



Industry Trends & Insights

Wizard of Lightbulb Moments

With 2021 in the rearview mirror, many are hopeful that 2022 will paint a different picture. However, battles still lay before all aspects of the food industry and consumers are looking to you as an ally. However, clients and consumers don't want you to be the hero. THEY are the hero in their lives. What they need now, more than ever, is a guide. You are the guide that will allow them to be the hero in their own lives. By buying or using your products, you guide them to become the hero in their own lives.

Inflation and COVID-19 are behaving as two independent parental forces, each having their effect on trends and consumers. They are expected to resolve at different rates which will independently influence consumer behavior.

As the year progresses, we will experience certain trends accelerating while others reverse or change direction. Culinary Tides, Inc.'s Shifting Sands Forecast: Shaping the Food Industry in 2022/23 is designed to cover any shifts in patterns that will be experienced in the coming year and into 2023 so clients are protected throughout the year and can shift strategy if needed. The report also explains where the trends are coming from, what their birth patterns mean, how long they are going to last, and where they may show up next. To be aware that a trend exists is of no strategic use unless you understand why it has occurred and therefore what could possibly change its course. Without this information, a company can be blindsided when a trend shifts course. And they always shift course. Things to consider in 2022/23 include:

- Health trends will be upended
- Government focus has shifted
- Consumers spending drivers are new and changing
- Technology is acting as an ally to consumers
- Food and Beverage patterns have entirely new sets of Parents

Of the 200+ trend lists that were cross analyzed in our report, here are a few that stood out:

The Trends Set To Tantalize Taste Buds Across The Globe In 2022

Conventional Surprises: Challenging the norm, this is the consumers' desire to seek comfort in food but with an added element of surprise from their classic favorites. **License to thrill:** This calls to attention the deep desire of consumers to want to explore and satiate their sense of adventure with food. Where life has lacked spontaneity due to Covid-19, consumers are now turning to their plates/ or palette for the thrill. **Tasty, but healthy:** Driven by consumers desire to be healthy, and with an increasing focus on probiotic health, gut health and immune support, consumers are looking for health-forward (beyond a health halo), food and beverages that make them feel like they are taking an active role in their future health. **Authentic memories:** While many thought that they would never long for school lunches again, there is a desire to evoke childhood memories and traditions or long-lost moments from the past. Consumers want to be transported back in time, with the comfort and indulgence that comes from the authentic flavors and ingredients that tell these stories. **Provenance with a conscience:** More than 50% consumers focus on, and prioritize, sustainability in food and beverages. Building on the traction seen previously, expect to see an increased focus on flavors and ingredients that have transparent origins, are sustainably sourced and are ethically processed. **Over-the top-indulgence:** Comes from a pure place of craveability as consumers desire indulgence from everyday snacks and sweets, during socially-heightened occasions, or celebrating special moments.



Source: Kerry

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Plant Protein & Unexpected Alternates



Immune & Cognitive Function



Global Flavors & Regional dishes



Stress Relievers & Time Savers



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Health & Wellness 2022: Navigating Consumer Aspirations, Approaches

In the face of great losses during the pandemic, many consumers found sources of strength and improved wellbeing amid shifting cultural conversations and lifestyles. Consumers continue to avoid many of the same markers of processed food in an effort to make healthier choices, but higher engagement with cooking during the pandemic is likely to intensify scrutiny of ingredient panels in the near term.

Consumers acknowledge a role for indulgence in their relationship with food and COVID-19 coping strategies—but after many months of the pandemic, they are also more aware of the impact of less intentional eating approaches.

Plant-based callouts face erosion of health and wellness associations as additional processed versions make prominent launches in the marketplace. As the plant-based marketplace grows to reach a wider, more omnivorous audience, there is still room to innovate around consumer aspirations for less-processed, plant-rich foods.



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What To Expect From Restaurant Technology Innovation In 2022

Robots as labor solutions: We've been talking about robotic kitchen employees and delivery vehicles for several years now, but they still have not become mainstream yet. Both AF&Co restaurant marketing company and Baum & Whiteman restaurant consultants believe that the days of robots becoming a mainstay in kitchens are nearly upon us. **The ghost kitchen space gets crowded:** Ghost kitchens were (and still are) one of the buzziest restaurant industry trends, but with nearly every single major restaurant chain (and newer virtual restaurant companies like C3) rushing to invest in virtual restaurants, will the bubble pop? Baum & Whiteman predicts that the ghost kitchen space is about to get quite competitive, and there could be a point of oversaturation, which the firm compares to the dot-com boom of the '90s. Baum & Whiteman predicts consolidations and mergers over the next two years between the major ghost kitchen players because eventually the virtual whitespace will be gobbled up. **Automation fills**

in labor gaps: Toward the second half of 2021, labor shortages became the number one gripe of restaurant operators. Among personnel benefits and recruiting changes, one of the tactics restaurants took was to invest in more autonomous technology that could do the jobs they weren't able to hire for. **Ghost kitchens expand faster than brick-and-mortar:** 2021 was a tale of two types of ghost kitchens: The first was the continuation of established restaurant brands like Inspire Brands looking to expand their reach and digital capabilities with virtual locations or even launching side-brand spinoffs like Red Robin and Chick-fil-A, which launched Little Blue Menu in September. **Restaurants shrink to make room for omnichannel flexibility:** They're overhauling their restaurant designs to shrink dining room spaces and make room for first-ever pickup lanes, like Pizza Hut and Chipotle, which just debuted its first-ever digital restaurant with a pickup lane and they're introducing triple drive-thru lanes or making over the inside of their restaurants, like the new Papa Johns restaurant redesign which emphasizes takeout convenience for digital customers. **All-in-one technology bundles grow:** As technology options grow, companies are scrambling to bundle them together to make it easier for operators to create a tech stack. Whether emerging restaurant technology solutions brands merged with one another or were bought by restaurant chains like Yum's purchase of Dragontail Systems in September, which coordinates the process of getting food to customers from the time digital orders roll in, to when drivers are dispatched. **Contactless persists beyond the pandemic:** Contactless restaurant experiences began as shorthand for pandemic-era safety precautions, but have persisted after COVID lockdowns. Contactless payments with just a tap of a phone have become the norm and 21st century automatons like the Piestro portable pizzeria have popped up with practically zero need for human interaction. **Phones become the new kiosks:** In a post-pandemic world, more operators are leaning away from the communal touch-heavy kiosks and toward personalized kiosks: aka placing orders tableside via your phone.

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Sources: Hartman, Epos Now

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Top 5 Food System Trends For 2022

1. The accelerated rise of robotics in agriculture. For years, the ag industry has increasingly implemented technology as a means of improving yields while reducing inputs and impact on the environment. Now, another on-farm challenge has emerged for which technology is becoming a leading solution—labor shortage. **2. Functional foods make a big leap forward.** Nothing like a pandemic to get people to take a closer look at their overall health. According to Food Industry Executive, 33% more consumers are treating food as medicine compared to 2020. And for many, eating better is priority number one. But it's no longer enough to cut calories and eat more veggies. Foods that deliver specific and intentional health benefits are beginning to take the lead. **3. Alternative proteins go beyond beef.** If you've seen our latest consumer research, you know that the alternative protein market is already on the rise. And we see it continuing to grow in bold new ways. In recent years we've seen restaurants and fast-food chains start to offer Beyond burgers and other beef alternative dishes, but in 2022 we're already seeing a rise of alternative chicken, alternative pork and alternative seafood dishes hit menus. **4. Ghost kitchens become scary popular.** Ordering on the app for curbside pickup. Paying a premium for Door Dash deliveries. Subscribing to a meal kit service. These have been the rising trends since March 2020 as COVID restrictions continue to keep diners out of restaurants and the supply chain continues to keep grocery store shelves bare. **5. The supply chain savvy will win the day.** Supply chain slowdowns aren't going anywhere soon. So rather than futilely working to get things back to the way they were, the most successful food companies will be those who learn to navigate this new reality.



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Cocktail Trends To Watch In 2022

Low and no-ABV: As the pandemic continues to influence people's mindsets, more drinkers are looking for balance in their consumption habits. With better quality low- and no-alcohol products on the market, bars can dedicate more space to lower-ABV serves on their menus to cater for this demand. **Bottled cocktails:** Led by the movement towards RTDs and takeaway cocktails during the pandemic, venues are pre-batching drinks instead of mixing them on the spot, saving plenty of time during busy service periods. **Simple serves:** Consumers are seeking simple drinks that can be replicated at home – think Spritzes, highballs or anything mixed with a high-quality tonic. More bars are offering refreshing long-drink options, allowing the spirit's characteristics to shine. **Nostalgia appeal:** As drinkers returned to bars, many sought out retro drinks from decades past with bars conjuring up twists on classic Cosmos

and Espresso Martinis. Consumers are also seeking out unusual drinking spots such as speakeasies or themed venues and experiences based on their favorite films, allowing them to relive screen moments. **Foodie focus:** Consumers have traded up to higher-quality drinks during the pandemic, and many brands have sought to offer cocktail-and-food-pairing masterclasses so people could virtually entertain guests at home. **Flexible Spaces:** Public and private spaces must maximize the capabilities they offer to match consumers' flexible lifestyles. Now more than ever brands have to inspire, rather than prescribe, with every touchpoint. **Climate Complexity:** Consumers are looking to brands to help them mitigate their impact on the environment. Companies that don't proactively change ahead of the climate crisis will be forced to change because of it.

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Sources: C.O.NXT, Spriti Business

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Mintel Shares 3 Consumer Trend Predictions For 2022

1. **In Control:** The first trend focuses on consumers' sense of control. In times of uncertainty, consumers crave a sense of control over their lives. Brands can deliver the information and options that consumers need to feel like they're in the driver's seat.
2. **Enjoyment Everywhere:** The second consumer trend focuses on enjoyment. Having endured lockdown, consumers are eager to break out of their confines and explore, play and embrace novel experiences, both virtually and in the "real" physical world.
3. **Ethics Check:** The third and final trend focuses on ethics. While many brands have made their voices heard on controversial topics, consumers want to see measurable progress against their goals.



Source: Mintel

[Continue reading article here](#)**Shifting Sands Forecast: Trends Shaping the Food Industry in 2022/23***A Culinary Tides, Inc. report with contributions from Menu Matters***Release Date:** February 2022

What the spread of COVID-19 and Recession onset have caused, is an upending of key drivers and trends. It can be difficult to know **which trends are most likely to rise above the noise** in the New Year. It can be even more confusing trying to decide which will resonate most with your brand and customers. This report is a cross-analysis of **200+ prediction lists for 2022/23 put forth by 175+ industry experts**. In all, more than 1,600 individual predictions were evaluated for their potential during the coming year, with only the most well-supported predictions included.

2022/23 predictions explore:

- **Government**– cybersecurity, plant protein, obesity, cannabis, sustainability
- **Technology** – narrowcasting, order, delivery, robotics, packaging, cellular agriculture
- **Health**– microbiome, cognitive function, protein plus, nootropics, immunity, cannabis
- **Consumers** – clockless eating, transparency, invisibly healthy, path to purchase, climatarian
- **Travel** –digital detox, climate neutral, dark travel, isolation, self-care, safe cities
- **Beverage** –zero proof, plant milk, tea/coffee infused, regional global, fermented
- **Food** – micro ethnic, plant-based, alternative flours, hybrids & stuffed, foodceuticals, wallflowers

The trends are broken down by macro and micro families, which help to establish their strengths and links to other existing trends. Overlooked trends were identify and added to the report by Culinary Tides, Inc and Menu Matters. Discover Navigation charts with “**Ah-Ha Moments**” you can use to navigate trends affecting your playground. Each chart focuses on evolving consumer drivers to help focus messaging and products as the year unfolds. By utilizing streaming intelligence techniques, the forecasts anticipate upcoming changes to trend and consumer behavior patterns that will emerge throughout 2022 and into 2023. This helps to translate fragmented trend lists, into actionable strategic intelligence.

Knowing which trends best fit your brand, which will resonate most with customers, how long they will last, and where they are headed next can clear a path for meaningful innovation. Understanding how these trends came to be and what is pushing them into the spotlight can help **move you to a calmer, more confident position for strategy development**.

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