

Foodservice Updates

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Adjust your approach to hiring

While the leisure and hospitality sector added 67,000 jobs in the latest report from the Labor Department, indicating the ongoing rebound of the sector, the demand for restaurant food is continuing to stretch labor. In other words, it's more important than ever for the people restaurants do successfully hire to stick around. Have you adapted your recruitment and retainment approaches to fit the current candidate's market? Focus on finding the right fit from the start. In a recent report from QSR Magazine, the head of client success at Harver, a recruitment partner for McDonald's and Chili's, shared that it helps to identify the key skills you need from a person by giving them situational judgment tests. These include a series of scenarios that relate to the role and ask a candidate how they would respond. Much like considering the experience of a guest, streamline the application process and remove obstacles that could get in the way of their understanding the role accurately. Be crystal clear about the requirements of a job by avoiding jargon and providing examples of the kinds of situations a team member is likely to have to manage on the job. Think about your business as a launching pad for hires – what opportunities do you offer to help people develop new skills that help them progress in your business or can transfer to other industries? Where are there opportunities for you to offer flexibility? Finally, while your perks and benefits may get a person in the door, they won't earn their loyalty if there isn't a strong workplace culture in place. Focus on building and sustaining a close, supportive team.



Improve the QR code experience

Love them or hate them, QR code menus seem to be sticking around. That is good news for many restaurant operators, particularly when the code enables ordering and payment from the table – and in the process, frees up staff, gets orders to the kitchen faster and minimizes order inaccuracies. That said, the guest experience of using these menus can be a bit lacking. If you find more guests asking for paper menus, it may be time to revamp your setup. Give your QR code menu the same treatment you would give your mobile-enabled website – limit the need for scrolling, expanding and reducing the screen, and make it possible for guests to get the overall sense of your menu in the space of a few seconds.



Time to renegotiate your tech

Could you reduce your tech spending? Chances are the answer is yes, particularly if you have added on to your existing tech stack in the past few years or not attempted negotiation in recent months. As new entrants to the restaurant tech market have increased exponentially since the start of the pandemic, their services have come down in price. If you're looking to make additions, streamline your tech, or simply secure more competitive rates on your internet package, contact your providers to identify potential cost savings.





Spiced Lamb Tacos with Spring Slaw and Chipotle Ranch

Ingredients:

Spring Slaw:

3 cups Asparagus, shaved lengthwise
3 cups Sugar Snap Peas, sliced
1/2 cup Red Onion, thinly sliced
1/2 cup Radishes, julienned
1/4 cup Cilantro, roughly chopped
1/4 cup Mint, roughly chopped
5 tablespoons HEINZ WHITE VINEGAR
2 tablespoons Olive Oil
1/2 teaspoon Kosher Salt
1/4 teaspoon Black Pepper
1 teaspoon Sugar

Chipotle Ranch:

1 3/4 cups KRAFT RANCH DRESSING
1 1/2 tablespoons Chipotle in Adobo

Filling & Toppings:

1 1/2 pounds Ground Lamb
1 1/4 teaspoons Garlic, chopped
1/2 tablespoon Fresh Oregano, chopped
1 teaspoon Chili Powder
1 teaspoon Salt
1/4 teaspoon Black Pepper
1/2 cup Beef Broth
30 each Corn Tortillas, warmed
1 1/4 cups Queso Fresco, crumbled
20 each Lime Wedges

Punch up your proteins

Whether you're serving more animal- or plant-based proteins these days, consumers are embracing spices to kick up the interest of these foods. According to Food Engineering Magazine, nearly half of consumers say seasonings weigh heavily on their decision to purchase a certain protein – and spicy flavors including harissa, chimichurri and Cajun, along with smoky flavors like hickory, mesquite, oak and alder, are winning fans. Fortunately, the rubs and marinades you use to enhance the experience of a dish also offer the timely benefit of helping you stretch your pantry without a need for more real estate.

Food Trends



Instructions:

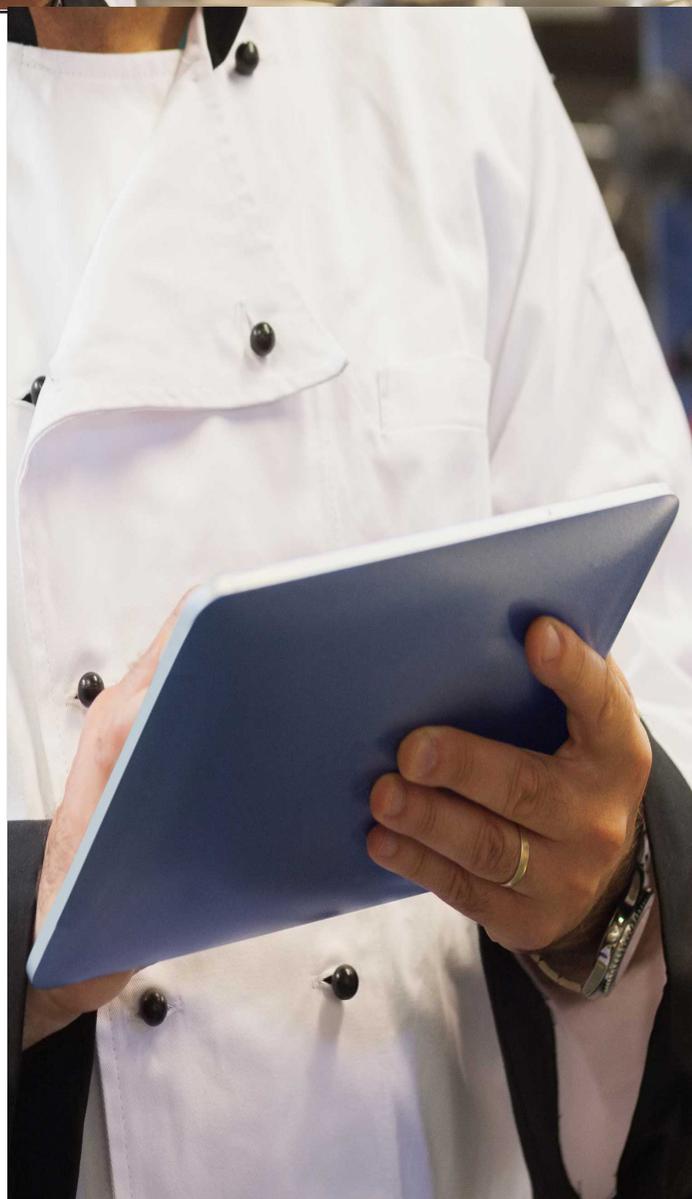
1. Combine the shaved asparagus, snap peas, onion, radish, cilantro and mint in a mixing bowl. Toss with the vinegar, oil, salt and pepper. Hold for service.
2. Mix together the Ranch dressing and chipotle in adobo. Hold for service.
3. Cook the ground lamb, garlic and oregano over medium heat until browned and crumbled.
4. Drain off excess fat and then stir in the chili powder, salt, pepper and beef broth. Continue to cook until the liquid has evaporated.
5. To serve: spoon the meat into the warm tortillas. Top with slaw, cheese, chipotle ranch and limes for squeezing.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Kraft Heinz



Get some help to track food freshness

At a time when food prices are escalating faster than they have in 40 years, it's all the more critical to minimize food waste. That includes not just measuring ingredients precisely and using nose-to-tail approaches to food preparation, but also being able to readily monitor the freshness of food and the presence of pathogens. As your kitchen becomes more connected, ensure you have the capability to be alerted promptly to the growth of bacteria or other indicators that your food isn't as fresh as it could be. Kitchen sensors can now help track these things, and the prompts may be opportunities to not only avoid a food-safety incident, but also to cut costs by adjusting necessary ingredient quantities and take the load off of an already-stretched team.



#FoodSafety

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Don't let a skeleton crew lead to a food safety problem

Short-staffed? Who isn't? While being shorthanded can lead to food preparation mistakes and safety problems, you can take steps to minimize your risk. On a regular basis, review what tasks are taking the most time and attention from your staff. Consider how to automate and/or simplify them with such helpers as precise ingredient dispensers; pre-measured, -cut and -seasoned ingredients; probes that monitor the functioning of appliances and notify staff of problems; digitized food safety logging; and digitized ordering that prompts guests to alert back-of-house staff to an allergy.



Foodservice Updates

Don't leave loyalty-building opportunities on the table

As inflation continues to weigh on the economy and consumers' level of comfort in making discretionary purchases, there is that much more pressure on restaurant operators to make the experience of restaurant meals worth the expense. But doing so doesn't have to be about expending significant additional effort. It can be about using your technology to drive an easier, more engaging, more personalized experience with your brand – one that will tip the scales in your favor when a guest is wavering about whether and where to order a meal. Your loyalty program is a key tool in this effort, but operators shouldn't simply lean on a cookie-cutter program – particularly at a time when it's increasingly common for tech stacks to integrate plug-and-play options to help operators gain a competitive advantage through building loyalty. Looking at the information you have collected about your customer base, what offers drive them to purchase repeatedly from you? As a recent report from Pymnts.com indicated, brands are currently looking to differentiate themselves with such features as in-app concerts, gamified rewards, and meal subscription services that allow users to earn back money with each purchase. Others are partnering with complementary brands to build engagement and ramp up the potential rewards on offer. To maximize your opportunities for continuously capturing the interest of loyal guests, ensure that at every step of a transaction, you're weaving in your business brand language, making sure users' experience is consistent regardless of how they are ordering from you, and that you're collecting data that helps you monitor guest responses and making adjustments based on what you're learning.



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