoes and Deep fry until golden brown. Season with salt after frying.

CREATIVE POSSIBILITIES: The German potato salad can be served hot or cold, the tenderloins do not need to be tossed in sauce, it can be served on the side. This concept can be served in a wrap, sandwich, salad or as is per recipe.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Tyson



Give your outdoor dining area a safety check for spring

As spring brings warmer temperatures, outdoor dining is likely to be in greater demand once again while we wait for indoor dining rooms to open to greater capacity. Take steps now to make sure your outdoor space not only adheres to COVID-19 precautions, but also minimizes the risk of injury to employees and guests. Look for potential hazards that could cause slips, trips and falls, including stray cords, obstructed entrances and poorly lit walkways. If inclement weather is in the forecast or you have experienced snowy or icy conditions this winter, consider how your preparations will need to change – whether that means securing awnings and stakes or checking the soundness of your outdoor structures. Many operators will continue to rely on outdoor heating systems as well, so make sure flame guards are in place over open flames and that you minimize carbon monoxide by keeping your dining area adequately ventilated.



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How long to hot hold?

If you're serving food in new ways – such as keeping items packaged and in a hot-holding area when you didn't before – double-check your food safety protocols to ensure you're protecting the foods you have available for easy and safe collection by customers. While keeping foods out of the temperature danger zone is critical, how is your food affected if you keep it out at the proper temperature for many hours at a time? A USDA advisory calls for operators to keep foods at a minimum temperature of 135°F for a maximum of eight hours, or a minimum temperature of 140°F indefinitely to protect food safety. But to maintain both safety and quality, Jonathan Deutsch, Ph.D., professor of Culinary Arts and Food Science at Drexel University, told Restaurant Business that it's best to limit the hot holding of food to a period of between two and four hours, which may mean replenishing your supply at more regular intervals.



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Take it personally

We're living in an era of personalization. A whopping 91 percent of consumers are more likely to support brands that provide offers and recommendations that are relevant to them, according to Accenture research. Before the pandemic, restaurant operators might have been able to identify their most loyal guests as they walked in the door. Technology – while important and helpful – wasn't necessarily critical to keeping track of what loyal guests liked. Now, it's clear that technology is needed to track customer preferences and deliver the promotions they want when they want them. This will be especially true as ghost kitchens become more common and guests have less face-to-face interaction with brands. But if brand personalization capabilities sound more feasible for the likes of Starbucks or Panera than for smaller independents, look for that to change soon. Brightloom, the new incarnation of Eatsa, the chain of popular fast-casual restaurants that used robots to prepare salads, is now focused on helping smaller businesses slice and dice their data into actionable information that can be used to build personalized marketing campaigns. (The company has some firepower behind it: Brightloom's CEO came from Starbucks, where he helped develop the brand's loyalty rewards program, and mobile order and pay capabilities, among other resources.) Competing businesses are developing similar capabilities, so look for tech-driven personalization to become more accessible for all.



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