

Foodservice Updates

In This Issue

- Use tech to prevent employee theft | Italian food, enhanced | The inspection before the inspection | Serve safer greens | A new map of the tech ecosystem | Another reason to embrace TikTok

Make gift cards a better gift

Gift cards are a front-of-mind gift-giving option for a vast number of U.S. consumers. The gift card market is worth more than \$160 billion and it has been growing by double-digit margins since 2015 – and gift card purchases have been a means of paying restaurants forward during the pandemic. But according to a new study from Incisiv, restaurants are still leaning on old-school tactics when it comes to managing their gift card sales instead of harnessing the data-driven power they can offer. By better connecting gift cards to loyalty programs, restaurants can capitalize on the special occasions that inspire guests to use these cards – occasions that happen to be predisposed to generating feelings of loyalty. The study advises restaurants fine-tune their approach to gift cards in four areas: First, make gift cards a more frictionless experience for guest and employee alike. That means considering such actions as how to minimize the steps/people involved in processing a transaction, or if you can add a gift card balance to a third-party wallet or loyalty account, for example. Second, make possible to purchase, transfer, redeem and reload gift cards across all of your purchasing channels. Third, make it more personal – like so much of the experience of dining out, customization of restaurant gift cards helps drive loyalty. Do you offer a range of designs for a range of occasions? Sample messages? Can a giver include a special video message or photo? Finally, make recommendations. Suggesting products based on the occasion and the recipient can help you upsell your cards, as well as generate data that can improve your ability to segment and target your customer base going forward.



A new map of the tech ecosystem

It's putting it mildly to say that restaurant tech – already on the rise before COVID-19 – has experienced a renaissance in the past 18 months. New players have come on the scene in response to pain points in a broad range of restaurant tasks. If you're considering adopting new technology this year – or even just looking to make sense of the array of options currently available – you might check out the 2021 Tech Ecosystem map, an annual collaboration by TechTable and Culterra Capital. A lot has changed in the past year.



Another reason to embrace TikTok

We have reported before about how the social media platform TikTok has helped elevate restaurant brands – and restaurant bloggers – during the pandemic. Now the platform is proving its value as a recruitment tool for restaurants as well. Its new “Résumés” feature encourages applicants to record a brief video résumé showcasing their skills, then post it with the hashtag #TikTokResumes. The feature encourages more creative, authentic sharing of skills than a traditional résumé would – and it might help a restaurant get a little bit of extra attention in the labor market at a time when restaurants are vying for workers. Chipotle recently began accepting TikTok résumés.



Turkey Arancini with Sweet Chili Cream Sauce

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1 small onion, diced
 1 ½ cups risotto
 2 garlic cloves, sliced
 ½ cup white wine
 3 ½ cups beef broth
 1 cup buttermilk
 1 egg
 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
 ¾ cup shredded mozzarella cheese
 2 ½ tablespoons chopped cilantro
 ½ teaspoon salt
 Pepper, to taste
 1 pound JENNIE-O® Roasted

Thigh Meat,
 Fryer oil

Breading:

1 cup flour
 ½ teaspoon salt
 ½ teaspoon pepper
 3 eggs
 1 cup bread crumbs
 1 cup ground tortilla chips

Sweet Chili Cream Sauce:

6 ounces sweet chili sauce
 1 ½ cups heavy whipping cream
 ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
 ½ cup shredded Monterey jack cheese



Italian food, enhanced

Who doesn't love an Italian meal? Throughout the pandemic, it was a go-to comfort food option for people preparing food at home and ordering individual and family-style meals to go. Now that people are returning to dine in restaurants, consumers are showing increased interest in authentic Italian dishes that contain health-conscious and/or premium ingredients, according to a survey of Italian food suppliers on Italianfood.net. Taking a look at the Italian dishes on your menu, how can you offer a more authentic Italian dining experience and elevate the ingredients you offer?

Food Trends

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In medium-sized pot over medium heat, melt butter, add onions and cook for 5 minutes until soft.
3. Add rice and stir until grains are translucent.
4. Add wine and turn up heat. Cook until liquid is mostly absorbed.
5. Add beef broth and buttermilk, stirring; bring to simmer, cover and transfer to oven.
6. Bake covered for 30-40 minutes until all liquid is absorbed and rice is tender.
7. Remove from oven and allow to cool.
8. Add egg, cheddar, mozzarella, cilantro, salt and pepper.
9. Let mixture cool for at least 3 hours.
10. Set up breading station with 3 bowls.
11. Combine flour, salt and pepper in one bowl.
12. Whisk eggs in second bowl.
13. Mix bread crumbs and ground tortilla chips in third.
14. Using ½-ounce size scoop, measure out risotto into a ball.
15. Place ball in the palm of your hand, then place ½ ounce of turkey into the center of rice ball.
16. Shape ball, making sure turkey is completely covered.
17. Roll ball into flour, then egg and finally bread crumb and tortilla mixture, making sure ball is completely coated.
18. Repeat until all Arancini are completed.
19. In a medium saucepan, add 2 inches of oil. Heat over medium heat until oil reaches 350°F.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Jennie-O



The inspection before the inspection

Is your team always inspection-ready? If not, having interim inspections can help your team develop the procedures it needs to form better habits – and make the actual inspection not such a big deal. Get an up-to-date copy of your local health inspector's evaluation criteria and use it to fine-tune your existing procedures and division of tasks during each shift. If you're in the midst of onboarding new staff and concerned about having tasks fall through the cracks as you get everyone up to speed, it can also help to use task management software to generate lists of tasks for employees to carry out. This can keep people on track regardless of how long they have been with you and who is around to assign tasks.



#FoodSafety

Serve safer greens

Summer is salad season. But the abundance of leafy greens available means restaurant operators have to be extra vigilant about food safety. Germs found on raw produce cause a large percentage of foodborne illnesses in the U.S. and are a major source of E. coli infections, in particular. Increasingly, indoor farms are popping up around the country to enable year-round growing of greens. As these greens are grown in water instead of soil and also harvested and packaged indoors, they offer a lower-risk alternative to greens grown outdoors. Amid food safety risks related to extreme weather, supply chain vulnerabilities, pathogens and pesticides, does your restaurant have a plan to gradually transition to safer suppliers?



Foodservice Updates

Use tech to prevent employee theft

Restaurant employee theft is a common problem, accounting for 75 percent of inventory shortages and 4 percent sales, according to the National Restaurant Association. Your systems and tools can help you stop it soon after it starts – or even prevent it altogether. A TouchBistro report advises leaning on your POS for help. For example, your POS settings can help you place controls on what employees can do when placing orders – such as preventing the printing of a bill if an order has not actually been served, or the deletion of items on a bill before it is closed and then keeping the cash. Your POS reports can also help you investigate questionable activity by flagging transactions that were removed or modified after they were finalized and those that involved voids or discounts, and scrutinizing day-end reconciliations that create an opportunity for underreporting earnings. It can show you how many times a cash drawer was opened and by whom, so you can quickly identify the employees to speak to in the event of a shortage. It can also identify discrepancies between an employee's scheduled hours and how many hours they are reporting. Beyond your POS, consider the use of cameras at your POS and inventory storage areas, which can help you send the message that you're committed to keeping everybody honest.



Team Four/Value 4 provides customized Supply Chain Solutions and Business Consultancy to the foodservice owners and operators throughout the United States. To find out how we can help your business save money contact us at:

1-888-891-3103 or visit our web site at www.teamfourfoods.com and www.valuefour.com