

DO THE RIGHT THING

2019 HOSPITALITY TREND REPORT *af&co.*



2019 HOSPITALITY TREND REPORT OVERVIEW

It's time to embrace the world we live in, stand for something, and do the right thing.

af&co.

Restaurants and hotels have been heavily affected by the tumultuous state of the world, and it's driving the hospitality industry to reflect on its actions, step up, and do the right thing. From eating well to implementing sustainability initiatives, embracing global ideas and supporting good causes, there's a renewed energy to do the right thing for yourself, others, and the world at large. The hospitality industry is leading the charge in creating the world we want to live in.

It's time to do the right thing!

About Us

af&co.

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.

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A FEW OF OUR AMAZING CLIENTS *Coast to Coast*



- AC Hotels
- Acacia House
- Bluestem Brasserie
- Canela Bistro & Wine Bar
- The Civic Kitchen
- Copita Tequileria y Comida
- Curio
- E&O Kitchen and Bar
- Gott's Roadside
- Hashida
- James Beard Taste America
- Lemonade
- Mr. Espresso
- One Market
- Oren's Hummus Shop
- Park Cafe Group
- Perbacco Ristorante + Bar
- barbacco eno trattoria
- Poggio
- Ramen Nagi
- ROOH
- Marriott San Mateo
- Tank18
- Tosca Cafe
- Virgin Hotels
- M.Y. China
- Wente Vineyards
- Ocean Prime
- Chowbotics
- Fonda Comida Mexicana
- Spork
- Magnolia Brewing
- Four Star Seafood
- Terranea Resort
- Rangoon Ruby
- Walnut Capital
- Salt & Straw
- Stanford Park Hotel

How We Trend...

OUR TEAM OF TRENDOLOGISTS

All year-round our team collects the hottest trends in hotels & restaurants - exploring the world to determine what's coming in and what's going out.

(It's a tough job, but someone's got to do it!)



ANDREW FREEMAN

President & Founder
"Will it be popular?"



KATIE HAGGART

Consultant, af&co.'s
Trendologist
"What's it taste like?"



CANDACE MACDONALD

Director, Consulting Services
"How will we market it?"



KYLE OSHER

Senior Creative Strategist
"What's it look like?"



LIB RIDDIFORD

Public Relations Consultant
"How will we talk about it?"



MICHAEL GORECKI

Account Coordinator
"Will it be fun?"

OUR PANEL OF EXPERTS

Industry leaders we interviewed for their insights and predictions.



STACY JED

Co-Owner, Amuse Management Group
& Bluestem Brasserie



BRIAN RECCOW

Owner,
The Specialistas



OLIVIA LINDSTROM

Assistant Manager and Sommelier,
Spork

**Trends We Saw
Coming...**

2018 Trends We Saw Coming!

We're bragging just a bit!

- Dish of the year: **roisserie chicken**
- Concept of the year: **fine casual**
- Cuisine of the year: **Israeli**
- Colorful & photogenic food
- Vegan cuisine gone mainstream
- Regional Mexican cuisine
- Pizza
- Nostalgic childhood classics
- Jewish delis
- Sumac, za'atar & harissa
- Creative packaging for wine
- High-end restaurants with wine bars
- Cold brew coffee with a twist
- Mezcal madness
- Topo Chico
- Mocktails
- Branded coasted, vintage cocktail shakers, and swizzle sticks
- Exclusivity and the VIP effect
- Facial recognition to pay
- Robotic food delivery
- Semi-private dining rooms
- Style elements made for Instagram
- Hotels with increased amenities for staying in shape and eating well
- Micro hotels
- Digital art
- Flying food on social media
- Limited time offers
- Gaining loyalty with data

2019

The Year of...

Trend of the Year

Do the Right Thing!

Whether it's fighting for gender equality in the kitchen, representing immigrants, or embracing sustainability, restaurants & hotels are helping to create the accepting world we want to live in and are raising money for deserving groups through creative marketing initiatives.

Bluestem Brasserie (SF) "Bake the World a Better Place" bake sale benefitting CUESA & The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market's Foodwise Kids
Examples: Jose Andre's nonprofit World Central Kitchen, Cocktail for a Cause at Curio (SF), Gay Pasta Night at Precita Park Cafe (SF) with proceeds benefiting UCSF Alliance Health Projects Art For AIDS



Cuisine of the Year

Georgian Cuisine

Restaurants dedicated to authentic Georgian cuisine (the country, not the state) are popping up across the US. Commonly known for the instagram-friendly khachapuri, Georgian wine is also becoming more popular (after all, the nation has been making wine longer than any other country in the world!).

Supra (DC) Supra means Georgian feast, and the spread often includes the popular khachapuri bread cheese boat. **Examples:** Toné Café (Brooklyn), Bevri (Palo Alto, CA), Georgian Dream (Brooklyn), Kargi Gogo (Portland)



Andrew Propp

Food City of the Year

Pittsburgh

There's no shortage of innovation in Pittsburgh. With a booming tech scene, restaurants are also getting in on the action by pushing the boundaries while keeping food approachable. With the city's proximity to farms, it's no surprise the local food scene is flourishing.

Fish nor Fowl (Pittsburgh) The latest restaurant from the Richard DeShantz Restaurant Group. **Examples:** Superior Motors, Spork, Driftwood Oven, Bitter Ends Garden & Luncheonette



International Food City of the Year

Melbourne

As Australia's second biggest city, Melbourne is introducing bold and playful restaurant concepts that are breaking the rules. The eclectic restaurant scene includes street food (elevated with a touch of fine dining), and fine dining (featuring casual touchpoints) creating an approachable, and downright delicious, restaurant scene.

Cookie (Melbourne)

Examples: Attica, Sunda, Garden State Hotel, Ishizuka, Bang Bang, Matcha Mylkbar, Congress



Dessert of The Year

Doughnuts

Savor these treats!... Literally. Artisanal doughnut shops are popping up throughout the country and unexpected savory flavors and fillings are showing up in traditionally sweet places. Donut mind if i do!

Grand Cafe (Minneapolis, MN) Food & Wine 2018 dish of the year: chicken liver donut with black honey glaze. **Examples:** Everything spice doughnut at The Doughnut Project (NYC), Passionfruit cocoa nib donut at Blue Star (Portland, OR), Potato doughnut tikki with spinach pakoda, yogurt mousse, and raspberry at ROOH (SF), brunch doughnuts at Magnolia Brewing (SF), everything spice churros at Canela Bistro & Wine Bar (SF)



Isabel Submit

Dish of The Year

Khachapuri: Rocking the (Cheese) Boat

Georgian cuisine is having a moment, and leading the way is the photogenic, instagram favorite dish Khachapuri. Featuring a cheese-filled bread boat topped with a runny egg, the egg and cheese are mixed together tableside. Bread... runny eggs... cheese... what's not to like?

Supra (DC)

Examples: Cheeseboat (Brooklyn), Barbounia (NYC), Bevri (Palo Alto)



Andrew Propp

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Comeback Cuisine of the Year

The French Revolution

While French cuisine has always been in fashion, French brasseries and bistros are opening up across the country and celebrating classic French fare with a modern twist. We're anticipating many more restaurants inspired by French cuisine in 2019.

Nico (San Francisco)

Examples: Frenchette (NYC), Bar Crenn (SF), Le Coucou (NYC), Taureaux Tavern (Chicago)



Eric Wolfinger

Food Trends

Food Trends

Meat the Future:

Cell-Cultured Meat & Vegan “Meat”

Plant-based “meat,” including the Impossible Burger, is showing up on menus throughout the country. And this alternative meat trend isn’t slowing down – we’re expecting to see more cell-cultured “meat” (real meat made in a lab from animal cells) and vegan seafood in the near future.

barbacco eno trattoria (SF) Restaurants are using the impossible meat in creative ways, such as the meatballs at Barbacco Eno Trattoria. **Examples:** Vegan seafood from Good Catch (National), Impossible burger with smoked king trumpet slaw at Tank18 (San Francisco), Cell-cultured meat from Wild Type (National), plant-based shrimp from New Wave Foods



Courtesy of barbacco eno trattoria

Food Trends

Globally-Inspired Breakfast

Get ready for breakfast around the world without leaving your town.

Globally-inspired breakfast and brunch menus have taken off, including the modern Indian brunch at ROOH, Israeli breakfast at Oren's Hummus, and Japanese breakfast at Cassava.

ROOH (SF) Modern Indian brunch.

Examples: Japanese breakfast at Okonomi (Brooklyn, NY), Italian breakfast at Poggio (Sausalito, CA), Australian breakfast at Two Hands (NYC), Mexican breakfast at Fonda (NYC), Brunch birraquiles at Copita (Sausalito, CA)



Allie Tong

Food Trends

Seed to Table

So long, farm to table. Seed to table is the new trend! What does it mean? Chefs are working directly with farmers to grow vegetables that put flavor (not yield, shelf life, or uniformity) first. Leading the charge is Row 7 Seed Company.

Row 7 Seed Company A seed company recently launched by Chef Dan Barber and his seed-breeder partners. By working together in the field and kitchen, they test, taste and market delicious new plant varieties to make an impact in the soil and at the table. **Examples:** SPQR (SF) works closely with a local farmer to cultivate uncommon items, Sweetgreen (multiple locations) recently partnered with Row 7 seeds to bring unique, flavorful ingredients to guests such as the koginut squash



Johnny Autry

@afandco #afcotrends

Food Trends

Hummus Among Us

Hummus milkshakes, chickpea fries, snickerdoodle hummus, green chickpea guacamole... oh my! Is there anything the reliable garbanzo bean can't do nowadays? Showing up on menus in both expected and unexpected places, chickpea dishes are becoming a menu standby.

Oren's Hummus (SF) features an extensive menu of hummus bowls.

Examples: Dark chocolate dessert hummus from Boar's Head, Chickpea fries with chilies, anise, ginger and curry aioli at E&O Kitchen & Bar (SF), Snickerdoodle hummus from Delighted By, Chickpea fries with harissa aioli at One Market (SF), Iced vegetables with sunflower seed hummus and hemp oil at Acacia House (Napa Valley)



Tai Kerbs

Food Trends

Mushroom Magic

Thanks to the strong umami flavors and health properties, the mushroom is magically appearing in a wide variety of places. Over the summer, the James Beard Blended Burger Project prompted over 350+ restaurants to create their version of “the blend,” incorporating mushrooms to make meaty dishes more nutritious and sustainable.

Little Goat (Chicago) Blended burger made with beef and mushrooms as part of the James Beard Blended Burger Project. **Examples:** Mushroom tea by Four Sigmatic, Mushroom pastrami sandwich at Mort & Betty's (LA)



Courtesy of Mushroom Council

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Food Trends

The New American Steakhouse: Where's the Beef?

As guests continue to expect (and demand!) more vegetarian and pescatarian options, American steakhouses are stepping up the game and are moving beyond boring steamed vegetable sides. Steakhouse menus that vegetarians can get excited about? Welcome to 2019.

Ocean Prime (Multiple Locations) Ahi tuna with mango, avocado, cashews and a spicy sesame soy glaze. **Examples:** Daniel's Broiler recently introduced a 100% plant-based menu (Seattle, multiple locations), Butcher & Banker (NYC) has a well-rounded menu that does not think of vegetables as an afterthought



Courtesy of Ocean Prime

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Food Trends

Waste Not, Want Not

The hospitality industry is increasingly passionate about reducing food waste and finding ways to increase their sustainable operations. Today's diners care that operators don't waste ingredients - they want to know how and where products are grown (locally, ideally!).

The Amazing Pasta Straw A company that creates straws out of, you guessed it, pasta. **Examples:** Straw ban (Various Cities), James Beard Foundation's "Waste Not" Food Waste Initiative, Austin (TX) food waste ordinance preventing restaurants from disposing of food waste in landfills, Brick & Mortar (Adelaide, Australia) provides customers with coffee grounds to bring home to fertilize their gardens



Rad Bosselman

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Food Trends

The Changing Food Climate

We're dining in a warmer world, and menus are reflecting it. From increased demand for more sustainable protein options (including goat meat and beans), to an increased awareness regarding seafood choices, restaurants are adjusting their menus to reflect sustainability initiatives.

Pacific Catch (SF) Hosts sustainability-focused roundtable dinners that spotlight their “clean eating menu” and sustainability initiatives; James Beard Foundation announced their Sustainable Seafood Partnership program earlier this year



Courtesy of Pacific Catch

Food Trends

Carbs at Large

Bring on the carbs! Pasta and bread are back, alongside an appreciation for heritage grains and artisanal bread preparation (Sour Duck Market in Austin boasts about Carlita, their sourdough starter who is turning nine years old this year). Our bread basket runneth over.

Perbacco (SF)

Examples: Che Fico (SF), Misi (Brooklyn), Felix (LA), Pammy's (Cambridge, MA), Tosca (SF), Hearthside (Collingswood, NJ), Shewolf (Detroit)



Eric Wolfinger

Food Trends

Exotic & Robotic: New Salads for a New Year

Goodbye mixed greens with balsamic vinaigrette, hello Burmese tea leaf salad! Menus are stepping up their game with globally-inspired salads. Unexpected crunchy elements, bright ingredients, and hearty toppings are making these salads the darlings of menus across the country.

Chowbotics The fresh food making robot features globally-inspired, chef-crafted salads. **Examples:** Tea leaf salad (Rangoon Ruby, multiple locations), Hinbe salad at Maydan (DC) featuring dandelion greens, lemon, garlic and fried shallots, Tomato & okra salad with tofu, wakame, ume, gomashio, and myoga at MTN (Venice, CA), Vietnamese chicken salad at Gott's Roadside (multiple locations)



Courtesy of Chowbotics

Cuisines, dishes & Ingredients to keep an eye on...

- Japanese desserts
 - Hokkaido cheese tarts
 - Kakigori shave ice
- Slab pies - both sweet and savory
- Burmese
- Lebneh
 - Wood Roasted Sweet Potato with lebneh, hazelnut & chipotle dukka
(Cockscomb, SF)
- Booza (Middle Eastern Ice cream)
- Oyster sauce
- Gooseneck barnacles
- Hibiscus
 - Cascara shrub ice cream made with candied hibiscus at **Salt & Straw (Multiple locations)**
- Pinsas
- Superfoods
 - Moringa
 - Tiger nuts
 - Adaptogens
 - E3 Live
 - Chaga
- Street foods:
 - **Foie gras dumplings (at M.Y. China, SF)**
 - Kabobs, jianbing, okonomiyaki, empanadas, pupusas
- Lionfish
- Katsu sandwiches
- Reserve oysters
- Piri Piri spice
 - **Piri Pica (SF)**



Courtesy of M.Y. China

Beverage Trends

Beverage Trends

Highly Rated Drinks

Cannabidiol, or CBD, is taking over cocktail menus. Containing no THC, the active ingredient in marijuana that gets you high, CBD delivers a dose of relaxation and sedation, making it perfect for enjoying in a cocktail (or two).

Gracias Madre (LA) Features CBD cocktails including the Stoned Fruit, Sour T-iesel, Rolled Fashioned, and Stoney Negroni. Each contains 15 milligrams of CBD tincture.

Examples: CBD infused cocktails at Pattern Bar (LA), Coca Cola is allegedly interested in pursuing drinks that include CBD oil, Adriaen Block (NYC) is the first dedicated CBD bar



Beverage Trends

Time for Tea

... but not your traditional teas! We're anticipating a rise in moringa tea (a popular superfood), cheese tea (yes, cheese), and mushroom tea. Guests are expecting more from tea programs, prompting the rise of tea sommeliers and elaborate tea programs.

Little Fluffy Head Cafe (LA) Features cheese tea on their menu

Examples: Mushroom tea (Four Sigmatic), sparkling matcha tea at Stonemill Matcha (SF), tea sommelier at ROOH (SF)



Courtesy of Little Fluffy Head Cafe

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Beverage Trends

Turning Lemons into Lemonade

Lemonade is more popular than ever, and creative infusion drinks are trending. We're talking creamy lemonade, creative lemonade infusions (cucumber mint lemonade with red hibiscus flower tea, anyone?), lemonade cocktails, and activated charcoal lemonade.

Lemonade (Multiple Locations) The playful menu includes the maple activated charcoal lemonade. **Examples:** Brazilian lemonade with fermented lime juice, coconut milk and espresso at Interval (Milwaukee), Arnold Palmer iced coffee lemonade (Stand Coffee, Brooklyn)



Courtesy of Lemonade

Beverage Trends

A Little Clarity

Clarified beverages are exploding onto the cocktail scene! But what are they? The process uses a culinary centrifuge to clarify beverages, leaving behind all of the flavor and a clear, smooth beverage with no cloudiness. We have the Spinzall, a popular culinary centrifuge, to thank for the increased popularity (and ultra smooth drinks).

Employees Only (LA) Hope Monkey cocktail made with Kaffir lime infused gin, clarified lime cordial and house absinthe bitters. **Examples:** Clarified bloody mary at Tattersall Distilling (Minneapolis), clarified pineapple-infused coconut water in the “Piña” cocktail at Spork (Pittsburgh)



Wonho Frank Lee

Beverage Trends To Watch

Drink This!

- Wines you'll see more of:
 - Georgian wine
 - Lambrusco
 - South African wines
- Coffee trends to watch:
 - Hot nitro coffee
 - Carbonated coffee
- High alcohol kombucha
- Aloe Liqueur
- Sake cocktails
- Color is still popular:
 - Black chardonnay
 - Orange wine
 - Butterfly pea flower tea
 - **Charcoal Botanical Collins (Solviva, Terranea Resort, CA)**
- Tiki drinks
- Pea milk
- Cocktails made with ingredients grown on site **(coming soon to Craft/Code kitchen & cocktails at the San Mateo Marriott)**



Courtesy of Terranea Resort

Concept & Business Trends

Concept & Business Trends

Express Yourself

Flex casual restaurants will be trending in 2019! What's a flex casual restaurant? It's a fine-dining restaurant that has different formats for different parts of the day. Think casual, express coffee and pastries in the morning, and full service dining at night.

Elle (DC) Bon Appetit best new restaurant top 50 nominee serves up casual baked goods in the morning. **Examples:** Beckon and Call (Denver), Marisol (Chicago), Canard (Portland)



Concept & Business Trends

A Taste of Japan

Popular Japan-based restaurants have been opening in the Bay Area, testing the market and paving their way for greater expansion plans within the US. We're expecting more authentic Japanese restaurants, and an influx of kaiseki and omakase menus, in the near future.

Ramen Nagi (Palo Alto) With 35 locations spread throughout Asia, the popular ramen shop opened its first US location earlier this year and has more in the works.

Examples: BAKE Cheese Tart (based in Japan with over 20 locations throughout Asia) opened this year in San Francisco and has plans for rapid expansion, Hashida Sushi (well known in Japan and Singapore) will open this winter in San Francisco's Hotel Abri



Courtesy of Ramen Nagi

Concept & Business Trends

Robotic Restaurant Revolution

Stay on the lookout for food-making robots! Food robotics company Chowbotics is rolling out Sally the Robot at airports, convenience stores, offices and more - serving up vibrant, forward-thinking meals via touchscreen interface 24 hours a day. Popular robotic restaurants including Creator and Spyce are further proof that robots are here to stay.

Sally the Robot by Chowbotics

Examples: Creator (SF), Spyce (Boston), Cafe X (San Francisco)



Courtesy of Chowbotics

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Concept & Business Trends

Play With Your Food

No longer just for eating and drinking, restaurants are redefining what they can offer. From roaming magicians to actively promoting gaming at the dinner table, businesses are looking for more ways to bring guests in and keep them there for longer.

Curio (SF) Every Friday night, the restaurant features something a little unexpected such as magicians and fortune tellers. **Examples:** games at the tables at Tabletop Tap House (SF), fish for your dinner at Zauo (NYC), “exciting food concepts and exhilarating music to live cirque performances” at Berber (SF)

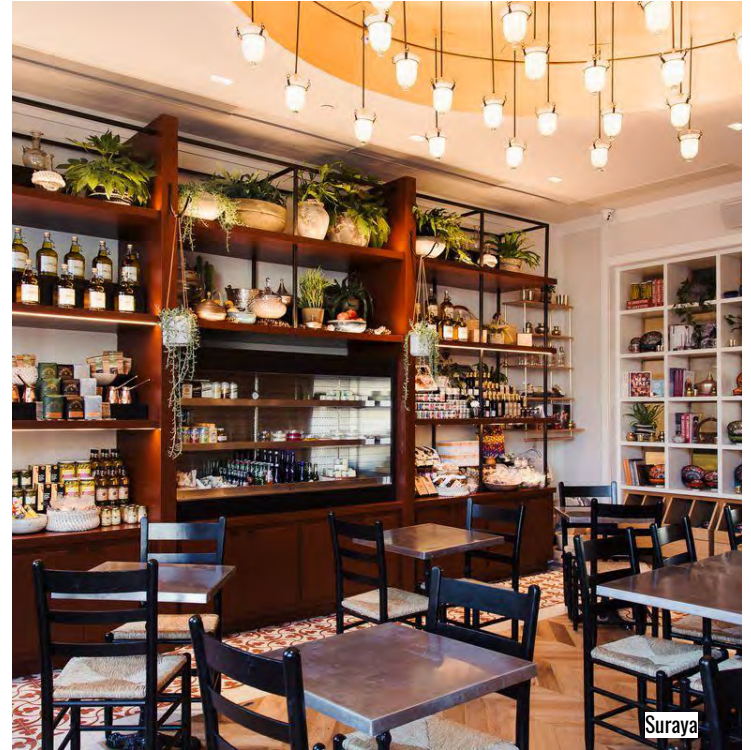


Concept & Business Trends

One Stop (Eat &) Shop

Creating a strong brand image, restaurants & hotels continue to delve into the shopping scene. From hotels with marketplaces and pantries, to retail stores opening with restaurants inside, these mixed use spaces allow patrons multiple ways to access and enjoy their brands.

Suraya (Philadelphia) the all-day restaurant, cafe, and outdoor garden features a market that sells grab-and-go items, pantry items, cookbooks, dishes, kitchenware and more. **Examples:** Dominique Crenn is set to open Boutique Crenn - a restaurant, patisserie and boutique - in San Francisco's Salesforce Tower, Tempesta Market (Chicago), BLACKBARN Shop, Cafe & Bar (NYC), Crate & Barrel announced plans to expand into the restaurant space in 2019



Design & Style Trends

Design & Style Trends

Plate & Glassware with Intrigue

To amuse and visually gratify guests, restaurants are taking the idea of “dishware” and shattering it into pieces. We’re talking cocktails that are served in lightbulbs and milk cartons, breakfast served on a shovel, appetizers served on a bed of rocks, and more - let your imagination run wild!

ROKC (NYC) serves their “Flower” cocktail in a lightbulb. **Examples:** Atomix (NYC) offers diners a choice of chopsticks made by Korean artisans and artists from the general manager’s private collection, the Michelin-star-rated EL ideas (Chicago) serves a coconut and lime powder palate cleanser on a mirror accompanied with a razor blade, The Grey (Savannah) serves mignonette in a dropper to accompany their oysters



Style & Design Trends

What's in a Name?

Restaurants are popping up throughout the country with interesting, unexpected, and whimsical names that often evoke common phrases. Slightly confusing? Yes, they can be. Totally memorable? Absolutely.

School Night (SF)

Examples: Here's Looking at You (LA), Call Your Mother (DC), Field Trip (Brooklyn), Employees Only (NYC, LA), Spoken English (DC)



Orange Photography

Design & Style Trends Heat Map

All Eyes On Me

- No windows / blacked out windows
 - **Bon Voyage (SF)**
- Wood burning ovens on show
- Neon signs
- Sliding walls in hotel rooms to create flexible, open concept spaces
 - **AC Hotel Sunnyvale Cupertino**
 - **Virgin Hotel San Francisco**
- Infographic menus
- Aprons with a charitable component
 - Tilit aprons
- Botanical wallpaper and ceiling wallpaper
- Custom murals in restaurants and hotels
(Magnolia Dogpatch, SF)



Hotel Trends

Hotel Trends

Digital Detox: Going off the Grid

Hotels are offering digital detox packages, allowing guests to lock up their phones in exchange for discounts. Everyone wins - hotels benefit (guests often use more amenities when they aren't on their phones) and guests revel in the relaxing experience.

The James Hotel (NYC) offers a portable safe to lock up your digital devices, with the combination and timer set by the front desk team. Guests that participate receive 10% off their room rate. **Examples:** digital wellness package at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel (NY), digital detox promotion at hotel chains including the Wyndham Grand



The James Hotel

Hotel Trends

Non-Hotel Brands Opening Hotels

Are you ready to immerse yourself in a hotel experience brought to you by your favorite brand? Beer, fashion, and retail brands are getting in on the hotel action, creating impressive, artisanal experiences for those that just can't get enough.

DogHouse Hotel & Brewery (Columbus, Ohio) Features amenities including in-room taps, hop-infused soap, a shower fridge, and a beer-paired breakfast.

Examples: West Elm Hotels opening 2019, Stone Brewing (San Diego), Dogfish Inn (Delaware), Fauchon L'Hotel (Paris) from the gourmet food company, Equinox is bringing the fitness-as-lifestyle concept to life by opening its first hotels in 2019 (LA & NYC)



Courtesy of DogHouse Hotel & Brewery

Hotel Trends

The Luxury Treatment

As spa treatments go next level (face gyms, cryotherapy and Turkish baths are just the beginning!), unexpected luxury treatments and amenities are showing up at hotels. Even at hotels without full spas, interesting indulgent elements such as meditation masks are part of the relaxing experience.

Atrio Spa at Las Alcobas (St Helena, CA) Shirodhara, an ancient Ayurvedic ritual, is offered at Atrio **Examples:** high tech “ultimate indulgence” facial at The Peninsula Spa (Beverly Hills, CA), spa treatments at hotel HGU New York include cryotherapy sessions and rehydration IV infusions

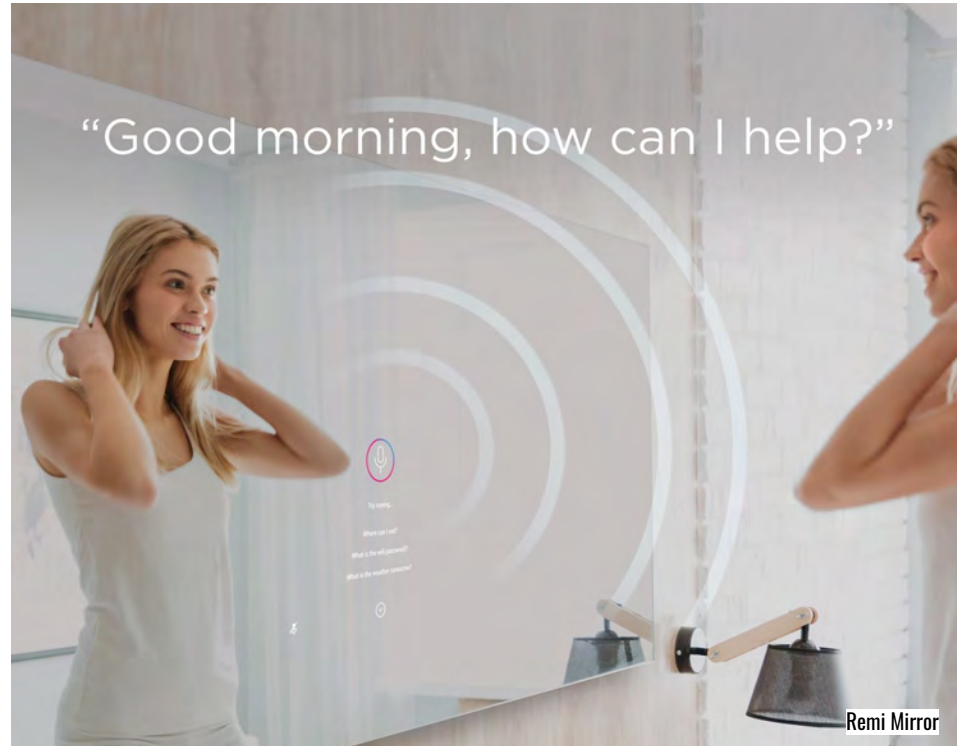


Hotel Trends

Mirror Mirror on the Wall

Taking technology, robotics, and IOT to the next level, hotels are pushing to create an experience that is more personalized, more seamless, and definitely more “wow.” Expect to see robots picking up towels, guests ordering food through mirrors, and itineraries being made after a consultation with their in-room VR glasses.

Remi Mirror Acts as a digital concierge, tv, and mirror **Examples:** Hotel Monville (Montreal) uses room service robots, The Sinclair Autograph Collection (Fort Worth, TX) will utilize the Savvy Smart Mirror



Banquet & Catering Trends

Banquet & Catering Trends

Your Phone Eats First

Snap it or leave it. With demand for more visually stunning and “Instagrammable” moments, catering companies are having to up the game when it comes to their displays and stations. From mobile chariot-esque displays to elaborate vodka-soda ice luges, hosts are intentionally creating experiences their guests want to share.

Pinch Food Design (NYC) serves food on one-of-a-kind “food furniture”; Creative Edge Parties (NYC & Miami)



Pinch Food Design

Banquet & Catering Trends

It's All in the Details

People are finding any and all opportunities to control their event space. Brand it! Make sure the vibe is right! Make it unique! The latest trend in events is delivering an immersive experience - and often a purpose - through speakers, thoughtful discussions, and charitable elements.

Wente Vineyards (Livermore, CA) The annual summer concert series features a pre-concert sunset dinner outdoors or in The Restaurant at Wente Vineyards, and a multi-sensory experience to enjoy Wente wines. **Examples:** Bluestem Brasserie (SF) co-owner Stacy Jed reports an uptick in events that begin with a fireside chat or discussion before launching into the reception, providing a purpose and focus for the event.



Banquet & Catering Trends

At this Event, Everyone's Vegetarian

Vegetarian options at events are no longer an afterthought! With WeWork announcing that they will no longer serve meat at company functions, we're expecting more companies to jump on the meat-free bandwagon in 2019. For those that don't eschew meat altogether, expect an uptick in the number of enticing vegetarian offerings.

James Beard Foundation Taste America (LA & SF) This year's events featured an increase in vegetarian offerings. **Examples:** WeWork's commitment to no longer serve red meat, pork or poultry at company functions for their nearly 6,000 employees



Marketing & PR Trends

Marketing & PR Trends

Music to Your Ears (& Mouth)

Restaurants and hotels are using music as a brand strategy tool. DJ playlist curation has taken off, and many popular restaurants and hotels now have their own Spotify playlists where guests can get a taste (er, listen) to the brand whenever they please.

Flour + Water (SF) Includes a playlist at the host stand of the music for the evening. **Examples:** Popular Spotify playlists for Momofuku, Meatball Shop, AC Hotel, and Chubby Noodle. Prior to dining at Californos (SF), guests are asked to provide dietary restrictions and music requests



Courtesy of Flour + Water

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Marketing & PR Trends

The Only Opinion That Matters: Nano-Influencers

Micro-influencers move over, it's now about the nano-influencer. With as few as 1,000 followers, these influencers may have a small reach, but their engagement is off the charts. As social media companies continue to adjust algorithms to create a more authentic experience, only highly engaged content (and content from close friends) will make its way into your feed.



@davidmiler Examples: @alexisbakerrr, @erin.gee

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Marketing & PR Trends

Stories: More Important than your Post

Restaurants, hotels and brands are investing more time and energy into generating Instagram stories. And for a good reason! 400 million people use Instagram stories each day. With the continuous addition of features like shopping tags, new filters, and the looming adoption of augmented reality, stories are only going to continue to grow in popularity.

Tender Greens (@tendergreens) Examples: Marquis los Cabos (@hotelmarquisloscabos), El Fenn Hotel Marrakech (@elfennmarrakech)



Marketing & PR Trends

Highly Experienced

An effective marketing strategy can no longer just be flyers and Facebook ads. Experiential marketing taking over, and the branding is often subtle, creative & immersive. Experiential marketing gives brands the opportunity to create memorable connections with customers through active participation.

Chobani “Giving tree” installation at Grand Central Station. Chobani donated a case of yogurt to No Kid Hungry for each seed digital seed planted. **Examples:** Popup Google Home Mini Donut Shops, Tabasco’s popup eatery that made bad takeout food taste good, Museum of Ice Cream’s partnership with Tinder where visitors could take an ice cream poll and swipe to find their match.



Marketing & PR Trends

Amped Up Partnerships

Partnership marketing has been taken to a new level! While the concept isn't new, companies are increasingly partnering with like-minded companies to establish their brand organically. Hotels and restaurants alike are getting in on the trend and finding unique ways to partner up.

b. patisserie & Mr. Espresso Collaboration (SF) Mr. Espresso partnered with b. patisserie to create a limited-time, espresso-infused Kouign-Amann. **Examples:** S'Well Bottles and Plum Wine dispensers at AC Hotel Sunnyvale Cupertino, Shinola Hotel (Detroit) is the product of a partnership between watchmaker Shinola and real estate firm Bedrock, The Civic Kitchen (SF) regularly partners with chefs for cooking classes, book signings, and more.



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