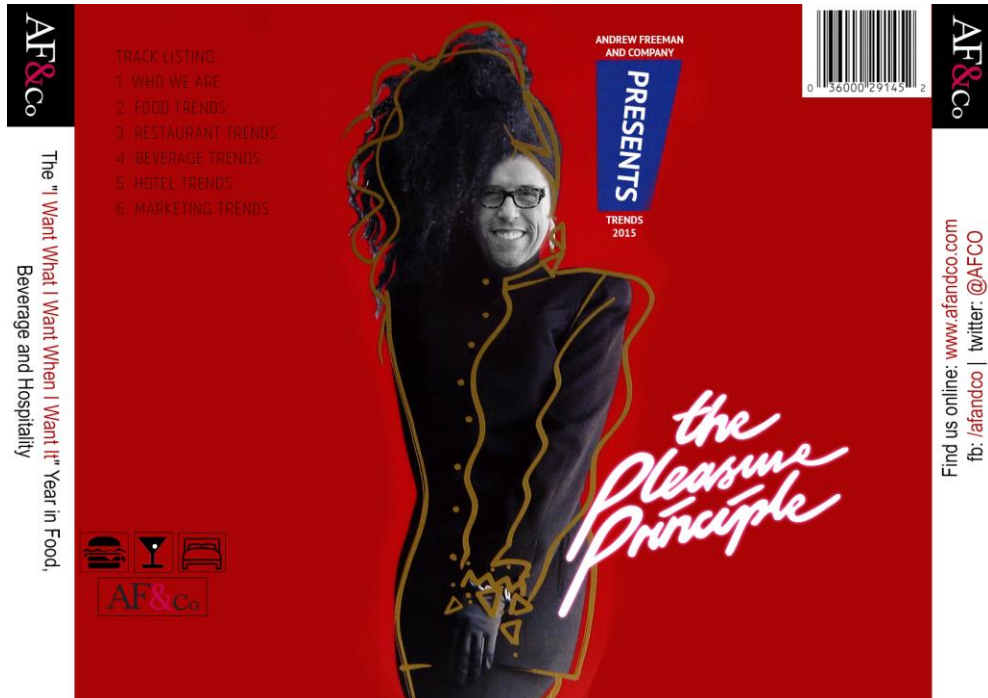


AF&Co



Now in its eighth year, AF&Co's annual trends report has become an industry standard in anticipating market demand and consumer feedback. Compiled from extensive research, the report is intended as a guide to help operators prepare for the coming year. Back again for the second year is AF&Co.'s Food Trends Index – a matrix featuring the top "food calls" for the upcoming year. Instant gratification, education and participation will be recurrent themes throughout restaurants and hotels in 2015. The economic upturn in 2014, coupled with the desire to attract the millennial patron, has led to a surge of hip new concepts, personalized service and customized experiences geared towards satisfying this "demand" generation. "According to magazine, millennials spent upwards of \$90 billion dollars on food service in the past year, so it is no surprise that the hospitality industry is adapting to cater to this generation's wants and priorities," says Freeman. While this shift is a driving force, operators must still find a way to balance the desires of their longstanding regulars with this emerging customer base. Chefs, restaurateurs and hoteliers are providing experiences that are less formal yet high in quality, more interactive and rooted in catering to the pleasure seeker.

The Pleasure Principle was developed by the AF&Co. team, Agency President Andrew Freeman, and staff trendologists Cia Glover and Candace MacDonald, from a combination of close industry observations, bi-coastal and international travel, discussion with industry leaders, meetings with hotel and restaurant clients, industry conferences, media interactions and thousands of hours spent researching in hotels and restaurants around the country. This year, the team polled a select panel of industry experts to gain insight into the top trends emerging in their respective fields, including fourth generation winemaker Carolyn Wente and James Beard Award-winning chef Tony Mantuano.

TOP TRENDS & PREDICTIONS FOR 2015 ACCORDING TO
ANDREW FREEMAN & Co.

*The Pleasure Principle:
The "I Want What I Want When I Want It" Year in Food, Beverage and Hospitality*

2015 Food Trends Index

Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Beets	Cauliflower	Radish
Caviar	Sea Urchin	Trout Roe
Kale Salad	Cabbage Salad	Banana Blossom Salad
Appletini	The 15 Ingredient Cocktail	Old Fashioned
Cayenne Pepper	Aleppo Pepper	Marash Pepper
Chop	Belly	Collar
Sweet	Umami	Sour
Asian Fusion	French	Spanish

Food Trends

Taco Mania

We've seen modern Mexican food sweep the nation, and now chefs are honing in on traditional tacos.

- *Ex: Alex Stupak's single-minded new concept in New York City, Empellón al Pastor, serves tacos almost exclusively (including a killer version of its namesake).*
- *Ex: René Redzepi, arguably the world's best chef, is turning his attention to the hand-held food with his new taco shop in Copenhagen called Hija de Sanchez.*
- *Ex: Charleston James Beard Award winner Sean Brock recently opened Minero, a Mexican taqueria, in his hometown.*

Scrambled Soft

First it was poached then deviled, now the new "it" egg is scrambled. And we're talking way beyond breakfast. Scrambled eggs are what's for dinner.

- *Ex: Hip Asian eatery Chino in San Francisco serves scrambled eggs with heirloom tomatoes and scallions under their "Snacky Whacky" menu category.*
- *Ex: Bobby Flay's new New York City Spanish-inflected restaurant Gato offers scrambled eggs with almond romesco, boucheron cheese and tomato confit toast.*

Spice, Spice Baby

These days' restaurants aren't afraid to bring the heat. And diners aren't afraid to accept the challenge. With the proliferation and popularity of authentic ethnic eats, there is no shortage of dishes that pack a punch.

- *Ex: Uncle Boons' Laab Neuh Gae is a spicy, chopped lamb salad that gets its serious kick from Thai bird's eye chilies.*
- *Ex: Flora (Oakland, CA) serves up a cocktail named "Carter Beats the Devil", a tequila-based drink with a bird's eye tincture.*
- *Ex: Sriracha is the go to condiment of the millennial generation, according to Restaurant Hospitality.*

Flavor without Fat

Chefs are adding oomph to veggies with old-world cooking techniques instead of relying solely on fats to turn up the flavor.

- *Ex: Skewer something and get it roasting. At Narcissa (NYC) chef John Fraser roasts beets on the rotisserie for five hours until they are achingly sweet and deeply charred.*
- *Ex: At Steins Beer Garden & Restaurant (Mountain View, CA) they turn to smoke to add nuance and depth to vegetables and even fruit, providing hearty meat substitutes.*



Code Spread: Nduja

It's spicy; it's porky; it's spreadable. The softer, malleable texture of nduja, a Calabrian spreadable cured meat, makes it a more flexible ingredient than other salami.

- *Ex: Nduja has long been a highlight of chef Staffan Terje's extensive charcuterie program at barbacco (San Francisco, CA).*
- *Ex: Blanca's (Brooklyn) chef Carlo Mirarchi often includes nduja-stuffed raviolo among the 25 or more courses he serves diners at his intimate Michelin two-starred counter.*

The Candy Man Can

Retro, artisanal and newfangled, candy is coming on strong. Sweet and unique, house-made candies can be the perfect way to close out a meal.

- *Ex: Ice cream gummies come in flavors like strawberry and mint chocolate at Amé Amé in New York City.*
- *Ex: The Simple Farm (Scottsdale, AZ) makes award-winning goat's milk caramels with sea salt and bourbon vanilla.*

Mr. Softy

Don't call it ice cream. Soft serve is popping up on dessert menus all over the country. Seasonal flavors, innovative sundae combinations and a plethora of sophisticated toppings make this nostalgic item decidedly modern.

- *Ex: The dessert menu at Alta CA (San Francisco, CA) is all soft serve sundaes with grown-up accompaniments. Our favorite? Sticky Toffee with chocolate soft serve, caramel, toffee and salt.*
- *Ex: Chicago's River Roast switches up their innovative soft serve offering daily. Recent flavors have included ginger-lemon grass studded with candied ginger and balsamic drizzled with quality balsamic vinegar.*

¡Muy Caliente!

Tapas and tapas-style menus have become the standard for our new sharing culture, but we're having a love affair with the cuisine of Spain—as we're seeing traditional and modern Spanish concepts opening all over the country.

- *With so many American chefs training in Spanish restaurants like Mugariz and El Bulli, it's no surprise they return home wanting to showcase what they've learned by opening their own Spanish spots. Examples are Katie Button's acclaimed restaurant Curate (Asheville, NC) and BCN Taste & Tradition in Houston.*
- *Ex: Canela Bistro Bar (San Francisco, CA) blends authentic Spanish ingredients and techniques with the ethos of California cuisine for a unique take on Spanish tapas culture.*
- *Ex: The cuisine is also moving beyond fine dining and crossing over into fast casual with the introduction of 100 Montaditos to NYC, a Spanish chain showcasing high quality, low priced bite-sized sandwiches.*

Pucker Up

From pickles to vinegary shrub-based cocktails, we're into sour flavors. It's an easy way to add dimension to dishes and by refreshing the taste buds, it literally makes your mouth water.

- *Ex: The addition of mustards, pickled vegetables or even kimchi on a burger cuts through the richness of the meat and adds depth of flavor to every bite. E&O Asian Kitchen (San Francisco, CA) tops their burger with kimchi and Sriracha aioli.*
- *Ex: Shrubs are created by preserving fruit with vinegar, sugar and water. The bracing beverage can be used in cocktails, like the Gunnersbury Park at Sable Kitchen & Bar (Chicago, IL), which is a combination of Great King Street whisky, rhubarb shrub and spices.*



Flipping Out

With the addition of savory pancakes to dinner menus, chefs are proving batter is a versatile canvas for a variety of flavors.



- *Ex: San Francisco's State Bird Provisions has a whole pancake section on their menu, which includes combinations like sourdough and sauerkraut as well as whole grain cheddar pancakes with heirloom tomatoes and roasted garlic.*
- *Ex: Chef Robin Song's Korean Late Night Pop-up at Hog & Rocks (San Francisco, CA) includes a zucchini pancake, a nod to traditional Korean snacks, topped with jalapenos and served with a soy chili dipping sauce.*

The Original Hybrid

It doesn't get much better than buttery toasted rye, melty cheese and a juicy beef patty. That's the beauty of a patty melt—part grilled cheese, part cheeseburger, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

- *Ex: You can only get the patty melt at Parm (NYC) on Tuesdays, but with its intensely beefy, dry-aged LaFrieda patty, it's well worth thinking about all week.*
- *Ex: The signature burger at Park in Cambridge, MA is a patty melt and it's so popular that Boston Burger Blog readers declared it the best burger in the city.*

Restaurant Trends

Passion Projects

Chefs and restaurant owners are no longer adhering to one style or cuisine. They're letting their passions be their guide and creating places that are an embodiment of what they love. They're also creating spaces that are less formal and more fun—allowing diners to let loose and feel taken care of.

- *Ex: Durham, NC's Rose's Meat Market & Sweet Shop may seem to be an unlikely pairing, but it's a match made in heaven. With a little bit of sweet, a little bit of savory and ramen on Wednesdays, they are reaping the rewards of doing what they love.*
- *"I want to have a restaurant where you always can sit down and have a choice...I don't care what you do. Come on in. Call your friends. Have them squeeze in...I want it to be everything I don't find [in other restaurants]," says Jody Williams about her new NYC spot Via Carota (with partner Rita Sodi).*

Rise of the Small City

Forget New York City and Los Angeles—think Asheville, Oakland and San Antonio. What small cities lack in hustle and bustle, they make up for in affordability, which allows for experimentation and bold choices.

- *Ex: Chef Gavin Kaysen left the Daniel Boulud empire to open his own spot, Merchant, in Minneapolis.*
- *Ex: Chef Hugh Acheson has long dominated the dining scene in Athens and Atlanta and continues to expand his Georgia empire with the opening of The Florence in Savannah.*

Chefs in Residence

Limited-run culinary residences are now de rigueur. It might be a teaser to a full-blown concept or a quick trip to a new city, either way chefs aren't afraid to take the show on the road.

- *Ex: This fall Food & Wine launches the second iteration of their Chefs Club in New York City's Puck Building. Four Best New Chef alums from the magazine make up the list of heavy-hitter chefs in-residence, including Portland, OR's Gabriel Rucker of Le Pigeon and Erik Anderson, formerly of the Catbird Seat in Nashville.*
- *Ex: Heston Blumenthal, one of the most influential chefs in the world, is moving his three Michelin-starred Fat Duck restaurant from a village in England to a casino in Melbourne, Australia for six months in 2015.*

The Balancing Act

With living costs rising and the debate to raise the minimum wage raging, restaurants are facing a unique dilemma. With hourly employees in the kitchen and tipped staff in the front of house, how do restaurant owners maintain a quality workforce with unbalanced pay scales? We predicted the end of traditional tipping last year and this inequality might force the issue to a climax.

- *Ex: At the time of the creation of this report (October 2014) five Bay Area restaurants, including Bar Agricole, Comal and Duende, announced the move to a 20% automatic service charge in lieu of elective tipping. The earnings will be pooled and divided between front and back of house workers.*



Apron Artistry

Chefs are turning to artisans to create durable and fashionable aprons to give personality to their chef's whites.

- *Ex: Los Angeles-based designers Hedley & Bennett are taking the food world by storm. With David Chang, Nobu Matsuhisa and Mario Batali all wearing their aprons, it's easier to list who isn't rocking their custom designs.*
- *Ex: The chefs at Spiaggia (Chicago, IL) are outfitted in aprons fashioned by Made in Carcere, an Italian company that collaborates with non-profits to produce handcrafted products with prison workers—inspiring second chances through craft and artistry.*

Incubation Period

The economy is on the upswing and the demand for artisanal products continues to grow. There has never been a better time to start that cookie business, sandwich delivery service or neighborhood bistro. Culinary Incubators are popping up all over the country to help these new food entrepreneurs lower the barriers to entry in this tough industry.

- *Ex: Membership in Washington, DC's Union Kitchen means access to affordable, licensed professional kitchen space, training programs and distribution.*
- *Ex: The Dinner Lab showcases emerging chefs in a pop-up environment. Feedback from the diners helps them develop and hone their concepts and dishes before launching restaurants of their own.*

Food Curation for the Masses

Local vendors, artisanal offerings and celebrity chef-helmed concepts have become the norm at airports, ballparks and malls around the country. No matter where we are, we want quality dining choices.

- *Ex: Top Chef winner Michael Voltaggio chose to open the second branch of his sandwich bar, ink.sack, at the Los Angeles International Airport.*
- *Ex: You can find Atlanta celebrity chef Linton Hopkins's famous double-decker burger at the city's Turner Field.*
- *Ex: Westfield San Francisco Centre offers mall shoppers elevated dining options far beyond standard food court fare, including eats from celebrity chef Martin Yan's M.Y. China.*



Eat, Drink, Play

Game halls are the next big thing. Adding an interactive gaming element to the bar atmosphere keeps people drinking and makes places a destination instead of a stop along the way.

- *Ex: With a beer garden, bowling and bocce Oakland, CA's Plank keeps the fun under one roof.*
- *Ex: Denver is set to welcome 6,000-square-foot RheinHaus to their restaurant ranks. The Bavarian beer hall will feature bocce ball courts to keep the drinks and fun flowing.*

Crowd Fun(ding)

Since 2009, close to 3,000 food and restaurant projects have raised \$41.47 million through Kickstarter. Small pledges (\$50 or less in some cases) can add up quickly and allow chefs and restaurateurs to stay true to their visions without the influence of private backers.

- *Ex: Kyle Itani and Jenny Schwarz were ahead of the trend when they used Kickstarter to help fund their Japanese-influenced Oakland eatery Hopscotch in 2012. Fun rewards like a customized scotch tasting and exclusive invites to industry night potlucks helped them reach their \$20,000 goal.*
- *Ex: Chef Kevin Sousa used Kickstarter to raise more than \$300,000 to fund the creation of Superior Motors in Braddock, PA. Part fine dining, part community job-training resource and part urban farm—the space will open in 2015 and is meant to lead a revitalization of the ailing steel mill town.*





The Incredible Shrinking Lunch Hour

Sadly, it seems not many people have time for a leisurely lunch anymore. Working at one's desk during lunch has become the norm and restaurants are adapting to this trend in a variety of ways.

- *Ex: Chris Cosentino closed perennial favorite Incanto and opened Porcellino (San Francisco, CA) in its place. The new, casual spot boasts a take-out friendly, all-day menu, as well as a market element to order sliced cured meats, wine and other specialty food items.*
- *Ex: Downtown San Francisco's Claudine offers their lunch menu for delivery through Caviar, a new delivery website that focuses on higher end restaurants.*
- *Ex: Copita Tequileria y Comida (Sausalito, CA) offers tacos and more to their local community with LittleCo To Go.*

High Class Casual

A growing number of higher-end fast casual concepts (many helmed by fine-dining chefs) are emerging to satisfy the demand for great food, fast and at lower prices. No longer just for the lunch crowd, these concepts are thriving during the dinner rush.

- *Ex: Souvla (San Francisco, CA) is inspired by Greece's casual, neighborhood souvlaki joints. It offers a simple, yet perfectly executed concept.*
- *Ex: Adam Fleischman, of Umami Burger fame, is expanding his fast casual empire with concepts like ChocoChicken (fried chicken made with chocolate) and Chop Daddy's. He's also partnering with Joshua Skenes (Saison, San Francisco) to roll out Fat Noodle, an Asian noodle concept that will be open from 11am until 2am every day.*

The Sweet (and Savory) Side of Life

The division between the pastry line and the rest of the kitchen is fading. Pastry chefs are contributing to savory dishes and even opening their own shops to serve selections of sweet and savory items.

- *Ex: Pastry chef Kaley Laird at San Francisco's Aveline has her hands in a number of dishes on the restaurant's dinner menu—including an avocado trio which features a savory avocado ice cream.*
- *Ex: Maurice Luncheonette (Portland, OR), the brainchild of pastry chef Kristen Murray, has been garnering national acclaim for its innovative pastries, but also its savory lunch offerings like polenta clafouti topped with a farm-fresh poached egg.*



All Together Now

More than just a special pre-fixe, Sunday Suppers are becoming a time for adventurous cooking. By offering one set menu (often family style) chefs can tackle more ambitious and complex dishes or experiment with new techniques or cuisines.

- *Ex: Sundays at the Bachelor Farmer (Minneapolis) often mean whole-roasted animals and challenging dishes that need the time and attention of a whole day.*
- *Ex: John Fleeer uses his Sundays at Rhubarb (Asheville) to encourage the act of eating together. Guests sit at communal tables with friends and strangers to savor family-style menus of locally-sourced fare.*
- *Ex: Poggio (Sausalito, CA) moves Sunday to mid-week with its weekly Tuesday Night Supper, a series of family-style meals reminiscent of chef Ben Balesteri's Italian-American childhood family dinners.*

Take Me Out Before You Go Go

You've served your guests a spectacular multi-course meal; they're packed to the gills and heading home. While the tradition of sending them on their way with a pastry or granola for the morning after is going strong, some chefs are thinking outside of the breakfast box for their unique takeaway treat.

- *Ex: Rose's Luxury (Washington D.C.) is topping many of the best new restaurant lists this year—and for good reason. Chef/owner Aaron Silverman takes food, hospitality and happiness very seriously. After an unforgettable private feast on the restaurant's roof garden, guests walk away with a throwback bag lunch complete with brisket sandwich, Utz potato chips and a Capri Sun.*

Just Say No

Dietary restrictions and food aversions are on the rise. Restaurants are starting to take a firmer stance on special requests—in an effort to stay true to their concept. "Sometimes we have to say no to customized dish requests," says Stacy Jed, owner of Bluestem Brasserie (San Francisco, CA). "We can omit elements or ingredients, but doing switches compromises the integrity of the dish and the experience we are trying to create for guests."

Beverage Trends

Who You Calling Shorty?

The solution to cocktail indecisiveness? The short cocktail. Miniature versions of full-sized cocktail offerings for those who can't decide what to order or for those who just want to sample a few things.

- *Ex: The drink menu at New York City's Alder offers "Shorts" of any of its cocktail selections for half off the full drink price.*
- *Ex: Look for "The Littles" at Dominick's (Los Angeles, CA). Three and half ounce portions of classic cocktails like a martini and a Manhattan are served for just \$4, but only during happy hour.*

Sorry, You Can't Take it with You (Except When You Can)

Bartenders tip their hats to the past and add a bit of spectacle to their presentations by incorporating flasks into the mix.

- *Ex: Large format cocktails at Rose. Rabbit. Lie. at the Cosmopolitan in Las Vegas are served in customized glass flasks that guests can take home with them.*
- *Ex: The Robert Burn's Hunting Flask cocktail at Charles Phan's The Coachman in San Francisco is presented to guests in a small metal flask and poured tableside over a large block ice cube.*

Cider House Rules

The craft beer movement has paved the way for an influx of artisan ciders. On tap, in bottles and even in the can, these easy drinking, sweet yet tart beverages are a welcome addition to bar menus.

- *Ex: The Seattle Cider Co. offers their tart and tangy Dry Hard Cider in a 16-oz can.*
- *Ex: Cider makes for great cocktails too. At the Yardbird (Miami, FL), the Porkchop cocktail plays on classic ingredients often paired with pork—apples and mustard—and mixes bourbon with house-made Dijon simple syrup, cider and thyme.*

Gin Up

Gin is the latest alcoholic beverage to have its moment in the sun.

- *Ex: New York City's Gin Palace offers only gins and gin-based cocktails with more than 70 varieties available to sample, plus their house specialty—Gin & Tonic on tap.*

- *Ex: Spaniards are obsessed with their Gin Tonics (as they call them). Special bars dedicated to the mixed drink have sprung up all over the country—each one mixing up custom Gin & Tonics with obscure tonics and artisanal gins.*

That's Quite a Package

Restaurant and wineries are getting creative and having fun with wine presentation.

- *Ex: Wine bottled in one-litre, old fashioned milk bottles? Yes please! Vaso di Marina is made by Portalupi Winery and can be found on the wine lists of Duboce Park Café and Precita Park Café in San Francisco, CA.*
- *Ex: Wine flights are served in test tubes at Wine Lab (Costa Mesa, CA), which is a fun nod to the bar's scientific name.*
- *Ex: Wine labels with bold creative names like WTF Pinot Noir and GR8 Cabernet Sauvignon will continue to rise in popularity, taking the snobbery out of wine drinking often associated with the Boomer generation.*

The Triple D: Dramatic Drink Delivery

Restaurants and bars are sharing moments of delight and spectacle as they up their drink delivery game.

- *Ex: Gaspar Brasserie (San Francisco, CA) serves the Cafe Brulot, a classic New Orleans after-dinner drink, tableside, where it is set aflame before being extinguished with coffee.*
- *Ex: The Library at NYC's NoMad Hotel is taking bottle service to the next level. Bottles arrive on a custom-designed bar cart with three pre-mixed cocktails and all of the fixings. For example, a bottle of gin will come with the ingredients for a negroni, a southside and a gin-gin mule. You also receive cocktail tools, ice and a plethora of bitters, vermouths and sweeteners if you'd rather go freestyle.*



On the Vine—Wine World Trends

- **Sustainability Goes Mainstream:** Virtually every winery and vineyard is continuing the movement towards a more holistic approach to growing grapes and making wine. It's a practical movement to adapt to changing conditions in both the economy and the environment.
- **Blended Wines** will continue to gain popularity and see double-digit sales growth.
- **Easy-drinking wines** from Portugal (Vinho Verde) and South America will continue to grow in popularity in the coming year.



Finesse the Frozen Daiquiri

The Island Oasis machine meets the artisanal movement. Bartenders are creating house-made mixes with locally sourced, seasonal ingredients and loading up the machine for positive profit margins and crowd-pleasing slushes.

- *Ex: What's a Caribbean-influenced restaurant without frozen drinks? At Brooklyn's Battery Harris the slushy machines are pumping out Dark and Stormys made with toasted five-spice ginger reduction.*
- *Ex: Palm House (San Francisco, CA) offers a rotating seasonal frozen house specialty cocktail. Add a dark rum float if you are feeling extra decadent.*

Into the Nitro

The next big thing in coffee is nitrogen. Flash-brewed ice coffee is placed under nitrogen to enhance its natural sweetness while diminishing its acidity. When poured, the resulting nitro coffee delivers a stunning cascading effect and rich, creamy mouth feel. You might even mistake it for Guinness until you taste it.

- *Ex: We're seeing this trend in third wave coffee houses across the country—including Portland's Stumptown, San Francisco's Coffee Bar (which serves Mr. Espresso coffee) and Minneapolis's Spyhouse.*

Hotel Trends

Feedback Loop

User feedback goes to the next level in the new era of personalization. Interactive campaigns encourage engagement with the tangible benefits of customized rooms, personalized experiences and unique features that integrate fun at every opportunity.

- *Ex: Marriott's "Travel Brilliantly" campaign aims to make millennial business travelers feel like their room was designed for them by gathering their feedback across multiple multimedia platforms. The result? Plugs in all the right places, moveable tables and spa-like bathrooms.*
- *Ex: Marriott's new European concept, Moxy Hotels, will feature floor-to-ceiling Instagram walls in the lobby to showcase the guests' best snapshots #atthemoxy*

Extreme Green

Guests value sustainability. How far are hotels willing to take it?

- *Ex: Tree-free toilet paper made of bamboo and sugarcane has been used at the Sundance Film Festival and Coachella.*
- *Ex: New hotel concept EVEN puts the emphasis on wellness, and uses all natural materials in its rooms, including eucalyptus fiber bedding.*

Happy Endings

Cause-related marketing lets guests feel good about their purchasing decisions.

- *Ex: Joie De Vivre's You Can Make a Difference program encourages guests to engage with their existing charitable partners by giving them the option to add an additional \$1 to their bill for each night of their stay.*
- *Ex: The Warwick San Francisco adds heart to their Valentine's Day promotional package by contributing 10% of the proceeds from package sales to "Hearts in San Francisco" which benefits San Francisco General Hospital Foundation.*



Modern Catering – Going Up

Taking a cue from high-concept modern chefs, caterers are pushing past traditional boundaries.

- **Live Gardens:** *Adding edible dirt to beautiful collections of farm-fresh vegetables creates a stunning display that is almost too perfect to eat.*
- **Cart Craze:** *State Bird Provisions (San Francisco, CA) has spawned a Dim Sum-style cart service frenzy in restaurants all over the country. Now, caterers are picking up the trend—expect to see meticulously plated dishes move around venues on custom-made carts.*
- **The Death of Yes:** *Caterers are finding their voice and their niche. The days of saying yes to whatever a client wants are gone — instead companies are developing and marketing specific styles they can become known for.*

Get Glampy With It

Camping doesn't have to mean roughing it—enter glamping (glamorous camping). Mountain resorts and remote destinations have begun to add “camps” to their properties—luxurious tents decked out with electricity, top-of-the-line bedding, gas stoves and full bathrooms. Guests can enjoy nature and all the creature comforts of a four-star resort.

- *Ex: Dunton River Camp in the Colorado Rockies features eight canvas deluxe tents just feet from the Dolores River.*
- *Ex: The tents at Fireside Resort in Jackson Hole, WY come with Glamping Butlers to help tend campfires, fetch marshmallows or scare away bears.*

Breakfast Replacement Therapy

Travelers are seeking out faster breakfast options which, in many cases, means skipping the hotel breakfast. How will hotels keep guests spending on property? We're seeing higher-end hotels and resorts begin to adopt on-the-go marketplace concepts and casual coffee shops to offer in-house alternatives.

- *Ex: Elaine's Coffee Call at the Hotel Lincoln (Chicago, IL) is the hotel's hip coffee shop and offers attractive alternatives to a full sit-down breakfast or lunch.*
- *Ex: Panzano at Denver's Hotel Monaco features the Breakfast with Wings program, where guests can order quick portable breakfast items to go.*

The Boomers are Still Booming

Baby Boomers are responsible for more than 50% of all vacation dollars spent in the US. As these folks age, they aren't traveling alone—they're bringing their grandchildren along with them. Hotels and tourism companies are catering to these multigenerational family units.

- *Ex: The Nickelodeon Suites Resort (Orlando, FL) offers special Grandparent Packages designed to help make memories.*
- *Ex: Road Scholar, a non-profit educational travel operator, leads a number of intergenerational trips to adventurous destinations like Iceland, Kenya and the Galapagos Islands.*

Advice from the Cloud

Hotels are making it easier than ever to plan vacation itineraries with virtual concierge technology.

- *Ex: Pin.Pack.Go from the Four Seasons uses Pinterest as a collaboration tool between guests and their concierges. Create a board, invite your Four Seasons destination to collaborate and the concierge will pin fun activities and destinations you might enjoy.*
- *Ex: Brannan Cottage Inn (Calistoga, CA) is the first property in Napa Valley to use the HotelCloud app as an e-concierge platform. The app generates curated itineraries based on guests travel motivations—girl's weekend, harvest and more with access to the hotel's insider info and favorite spots.*

BYOE (Bring Your Own Entertainment)

99% of guests travel with at least one mobile device. Of those, 45% travel with two devices and 40% travel with three or more. These devices aren't just for communicating—they house entertainment as well. Offering syncing services that attach devices to in-room televisions is just one more way hotels can make their guests feel taken care of.

- *Ex: MyMedia by Shodogg offers hardware free technology that enables any mobile device to securely connect to digital content and cast that content to any Smart TV screen.*

Marketing Trends

Delicious on Demand

Fortune magazine recently reported “food-related businesses attracted \$2.8 billion in venture capital in 2013, with 2014 showing few signs of a cooling market.” The tech boom has boiled over to the food world and its food delivery on steroids. Will these new companies find widespread success? Only time will tell.

- *Ex: Instacart, Postmates, Blue Apron, Munchery, Caviar, Mantry, Sprig, Forage, Chef'd, Good Eggs*

Tech Crunch: Restaurant Edition

Technology continues to work its way into the restaurant world too. With pay for play reservation apps, one-touch payment and apps that make wine lists work smarter, both diners and operators reap the benefits of smartphone technology.

- *Ex: WineStein works with a restaurant's menu to ascertain the best wine pairings given the existing inventory and shares the pairings with diners on their own phones. The restaurant can access data on how often a certain wine is viewed and paired.*
- *Ex: OpenTable isn't the only game in Reservation Town. SeatMe, Reserve, Resy, Sosh and Table 8, just to name a few, are providing stiff competition and some even offer a fee-based model where the reservations are available but for a price.*
- *Ex: Asking for your bill is so 2013. With Apple Pay integrating with OpenTable and apps like Covered, you'll never need to reach for your wallet again.*

What's Your Story?

A great story is the key to a Millennial's heart. This savvy generation already knows about unique ingredients and the farm-to-table movement. What they want is authenticity and backstory into the places they frequent. Give them fun content that offers insight into the personalities and stories behind the restaurant and its players.

- *Ex: The menu and concept of Grant Achatz's Next in Chicago changes three times a year. The restaurant releases artfully produced video previews of each concept to get the buzz and excitement going through the press and viral online sharing.*

Where You Lead, I Will Follow

Social media is no longer about talking *to* people; it's about getting your advocates to talk to their friends *for* you. Consumers want to hear from their own friends and the people they trust, so social strategy has to ignite sharing and motivate activity.

Somebody's Watching You

These days we know more than ever about our guests—and that pool of data is only growing larger. The information is there, the key is how to access it and what to do with it. Some companies are even using the data to adjust and change their concepts.

- *Ex: Social media aggregates like Brand Analytics, Radian 6 and others offer sophisticated ways to listen to what guests are saying.*
- *Ex: Food Genius offers data around menus and local food preferences to help restaurants appeal to their local markets.*
- *Ex: The Internet of Things tracks and connects objects to data and is already being used by many in their daily lives. Imagine towel racks that collect information about towel usage or lights that let a hotel know when someone is in their room. It has great potential for both energy and cost reductions, but also, these "things" will allow hotels to bring guests an even more customized experience.*

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Andrew Freeman & Co. is a high-energy hospitality agency with a unique blend of expertise in marketing, publicity and creative services. The AF&Co team will do whatever it takes to build awareness for clients and ultimately increase sales. AF&Co offers tailored, flexible programs that include: creative/concept development, branding, recruiting, graphic design, public relations, sales/marketing, training, event management, and more depending on the clients' needs. The AF&Co team is creative, direct and fun, and focuses on the areas that they are passionate about: restaurants and beverages, travel and hotels, and lifestyle personalities and products. For more information, visit afandco.com or follow them on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

An industry veteran, prior to opening AF&Co. nine years ago, Andrew worked at legendary New York venues including Windows on the World, the Russian Tea Room and the Rainbow Room. Eventually Andrew left New York to become the Vice President of Public Relations and Strategic Partnerships for Kimpton Hotels and Restaurants, based in San Francisco. He spent ten years with Kimpton, launching the global brand and over 40 hotels and restaurants. Andrew is currently the head of a dynamic hospitality agency offering full service marketing, public relations and consulting for hotels and restaurants. In the nine years since opening, the agency has conceived, launched and promoted over 200 hotels and restaurants.