

# Foodservice Updates

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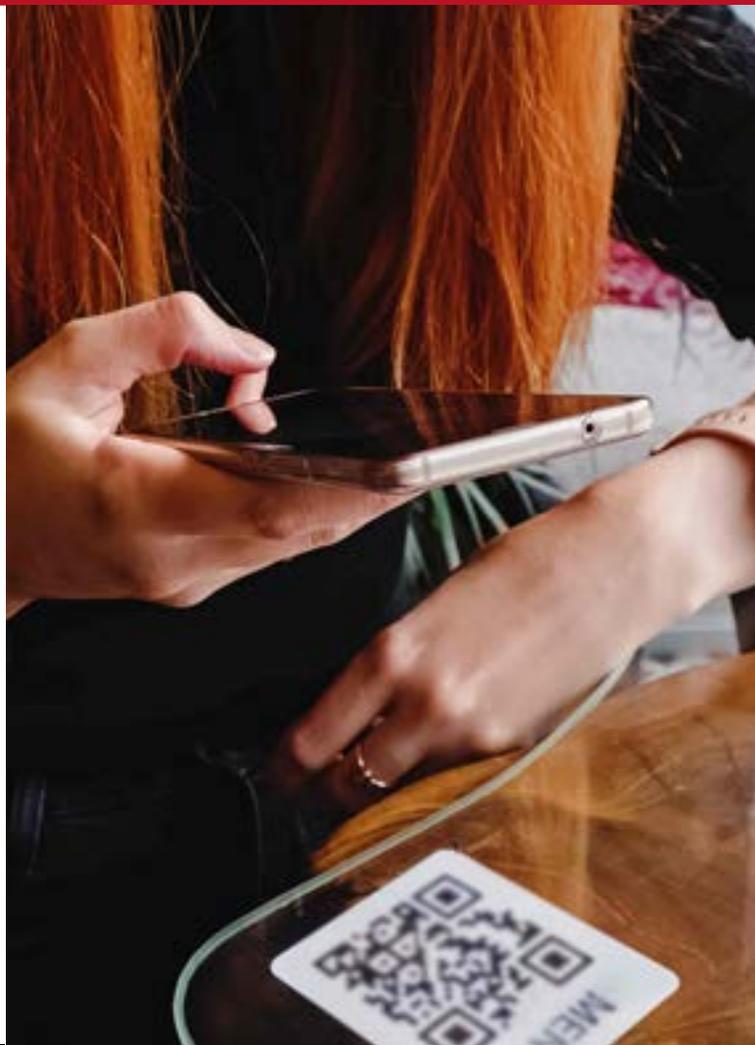
## Look at labor differently

Labor needs have been soaring at restaurants, but you wouldn't know it by looking at enrollment in culinary schools. According to a recent Washington Post report, the Culinary Institute of America now accepts 97 percent of all who apply, up from 36 percent two decades ago. Over the same time frame, the percentage of students who ended up enrolling dropped from 91 percent to 33 percent. To be sure, the low pay in the sector relative to the cost of culinary education, the strains of the pandemic on the industry, and increased prioritization of flexible work schedules, paid sick leave and health insurance haven't helped those results. The industry's labor challenges are expected to persist: The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the need for chefs will climb 25 percent from 2020 to 2030 as compared to an 8 percent average projected growth rate for all occupations. All that said, there is a silver lining for those looking to enter the industry – and for restaurants looking for motivated staff. The current conditions may provide aspiring chefs with the opportunity to get on a faster track to higher-level positions in the industry. One restaurant manager quoted in the Post report said jobs that once required a person to pay their dues over 10 years or more might now be achievable within three to five years. Candidates for these jobs may not come from the country's top culinary schools but from high school culinary programs or other alternative programs that give students a taste of restaurant work and may spark some motivation for developing a career in the industry. Restaurant operators may have to mine for talent in new places and develop more in-depth training programs that provide education on the job in exchange for work provided. But at the same time, these efforts may also help transform how restaurant employment is perceived by the workforce, elevating restaurants as places in which a person can build a long-term career.



## Next-level QR codes

Whether your guests love them or hate them, QR codes have been sticking around at restaurants. They are an easy choice for restaurants looking to collect data and build loyalty, but guests who still like holding paper menus may need some extra encouragement to improve the experience of using the codes. Consider harnessing QR codes to connect guests to additional nutrition and allergen information for a menu item or retail food product. Add to the surprise factor of your gift cards by using a code on the cards that directs the recipient to a photo or video of their gift online. QR codes can also put your paper menu to shame by helping guests experience menu items before ordering them: Food Management reports that at the Pensacola Beach Hilton, they're using QR codes to show their menu alongside video previews of select dishes and drinks.



## Use tabletop tech to bring your menu to life

When you're trying to upsell a guest with an appetizer or a dessert, you have a better chance of transforming their hesitation into agreement if you can show them exactly what they might be missing. Tableside tech can be helpful here. While a tablet can be a time and labor saver in a restaurant, it can also serve as a virtual dessert tray or a sneak peek into your kitchen if you can use it to present quality photos or even video of menu items being prepared. Are there dishes on your menu with a high wow factor – or ones that are especially profitable for you? How can you boost their profile with guests through the tech you currently use?





## Tomato rigatoni with capers, olives and bacon

### *Ingredients:*

20 Oz. Barilla® rigatoni  
1 Lb. Bacon, chopped  
2 Garlic cloves, minced  
½ Tbsp. Crushed red pepper flakes  
3 Tbsp. Capers  
1 Cup black olives, pitted/halved  
1 Cup green olives, pitted/halved  
32 Oz. San Marzano tomatoes, crushed  
½ Cup crème fraiche  
Salt & black pepper to taste

## Meals from the Med

At a time when consumers are leaning into plant-forward dishes and favoring healthy foods that are high in flavor, the Mediterranean options on your menu can be reliable alternatives. They're easier on the budget and can be recreated with different shelf-stable ingredients. They also leave room for customization with animal proteins or your own creative twists.

# Food Trends



### *Instructions:*

1. In a skillet over med/high heat add bacon and cook for 5-7 minutes until brown.
2. Remove bacon, reserving fat and set aside.
3. Add garlic, crushed red pepper, capers and olives to the pan. Cook for one minute.
4. Add tomato sauce and bring to a simmer.
5. Meanwhile, bring a pot of water to a boil and cook pasta according to package
6. Directions. Reserve 1 cup of pasta cooking water.
7. Drain pasta and add to the sauce with a ½ cup of the pasta cooking water.
8. Mix well and stir in crème fraiche. Add remaining water if necessary.
9. Top with reserved bacon.

Recipe and photo courtesy of Barilla

## Don't make food safety assumptions

Is your message getting across when it comes to enforcing food safety practices in your restaurant? It may not be. Perhaps you have staff from a different culture who don't yet have the English-language proficiency to fully understand your training as it is currently delivered. Even staff who don't face a language barrier at work might have been raised with different views on whether a food is safe when kept unrefrigerated or when it is necessary to wash hands. Tasks that are perceived in different ways are likely to be completed differently as a result. Conducting ongoing training and, just as importantly, taking care to assume nothing about a person's knowledge, can help you uncover surprising gaps in your food safety culture.



**#FoodSafety**

# #FoodSafety

## Where are the food safety biases in your restaurant?

Food safety is everyone's job – but does everyone in your organization sincerely believe that? They may not if people in different functional roles aren't held accountable for upholding it. Consider this: If you have only a core team of people focused on food safety, they can become the pesky watchdogs of your business, setting up an adversarial relationship with staff in other functions. Spreading the responsibility around – for example, having someone in marketing take charge of food safety training videos from your CEO, or partnering with HR on an improved food safety rewards and recognition program – can help ensure everyone commits to your food safety culture.





# Foodservice Updates

## Are you ready for autumn outdoor dining?

As the weather cools, you're likely to experience a shift in guest preferences and expectations when it comes to your available seating, both indoors and out. While many of your guests may have put the pandemic behind them and are happy to eat inside, others may be looking to avoid mixing with others indoors and expecting your outdoor seating area to be open. Now is a good time to give your cool-weather plan a review so you can readily tell guests in advance (on your website, reservations platform, phone line and other places where you provide information about your restaurant) whether your outdoor seating area is open, as well as share any adaptations you have made to make the area more comfortable in chilly weather. After all, in an era of abundant plexiglass and dining bubbles, outdoor dining in cool weather can look very different across restaurants. While you're at it, consider the comfort and safety of your outdoor furniture – including replacing aluminum chairs that are icy to the touch or using blankets to warm them up, covering or securely storing outdoor furniture overnight to protect it against inclement weather, and clearing away leaves, twigs and other debris that may collect on your walkways and cause a tripping hazard.



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