

Foodservice of the future

It's the detail the customer doesn't notice that can often make the difference.

Here's what to expect – and prepare for:

Food that fits in:

Arlene Spiegel, president of Arlene Spiegel & Associates in New York City, identifies “a major shift in the way consumers think about satisfying their hunger. Traditional three-meals-a-day habits are being exchanged for eating throughout the day. People are eating ‘healthy/energy’ bars on subways and buses on the way to and from school, work, the gym. As life gets busier, food needs to fit in and be accessible.” Restaurant consultants, she adds, “need to be involved and savvy in technology, dining behaviours, lifestyle trends and specific psychographics of a given population before creating systems and concepts”.

Vertical farming:

“A 12-storey building is the equivalent of 600 acres,” he notes.

De-skilling:

“We are seeing a loss of talent in the kitchen in terms of line cooks,” notes Sheila Bentley, of Magills Restaurants and Catering. Americans’ “unwillingness to pay a lot for food will keep the atmosphere nice, but the menu pretty casual, that is cheap.”

Sustainability:

The next decade or two will see growth in locally-sourced food “with almost no waste coming from their facilities – real plates, even for fast food,” says Greg

Christian FCSI, sustainable foodservice consultant, chef, CEO and founder of Beyond Green.

Mind data:

“Businesses now have an increasing wealth of data at their disposal about subconscious and involuntary stimuli that lead to food consumption and result from it,” notes Erica Orange, Edrich, Brown, Inc.

3D printing:

This technology is “revolutionizing the food world,” Orange believes. “3D printing could also eventually help tackle the world’s growing demand for meat.

Tackling waste:

Steps will be taken to save much of the food that now goes to waste, according to D Michel Judkiewicz, secretary general European Industrial Research Management Association.

Nutrients:

Wacker sees consumers embracing micronutrients. “It’s what I like to call vibrational food; food that enhances people’s energy.”

Individualisation:

Another future trend, says Wacker, will be individualized menus. “You will be able to know exactly what your body needs at the specific moment you are hungry.”

Protracted decline ■

