



CHANGE |
is
the
new **BLACK** |

af&co.

2018 HOSPITALITY TREND REPORT | #afcotrends | @afandco

2018 HOSPITALITY TREND REPORT OVERVIEW

*Responding to Perpetual Change
with Creativity, Optimism and
Innovation.*

af&co.

There's one thing we can count on for next year, and it's ... *nothing*. Change is here to stay, and this year's top trends reflect the industry's acceptance of this state. Successful hotels and restaurants are turning creativity into innovation and adapting faster than ever. And there's a lot of change to deal with - economic, political and social factors as well as significant cultural shifts in the way people use restaurants and hotels. Hold on tight, folks, because it's time to dig in and embrace the craziness.

The times, they are a changin'.

About Us

WE ARE AN INNOVATIVE RESTAURANT & HOSPITALITY CONSULTING FIRM

*Headquartered in San
Francisco with clients across
the country.*

af&co.

We have developed and launched concepts for over **120** restaurants and hotels and provided ongoing marketing and public relations programs for over 200 others. We have created unique culinary events of all sizes from intimate dinners to food and wine festivals drawing over 10,000 people. We focus on what we are passionate about: hotels, restaurants, food, wine, spirits and travel.

A FEW OF OUR AMAZING CLIENTS



Coast to Coast

- **Acacia House**
- **Au Bon Repas**
- **The Alembic**
- **Bluestem Brasserie**
- **Buffalo Theory**
- **Canela Bistro & Wine Bar**
- **Cameron Mitchell Restaurants**
- **The Chapel / The Vestry**
- **Chowbotics**
- **Citizen**
- **Copita Tequileria y Comida**
- **E&O Kitchen and Bar**
- **El Paseo**
- **Ensemble Hotels**
- **Finn Town**
- **Goat Hill Pizza**
- **Gott's Roadside**
- **Hakkasan**
- **Hotel Contessa**
- **James Beard**
- **M.Y. China**
- **Mr. Espresso**
- **Ocean Prime**
- **One Market**
- **Pacific Catch**
- **Park Café Group**
- **Perbacco**
- **Barbacco**
- **Poggio Trattoria**
- **ROOH**
- **Salt & Straw**
- **San Francisco Brewing Co.**
- **UpValley Inn**
- **Wegmans**
- **Wente Vineyards**

How We Trend...

OUR TEAM OF TRENDOLOGISTS

All year-round our Trendologists collect the hottest trends in hotels & restaurants – exploring the world to determine what’s coming in and what’s going out. (Rough life, we know!)



ANDREW FREEMAN

Master Trendologist
“Will it be popular?”



ANNE LE ZIBLATT

Partner
“How will operators use it?”



CANDACE MACDONALD

Director, Consulting Services
“How will we market it?”



KYLE OSHER

Senior Creative Strategist
“What’s it look like?”



KATIE HAGGART

Consultant
“What’s it taste like?”



MICHAEL GORECKI

Account Coordinator
“Will it be fun?”

OUR PANEL OF EXPERTS

Industry leaders we interviewed for their insights and predictions.



CAROLYN WENTE
CEO
Wente Vineyards



MIKE WARD
Executive Chef,
The Restaurant at
Wente Vineyards



RYAN VALENTINE
Director of Beverage,
Cameron Mitchell
Restaurants



RICH SHANK
Director,
Consumer Insights,
Technomic



STACY JED
Co-Owner
Bluestem Brasserie



JOYCE GOLDSTEIN
Chef, Author
& Consultant



KIMBERLY CHARLES
& the team at Charles
Communications Associates



STEVE WEIS
VP of Development,
Cameron Mitchell
Restaurants



TONYA PITTS
Somm & Wine Director,
One Market Restaurant



JORGE TINOCO
Sommelier,
Wente Vineyards



MELISSA JOHNSON
Managing Director,
Cameron Mitchell
Premier Events



MELISSA MUOIO
Brand & Style,
Levy Restaurants



JENNIFER REBMAN
Culinary Director,
Gott's Roadside



MAGNUS RIDDIFORD
Co-Founder,
Wine Dogs Imports

**Trends We Saw
Coming...**

2017 Trends We Saw Coming!

af&co.

We're bragging just a bit!

- **Ingredient of the year:** Cannabis
- **Food city of the year:** LA
- **Cuisine of the year:** Filipino
- **Dish of the year:** Breakfast sandwich
- **Trend of the 2017:** contemporary takes on lesser-known cuisines
- **Business trend of the year:** culture comes first
- **Ice cream** - the new ice cream age
- **Fermentation...** rot is STILL hot
- **Can-do caviar**
- **Grain bowls**
- **Sour beer**
- **Year 'round rose**
- **Coffee on draft**
- **Canned wine**
- **Tip included?...** we called this as a flop
- **Flexible spaces** - maximize every hour & inch
- **Food Halls** are here to stay - Hall-elujah!
- **Vibe dining.** I'm not even hungry, I just came here to stare...
- **Repurposing vintage style** in design
- **Delivery Madness**
- **The influence of paid Influencers**
- **Pop-ups, popping up everywhere**
- **The rise of the veggie kingdom** and Impossible Burger's "bleeding veggie burger"



2018

The Year of...

Food City of The Year

af&co.

Hail to Washington D.C.

There's more than steak with ketchup! With an explosion in fine-dining restaurants that don't fit the mold, and fast-casual restaurants that push boundaries, the nation's capital is arguably the most exciting place to eat in, *well*, the nation. Chefs are flocking to D.C. to open their latest outposts (hey there, chefs Edward Lee & Argiro Barbarigou), adding fresh flair to the formerly stodgy dining scene. This isn't the D.C. you thought you knew.

ChiKo (DC) Peel & eat shrimp with garlic XO sauce and chili lime at this fast-casual restaurant featuring Chinese & Korean flavors, and a reservation-only kitchen counter with a \$50 tasting menu. **Examples:** Himitsu, Pineapple and Pearls, Timber Pizza Co.



Courtesy of LeadingDC

Dish of The Year

af&co.

Raise The Roost: Tastes Like Chicken

Give ‘em the bird! Chicken is back and is growing in popularity. Rotisserie chicken, fried chicken, chicken sandwiches... high-end chefs are embracing chicken and elevating its status. It’s cheap, delicious, and couldn’t be more comforting (hey, we’ll take all the comfort we can get in these crazy times!). Stay on the lookout for more chefs introducing the versatile rotisserie chicken - easy on operations and the wallet, and perfect for delivery and take-out. Don’t chicken out, it’s time to embrace the original white meat.

RT Rotisserie (SF) Casual spin-off to sister restaurant Rich Table, the counter-service restaurant offers rotisserie chicken for takeout or delivery only.

Examples: McFly’s All-Natural at the Electric Owl (LA), City Rotisserie (Portland), MF Chicken (SF), Buffalo Theory (SF)



Kassie Borreson

Concept of The Year

af&co.

You're So Fine (& Casual)

“Fine-casual” dining is hitting the scene! Thank you, Danny Meyer, for coining the term. What is it? Think upscale counter-service - and even table service - with curated ingredients and unexpected touches like a wine bar and optional tasting menu. Expect to see a rise in the number of restaurants popping up under this concept. We are entering the age of limited menus - where quality, speed, and customization is more important than quantity.



Martina (NYC)

Danny Meyer's pizza-focused restaurant coined the term “fine-casual.”

Examples: Tocaya Organica (CA), Souvla (SF), Duna (SF)

Liz Clayman

Cuisine of The Year

af&co.

Israeli Cuisine Hits the Scene

What is Israeli cuisine? Well, with a country that's hardly 70 years old, it's complicated -- and extremely diverse. And almost impossible to resist. For starters, prepare yourself to see more Israeli inspired ingredients including sumac, za'atar, tahini, halva, halloumi, harissa, and chermoula popping up on restaurant menus. From shakshuka at brunch to sumac-spiced donuts for dessert, Israeli flavors are deep and vibrant, lending themselves well to both savory and sweet applications.

Zahav (PA) Shakshuka is among the contemporary Israeli dishes from Michael Solomonov, 2017 James Beard winner for Outstanding Chef.

Examples: Tel (LA) - Coming Soon, Nur (NYC), Kismet (LA)



Food Trends

Food Trends

af&co.

Color My World

Lights, camera, action! Everything is rainbow, thanks to Instagram. The more photo-friendly your food, the better. In 2018, keep an eye out for over-the-top ice cream desserts, edible flowers everywhere, millennial pink chocolate (that is naturally pink!) and other unexpected colors showing up in food, such as jet-black charcoal lemonade. As long as it's worth a photo, it's worth the calories. Even vegetables are getting in on the trend, with purple carrots, potatoes, asparagus, & cauliflower capitalizing on the instagrammable fun.

Farm : Table (SF) Specializes in breakfast and lunch sourced from local farms, and extremely colorful offerings including charcoal lattes and beet lattes. **Examples:** Rainbow Soup Dumplings at Imperial Lamian (Chicago), "The Tartine Bowl" at Sweetgreen, Rainbow mimosas and snow cones at Finn Town (SF)



Let's Talk Trash

Reducing restaurant waste is not optional. Creative ways to combat and utilize trash are reflected in the kitchen and elsewhere. The ice cream shop Salt & Straw (CA & OR) is using “wasted” ingredients in their popular flavors while also engaging in partnerships with organizations including Food Runners, a Bay Area nonprofit working to deliver surplus food directly to people in need. With celebs like Anthony Bourdain digging into the issue in his documentary *Wasted! The Story of Food Waste*, everyone is talking trash these days.

Salt & Straw (CA & OR) featured “The Roxie Road,” a sustainable ice cream flavor made using surplus popcorn from the historic Roxie Theatre in SF. **Examples:** “Ugly Juice” from Project Juice (SF), sustainable straws at Pacific Catch (SF), Misfit Juicery (DC)



Allison Jones

Like a Vegan

Vegetables have gone mainstream! Long gone are the days of offering one vegetarian entree (*we're looking at you, pasta primavera*). Tastes have changed and even the happiest of carnivores enjoys a vegetarian dish. Vegetables will be all up in your grill in 2018 (literally, sometimes), as entrees like rotisserie cauliflower, jackfruit tacos, and hominy ceviche are becoming standard - even expected - in restaurants across the country. We will gladly be eating our veggies.

The Alembic (SF) "Highway One Fennel" featuring coastal wild fennel slow poached in vermouth & aromatic herbs, mild caraway confit citrus, marcona almonds, and finished with cucumber & Benham gin sorbet. **Examples:** Hominy "ceviche style" at Erven (LA), the expansion of Amy's Drive Thru (CA), the "Impossible Burger" at Cockscomb (SF)



Kingmond Young

Food Trends

¡Viva México!

Regional Mexican cuisine has incredible variety. Which is ideal, since you'll be tempted to eat your way through Mexico once you get a taste. Mexico has 31 states, their subregions (Oaxaca alone has eight), and the capital. Need a place to start? Get familiar with Mexico City, where the infusion of traditional family recipes and ingredients with contemporary twists create dishes with both a story and a soul.

Nixta (St Louis) Modern Mexican cuisine at Bon Appetit's #9 Best New Restaurant in America 2017 **Examples:** Tintorera (LA), Xochi (Houston), Alto Bajo (Portland), Copita Tequileria y Comida (Sausalito, CA)



Take Another Pizza My Heart

It's never been easier to make dough! From flash-baked to St. Louis-style, fast-casual to fine-casual, pizza is making an appearance everywhere. In addition to the classic slice, stay on the lookout for more local and regional specialties, and global-inspired pizzas with influences from Korea, Japan, and beyond. With all the change happening around us, a comforting slice of pizza is just the thing you need.

Goat Hill Pizza (San Francisco) Serving up sourdough pizza since 1975, including their chicken florentine pizza with mushrooms and spinach.

Examples: Sash Japanese Pizza (NYC, Tokyo, Melbourne), Young Joni (MN), Pies and Pints (multiple locations)



Forever Young

It's the Peter Pan effect! Millennials are growing up and are bringing their childhood food preferences with them! (Errr... maybe they're not growing up?). With nostalgic cuisine hitting the scene, items including chicken nuggets, tater tots, scoops of edible cookie dough, Pop Rocks, Carvel ice cream cake and Cheetos are showing up in unexpectedly refined places. Soft-serve ice cream sprinkled with fruity pebbles, anyone?

Cookie Dough Parlor (Oakland) Childhood dreams do come true! Edible cookie dough has been given the ice cream treatment, and we have zero complaints.

Examples: Cheetos Pop Up (NYC), Chicken Nugget Tasting Room at Hip Chicks (Sebastopol, CA), Tater tots at Ocean Prime (multiple locations), MAC'D (SF)



Courtesy of Cookie Dough Parlor

Classic Redux: This Ain't Your Mama's Meatloaf

As consumers long for the comfort of nostalgic food of the past, expect to see items like meatloaf, wedge salads, deviled eggs, seafood towers, and crudite, popping up on menus. Classical entertaining with a twist is on the rise. You'll see bite-sized Beef Wellington at catered parties, and classic vegetable crudité paired with a not-so-classic dip - like the "iced vegetables with sunflower seed hummus and hemp oil" at Acacia House in Napa.

Citizen (Beverly Hills) Deviled eggs with jalapeno bacon candy.

Examples: Wedge salad with "everything bagel crunchy stuff, bacon, tomatoes, that chunky blue cheese dressing, fresh dill" at Turkey & the Wolf (New Orleans), crudite at Acacia House (Napa), tuna casserole at Finn Town (SF), lapsang souchong tea deviled eggs at E&O Kitchen and Bar (SF)



Contemporary Takes on Chinese Cuisine

The diverse regional cuisines and flavors of China are finally getting the the attention they deserve, thanks to the rise in authentic regional cuisine. We're seeing outposts that are coming directly from China, including Yang's Braised Chicken Rice (LA), serving up the Shandong cuisine staple, huang meng braised chicken, and DaDong (coming soon to NYC), a popular roast duck chain based out of Beijing. This is a new kind of Sichuan food, reflecting innovative food trends that are currently happening in China.

Hakkasan (multiple locations) Serves high-end, Cantonese cuisine, including Black Truffle Roasted Duck with tea plant mushroom. **Examples:** Chinese Tuxedo (NYC), Mister Jius (SF), DaDong (NYC) - coming soon, DaXi (NYC), M.Y. China (SF)



Courtesy of Hakkasan

Food Trends

af&co.

Let's Keep This Kosher

Jewish delis are popping up across the country, introducing more people to the beauty of smoked fish, corned beef, pastrami, bagels, latkes, pickled herring, chopped liver, brisket, and matzo ball soup, just to name a few. With fast-casual (and fine-casual!) service and a whole host of build-your-own options, it's no surprise that Jewish delis are gaining traction. It's time to get your nosh on! We'll l'chayim to that.

Harry & Ida's Luncheonette (NYC) Vintage-inspired spot for classic sandwiches like housemade pastrami & specialty deli goods with a focus on sustainability. **Examples:** Mamaleh's (MA), Steingolds of Chicago, Frankels (NYC)



Harry & Ida's Luncheonette

Food Trends Heat Map

af&co.

Ingredients to keep an eye on...

- Insects
- Sumac
- Za'atar
- XO Sauce
- Paletas (Mexican popsicles)
- Shakshuka
- Halva
- Koji
- Tahini
- Harissa
- Pandan
- Synthesized Proteins & Lab Grown Meat
- Tapioca (& Bubble tea)
- Calabrian chilies
- Cactus / nopal
- Queso
- "Other" Wings (cauliflower wings, duck wings...)
- Sardines
- Everything bagel spice
- Cookie dough
- Geoduck



Beverage Trends

Beverage Trends

af&co.

Don't Mock Me!

The mocktail is here to stay... just don't call it that! We're talking house-made tonics, elixirs, house sodas, shrubs, tinctures, and fresh-pressed fruit and vegetable juices. Restaurants and bars are raising the bar with their non-alcoholic beverage options, often with a healthy spin. Think tonics that boast a purpose (health, energy), and add-on options like chia seeds (for vitality!) that are driving up check averages.

Park Group Cafe (SF) Features a selection of juices with restorative health properties, including the Revival and Mighty Cleanse. **Examples:** "Cheap Date" drink section at Rose's Luxury (DC), "Vibrations" restorative tonics at AbcV (NYC)



Beverage Trends

af&co.

Farm to Shaker

Get ready for cocktails that are inspired by mother nature - and a desire (*need!*) to reduce waste. Using byproduct from the kitchen for cocktail programs, and seasonally inspired ingredients, bar programs are showing their dedication to sustainability. The trend goes beyond the glass, with an increased interest in reclaimed materials used in bar design and more attention to detail, including dishwasher water usage rates.

Trash Tiki (Pop Up & Online Platform) Cocktails are made using the by-products of other bars or things that would usually be thrown away, such as coffee grounds, leftover fruit, and avocado pits. **Examples:** Tin Roof Drink Community (NY), Beetroot Kanji cocktail at ROOH (SF)

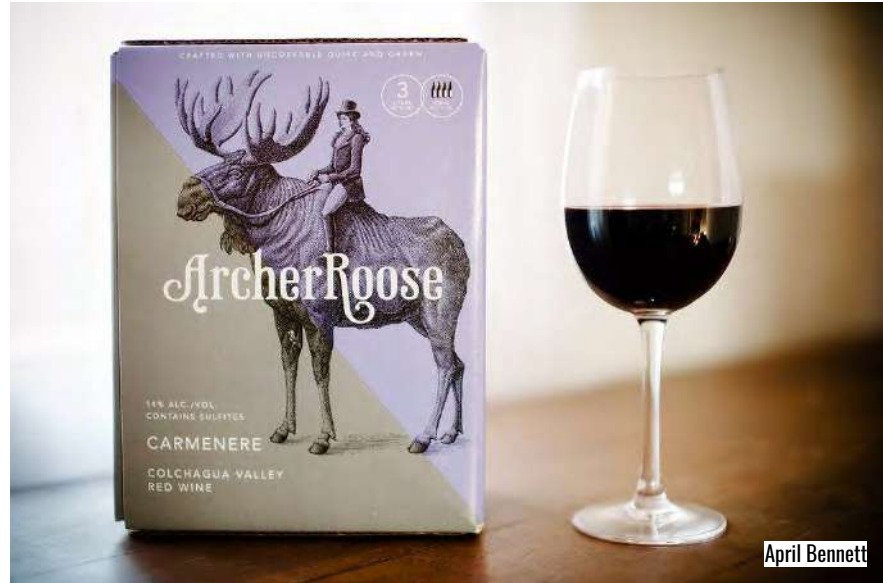


Beverage Trends



Nice Package

The world of wine packaging is changing fast! From cans, to boxes, tetra paks, wine kegs (disposable wine kegs!) and more, inventive wine packaging has opened the door to flexibility and higher profits. Millennials don't care about what package their wine comes in, they just want it to be pretty -- and they even feel better about buying wine in alternative packaging! Cardboard boxes are more environmentally friendly than heavy glass, and it's helpful for producers too, greatly reducing shipping costs with the lighter loads.



Archer Roose Produces artisan-quality wine at an affordable price point through alternative 3 Liter packaging that appeal to millennial tastes.

Examples: Wine kegs from Free Flow Wines (Napa, CA), Canned wine from Cycles Gladiator Wines (Novato, CA), Canned wine from The Infinite Monkey Theorem (Denver)

Beverage Trends

Raising the (Wine) Bar

High-end restaurants are opening adjacent wine bars, offering smaller food menus, affordable pricing, and a casual way to access their brand. Guests want customization, but they don't need massive menus. They crave quality experiences they can make their own. Enter the wine bar, where quality is high, and the menus are small. There's nothing to w(h)ine about here! Multiple concepts within the same space minimize risk for operators by driving traffic and optimizing efficiencies.

Wildair (NYC) An offshoot of Contra, this small eatery serves American fare with a focus on seasonal produce and natural wines. **Examples:** Bar Crenn by Petite Crenn (LA), Little Pearl by Pineapple & Pearls (DC), Ronsky's Wine Bar (MA)



Beverage Trends

Just (Cold) Brew It

Cold brewed iced coffee is here to stay, but expect to see more fun flavors and artisan preparations popping up at your neighborhood coffee shop. Coffee roasters are moving past the traditional cold brew and are experimenting with flavors ranging from the expected (hazelnut, vanilla bean, nutella) to the unexpected (horchata, lavender honey, cardamom rose). This is a caffeinated trend we can get behind. Ice, ice baby!

Hillside Supper Club (SF) Serves cold brew drinks made from Mr. Espresso beans and flavored with spices including cardamom and orange peel. **Examples:** New Orleans style iced coffee at Blue Bottle Coffee (Multiple locations), the Snowy Plover at Andytown Coffee Roasters (SF)



Beverage Trends

af&co.

Mezcal Madness

Mezcal is showing up on cocktail menus across the country, but this 500 year old spirit is hardly new. Made from the agave plant native to Mexico, mezcal traditionally has a smoky flavor, distinguishing it from its cousin, tequila. Bartenders are thinking outside the box, playing with classic cocktails to create drinks including mezcal negronis & mezcal mules.

Westward (Seattle) Naked and Famous cocktail made with mezcal, yellow chartreuse, rinomato, lime. **Examples:** Mezcal negroni at Stoke (Charlotte, NC), Ode to Oaxaca cocktail at Urban Solace (San Diego), Salt bae cocktail at Brimmer & Heeltap (Seattle)



Madison Murphy

Beverage Trends To Watch

af&co.

Drink This!

- Wines you'll see more of:
 - Pinot Noir
 - Gamay
 - Sauvignon Blanc
 - Sicilian wines
 - Australian Semillon
 - Low Oak Wines
- Restaurant groups with their own wine labels
- Aquavit
- Vermouth
- Bitters (& Bitter cocktails)
- DIY cocktail mixers including tonics, shrubs
- Activated Charcoal Latte
- Boozy Freezer Pops (the Peter Pan effect!)
- Sparkling water just getting more popular
 - Topo Chico
 - Truly Spiked & Sparkling
 - White Claw
- Table Beer
- Dill Pickle Beer... kind of a big dill
- Beers with food names (Fried Chicken IPA by Veil Brewing Co)



Concept & Business Trends

Concept & Business Trends

af&co.

It's a Six Meal Period Day

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Snacks, Happy Hour, & Delivery, oh my! In response to guests' demand for customization and choice, there are more meal periods now. Lunch may be a harder audience to capture, but guests are utilizing restaurants for more needs throughout the day, and delivery continues to expand. Restaurants dedicated to delivery are becoming more common, and the snacking culture has contributed to the ongoing rise of food halls. Restaurants are expanding their concepts to meet the needs of guests beyond the typical.



Christina Slaton

ASAP Poke (Chicago) The Haiga Mai Rice Bowl is among the items available for delivery from a virtual restaurant without a brick-and-mortar presence. **Examples:** Takeout and delivery only at MF Chicken (SF), delivery-only from the virtual restaurant Si's Chicken Kitchen (Chicago), DoorDash Kitchens - a commissary kitchen for delivery-only restaurants (Silicon Valley, CA)

Concept & Business Trends

af&co.

The VIP Effect

Bars that have hidden restaurants in back, members only restaurants, speakeasy-style restaurants, bars inside of bars... it's an exclusive world out there! Embrace your inner *FOMO* and join in the members-only craze. More restaurants and bars are realizing the importance of recognition and loyalty, and are providing exclusive-feeling experiences - whether or not they truly require a membership - to create a special moments for their guests.

Palizzi Social Club (Philadelphia) Members-only Italian-American restaurant, and Bon Appetit #4 America's Best New Restaurants 2017. **Examples:** Over Proof at ABV (SF), Members-only bar inside of the bar at Vestry (LA), Cold Drinks at China Live (SF), Commons Club Chicago at the Virgin Hotel (Chicago)



Palizzi Social Club

Concept & Business Trends

af&co.

No Wallet, No Problem

Are you ready to pay with your face? It's time to embrace the future, because the future is now! Facial recognition at KFC, in China, allows customers to, *yes*, pay with their face. More restaurants are offering iPad ordering kiosks to reduce lines, and digital menus allow restaurants to make adjustments on the fly (discounting items, removing an 86'ed item), creating a menu that can be more dynamic. We're can't say we're promoting digital menus for all concepts just yet, but the winds of change are blowing...



Honeygrow (multiple locations) The fast-casual chain uses touch-screens for ordering, and trains in employees using virtual reality scenarios.

Examples: Eatsa (multiple locations), Sweetgreen (multiple locations), Shake Shack (multiple locations)

Concept & Business Trends

The Future, Delivered

Technology has transformed the restaurant & hospitality industry, and it's just getting started. Delivery is so standard that robots are beginning to replace delivery drivers in most major cities. Brands including Chipotle and Domino's are testing drone food delivery, and Domino's has also begun testing driver-less car delivery. The future of delivery is robotic.

Domino's Pizza partnered with Ford to test driverless car delivery. Ford plans to begin production of self-driving cars in 2021. **Examples:** Robot delivery with Starships Technologies & Marble, Tesla (Plug-in stations are being constructed by Tesla for roadside recharges are morphing into full-scale rest stops that could offer food)



Courtesy of Ford Motor Company

Design & Style Trends

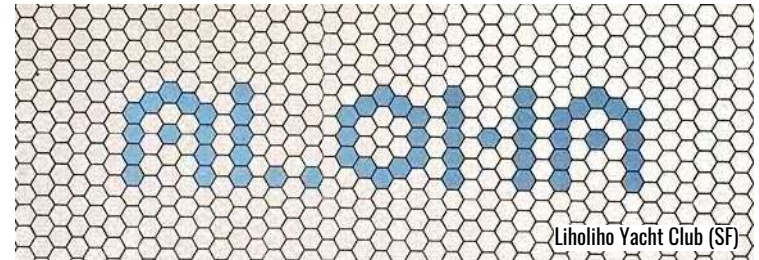
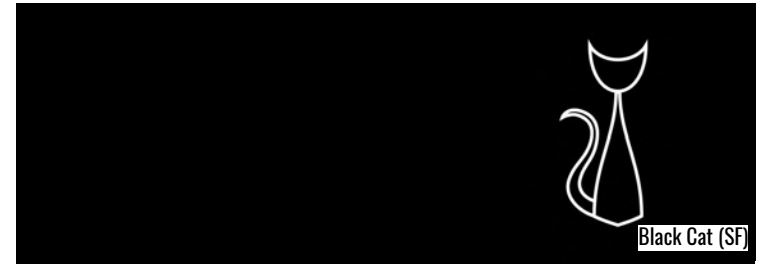
Design & Style Trends

af&co.

Free the Logo

Visual brand identity isn't focused on the logo lockup anymore! As brands are required to live throughout an increasing number of channels and mediums, they are forced to be more flexible and experiential. They need to be recognizable by color and design, and identifiable without ever mentioning your name.

Starbucks From 1971 to today, the Starbucks logo has become progressively simpler and cleaner, proving you can create an identity without ever saying your name. **Examples:** Liholiho Yacht Club (SF), Black Cat (SF)



Design & Style Trends

Show Us Your Privates! Rooms, that is...

Restaurants, bars and hotels are offering spaces with semi-private barriers, allowing for privacy without cutting people off from the action. Often semi-transparent, these spaces offer ambiance, energy, and privacy. Guests want to be a part of the action of the restaurant, while still having the experience afforded to them by a private dining room.

M.Y. China (SF) Creative barriers, including metal bars and mesh curtains, provide privacy and separation without cutting guests off from the action.
Examples: One Market (SF), Hotel Nia (Menlo Park), Hakkasan (SF)



Courtesy of M.Y. China

Design & Style Trends

Do It For The 'Gram

Color and light matter! The entire experience and every touch point is a social media opportunity. Photo-friendly locations, signs, and walls are being manufactured as guest touch points, and event planners are specifically seeking out locations with great backdrops. Lighting is important -- both for taking photos, and for keeping the requisite hanging plants alive. #nofilter

Surfjack Hotel & Swim Club (Honolulu) Stylish Hawaii hotel with multiple instagrammable locations, including a pool emblazoned with “Wish You Were Here!” **Examples:** Beatnik (Chicago), floor tile at Media Noche (SF), living wall at Steins Beer Garden (Cupertino, CA), bathrooms at Gitane (SF)



Courtesy of Surfjack Hotel & Swim Club



Beatnik: Kailley Lindman

Design & Style Trends Heat Map

af&co.

All Eyes On Me

- The utilitarian pouch is the next apron (less is more!)
- Bandanas (showing up in uniforms)
- Vests
- Pin collecting - the 80's are back!
- Pens are the new matches
- Branded trinkets... anything (everything!) is branded
- Beautiful To Go Packaging
- Branded Coasters
- Vintage Cocktail Shakers
- Swizzle Sticks

Mikkeller Bar (LA & SF) Beer bar with collectible coasters and a dedication to experimental brews.



Hotel Trends

Robo Service

Get ready to see robots delivering room service and serving in the lobby! As the robot revolution reaches the hospitality industry, hotels are utilizing technology to deliver fresh experiences - and accessibility - to their guests. New vending options in hotels are giving guests more control and choice. Farmer's Fridge, gives guests access to fresh jarred salads any time, while Sally the Salad Robot takes it a step further, offering over 1,000 different salad combinations made to order.

Sally the Salad Robot Chowbotics develops robots for food service. The company's first product, Sally the Salad Robot, allows users to create custom salads with chef-selected, seasonal ingredients. **Examples:** Farmer's Fridge, Henn'na Hotels (Tokyo) - run almost entirely by robots,, robot bartenders at Royal Caribbean



Hotel Trends

af&co.

Stay Well. Feel Well. Live Well.

From “eating clean” to working out, meditating, and sleeping, well-being is in the spotlight. Hotels are offering guests amenities such as vitamin C-infused showers (to reduce chlorination, of course) and healthy prepared meal delivery services such as Sakara Life. These new amenities are making wellness & health more attainable while traveling. Sorry, folks! There are no more excuses for “letting yourself go” while on the road!

Hilton (multiple locations) The company's Five Feet to Fitness programs lets guests select one of 11 options for their in-room fitness activity. **Examples:** run concierge & SuperFoodsRX menu at Westin Hotels & Resorts (multiple locations), “Brain, Booty, Beauty” package at Dream Hotels (NYC), dawn-simulation lighting to ease jet-lagged guests at Courtyard Marriott



Hotel Trends

af&co.

Expanding Breakfast Horizons

The spotlight is on breakfast! Hotels now are offering much more than the standard continental breakfast. Eggs and toast is nice..but..hello, shakshuka! Global breakfast tastes are being embraced with items like Georgian khachapuri to Chinese jianbing. Hotels are pushing the fold with their offerings. And breakfast isn't just for the morning! Get ready for guests that expect breakfast options all day, everyday as breakfast for dinner becomes more popular.

The Ivy Hotel (Baltimore) Breakfast is included in the nightly rate and features items such as house-smoked salmon and fresh baked bread. **Examples:** Canopy by Hilton (D.C.), Eggslut at the Cosmopolitan (Las Vegas), Catalina Kitchen at Terranea Resort (Rancho Palos Verdes, CA)



Courtesy of The Ivy Hotel

Bigger Isn't Always Better

Micro hotels are big right now. Well, actually, they're tiny. While this trend started off in large cities, it's growing in popularity as brands including Marriott and Hilton spinoff their own versions of the tiny, more accessible hotel rooms. With minimal decor, a smaller price tag, and great public spaces (including decked out lounges and bars), these small but functional rooms are gaining in popularity amongst millennials who prefer experiences over material goods. Luxury is definitely in the eye of the beholder.

Yotel (multiple locations) One of the first brands to gain traction with their small, but functional, room model. **Examples:** CitizenM (Netherlands, U.K., Paris, NYC), Pod 39 (NYC), Hudson Hotel (NYC), Tru by Hilton (multiple locations), Moxy by Marriott International (multiple locations)



Hotel Trends



The Future is Now: Hotel Edition

Aloft Hotels recently unveiled voice-activated rooms, allowing guests to control the temperature, lighting, and music by talking. The company Zycomm has created facial recognition technology that can be used to greet hotel guests by name. And, check this out -- electronics (and other unexpected items!) are now available to check out at the front desk. At the Sheraton Maui Resort and Spa, guests can check out a ukulele and take lessons at the resorts shaka shack.

The Hyperloop The proposed Hyperloop hotel would allow guests to breakfast in New York and lunch in Chicago without stepping foot outside. **Examples:** Selfie sticks checkout at The Mayflower Hotel (DC), Automatic texting service at Cambria Hotel (LA), texting service at UpValley Inn & Hot Springs (Calistoga, CA)



Hotel Trends

Digital Art Demand

Digital art allows hotels to display artwork from artists - both local and international - on any screen, and companies such as Daylighted are popularizing this new way to feature memorable pieces. The art pieces are tailored to give visitors a sense of place and can easily be changed and rotated. Daylight's curation team works closely with clients to keep the exhibitions fresh and appropriate for their guests, utilizing technology to achieve a flexible and highly customizable style.

The Alise (SF) Features a video art wall that seamlessly fits in with their art deco style. **Examples:** Stanford Court Hotel (SF), Empress Hotel (La Jolla, CA), Kimpton Carlyle Hotel Dupont Circle (DC), The Marriott Irvine (Irvine, CA), Hyatt Regency Chicago



Courtesy of The Alise.

Banquet & Catering Trends

Banquet & Catering Trends

af&co.

Catering to Your Every Need

There's a ton of competition in the world of catering, as restaurants break into the space and expand their footprint outside their own four walls. For restaurants with capacity in the kitchen, growing catering is huge, and partners such as ZeroCater and MobyDish are helping them make it happen. ZeroCater is working with offices to deliver an impressive array of gourmet offerings, from family-style restaurant meals to snacks - simultaneously boosting restaurant sales & exposure, and office moral.



ZeroCater Restaurants are dealing with competition, labor issues and rising operations costs. At the same time, companies across all industries are looking for ways to improve office culture, diversity & inclusion while competing for talent. The solution? Impressive employee/office food programs. Examples: MobyDish, EAT Club

Banquet & Catering Trends



Living La Vida Local

Event planners are looking to create a local experience, but what does this mean? For starters, it begins with embracing local and seasonal produce, and partnering with local brands - like wineries and distilleries - to offer a “hyper local” experience. With people traveling to events from all over the world, they want to experience the venue in a fun way that doesn’t feel forced. Another way to infuse authenticity into events is with speakers - or thought leaders - brought in to promote deep conversation.

Wente Vineyards (Livermore) Serves up authentic experiences at events by utilizing local produce from their 3/4-acre on-site organic garden **Examples:** demand for seasonal & local produce at Cameron Mitchell Premier Events, “local happenings” bulletin board at Bluestem Brasserie (SF)



Courtesy of Wente Vineyards

Banquet & Catering Trends



There's an App for that

Technology is changing the face of events. Silent auctions are being run on apps, and groups are utilizing apps instead of traditional ice breaker games. With The Go Game, groups are getting outside and playing physically active games before coming inside for a meal, allowing them time to stretch their legs and get comfortable with their peers. Cameron Mitchell Premier Events predicts they they will be catering parties where guests order food from an app and servers bring it to their specific location within the event space.



The Go Game The Go Game corporate events & workshops offer memorable & engaging team building activities, including a cell-phone scavenger hunt on steroids, starring you and your co-workers. **Examples:** GooseChase App

Marketing & PR Trends

Marketing & PR Trends

We're Flying High!

Food in the air and food movement is gaining traction on social media, capturing audiences with short attention spans by showing instead of telling. The food influencer sphere is a saturated market, creating the perfect conditions for people to be creative and unique in order to get attention, and paving the way for social media accounts dedicated to capturing food. Think egg porn video, cocktail shaker boomerangs, and colorful beverages being stirred.

@ehgg Flying food midst stunning backdrops from this social media influencer, including shots of ever-popular cookie dough. Examples: @foodintheair, @poggiotrattoria, @onemarketsf, @buzzfeedtasty, @dailyfoodfeed, @thenaughtyfork



Marketing & PR Trends

Lifestyle Choices

People see through anything too promotional, paving the way for a new wave of marketing - selling a lifestyle. Restaurants and hotels are pushing concepts that speaks to the lifestyle of someone who would eat, dine, or stay there. Think community events, a focus on fashion, and partnerships to tell a comprehensive story instead of overtly pushing food and beverages. It's all about humanizing and telling the story of the people in 2018! People want to escape and be entertained, not overtly sold to.



Marc Patrick

@LemonadeLA (multiple locations) The popular group of California-based fast casual restaurants is known for their distinctive and seasonally changing menu that provides healthy, farmer's market-inspired food to its guests in a relaxed, eco-friendly space. **Examples:** @parkcafelife, @sweetgreen, @whotels, @fourseasons, @minatetestkitchen

Marketing & PR Trends

af&co.

Influence is Money

Social media is paid media! As huge influencers are now requiring payment, micro influencers are the new target audience. Someone who is a micro influencer nationally could be a huge influencer in a specific market, and businesses are tapping into these influencers by inviting them to over-the-top events in exchange for exposure. Think dinner parties with a DIY flower arrangement station, adding to the lifestyle aspect of the brand. But be careful!! It's important to vet influencers, since many have fake followings and engagements that have been bought.



@Allie.Eats Partners with local businesses to photograph and post about their food and beverage offerings.

Examples: @cyneats, @hungryhungryheejin, @lindseyeatsla, @stuffbeneats, @tonyeats, @rjwang, @foodeeicious

Marketing & PR Trends

af&co.

LTO: Get it While it's Hot!

Limited time offers – everyone's doing it! From McDonald's to fine-dining restaurants, limited time offers are giving people more reasons to come to your restaurant – NOW! From Tuesday Night Suppers at Poggio Trattoria to guest chef pop-ups at Canela Bistro & Wine Bar, limited time offers give people a sense of urgency, and a sense that they're indulging in an exclusive experience. It's time to embrace the changing world of public relations!

Gott's Roadside Featured limited time, seasonal, organic magic dip shells in a range of flavors, including peanut butter, chocolate, cherry, and blue raspberry.

Examples: Barbacco (SF), Perbacco (SF), Canela Bistro & Wine Bar (SF)



Marketing & PR Trends

af&co.

Gaining Loyalty with Data

Recognizing your guests is more important than ever, and there's an explosion of new tools on the market to help. Zenreach and Yelp WiFi receive customer data through Wi-Fi login info, and run targeted promotions to retain customers. UberEats has begun using data and analytics on their customer base to identify gaps in their local delivery options, and are reaching out to restaurants with requests for in-demand foods they'd like them to offer. Utilizing data to win over guests is so 2018.



Thanx This electronic loyalty program enables merchants to effortlessly identify, engage, and retain their best customers. Consumers shop as usual, accumulating personalized rewards at their favorite businesses via real-time notifications to their mobile phones. **Examples:** Venga, Thanks Again, Zenreach, Yelp WiFi



**HAVE TRENDS,
WILL TRAVEL!**

**BOOK US FOR YOUR NEXT
COMPANY RETREAT OR BAR MITZVAH
VIA WEBINAR OR LIVE AND IN COLOR.**

info@afandco.com

A Message For The North Bay

af&co.

As a San Francisco based restaurant and hospitality agency, the devastating fires throughout Napa, Sonoma and Mendocino Counties have hit extremely close to home. Please join us in helping raise funds for everyone affected. www.gofundme.com/california-north-bay-fire-relief

Though much has been destroyed, there's still a lot left to love! Show your support by visiting the local hotels, restaurants and wineries that remain open during these challenging times!

af&co.

CHANGE
is
the
new BLACK

NOW AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

www.afandco.com/whats-trending

#afcotrends | @afandco