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PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK LAWLOR

ON THE COVER

Like so many people in the industry, chef Chris Pandel and his crew at Cira in Chicago, pictured, have been flexible and innovative, finding ways to deal with the labor crunch and supply chain challenges as detailed in the following pages.



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A LABOR OF LOVE

Welcome to the spring edition of Food Fanatics® magazine!

As labor shortages continue to challenge the restaurant industry, the spring 2022 edition of Food Fanatics magazine is here to deliver fresh ideas that inspire innovation, creativity and success.

Being short on staff means less availability to serve guests, less ability to create meals customers crave and ultimately, less growth. In this edition, we're exploring remedies to these challenges, including smarter ways to staff and retain talent, as well as how to streamline menus and still impress guests without adding stress or increasing cost.

As this edition is all about labor, we have a new format, separating our stories into Back of the House and Front of the House.

The Back of the House articles offer creative ideas to save on labor through switching up the menu. Easy prep and simple ways to wow guests all point toward a revitalized operation. Plus, we invite you to dive into new recipes gushing with those crisp spring flavors we look forward to after a long winter.

As we move into the Front of the House, we tackle new ways to staff, see how operators are using robotics to fill in gaps and learn how they are addressing a rapidly changing workplace. We also hear from veteran chef and restaurateur Michael Mina on navigating the best and worst of times.

At US Foods®, We Help You Make It®, and we hope with this edition of Food Fanatics, we help to inspire a strong and successful spring season.

Thanks for reading,

Andrew Iacobucci
Chief Commercial Officer, US Foods

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BACK OF THE HOUSE

Fast and easy labor-saving food and drink tactics for a more efficient kitchen crew



EASY DOES IT

Executing a simpler menu
can relieve labor woes

By Jacqueline Raposo
Photography by Matt Armendariz
Food styling by Adam Pearson
Prop styling by Stephanie Hanes

As the labor crunch

continues to keep its chokehold on hospitality, a reliable well-staffed back of the house seems elusive.

Fortunately, there are many ways to modify production when staff call out because of illness, parenting troubles or pandemic ennui. Keyword: Easy. Items that require little prep up front or as they come off the line. Bonus points for dishes or components that share the same sauces, dressings or marinades. Even better for easy upsell dishes.

Chefs recommend these time-tested menu shifts to be ready for anything.



Ceviche is an easy way to switch out the protein, like shrimp above, when supply issues hit.

▶ CEVICHEs AND CRUDOS

▶ **Why it's easy:** Prepped and chilled in advance, these cold menu items require little final execution. They also leave plenty of room for alternating local, seasonal ingredients and adding extra pop with pre-batched sauces.

▶ **Why it works:** “More and more people are not afraid to eat raw fish,” says executive chef Eric Bartholomew of LaCo in Seacrest, Florida. “Ceviche not only speeds up execution but gives that visual wow factor and fresh, vibrant flavors.”

▶ **Try it:** Bartholomew's Seacrest Ceviche features local shrimp in a bright and spicy jalapeno-lime broth with crunchy red onions, cucumbers and creamy avocado. Red snapper works too.

Three Ways to Ceviche

*Executive chef Eric Bartholomew
LaCo, Seacrest, Florida*

3 cups lime juice

1 cup light agave syrup

½ ounce jalapenos, seeded

½ cup mojo sauce

2 tablespoons olive oil

**½ pound 16-20 gulf or
wild-caught shrimp, split**

½ pound kampachi

**½ pound mixed mushrooms such as
shimenji, shiitake and king**

3 avocados, diced small

**3 Roma tomatoes, peeled, seeded
and diced small**

2 cucumbers, diced small

4 ounces pickled or raw red onion, slivered

Small bunch cilantro, chopped

Kosher salt to taste

Chili oil to taste

Puree lime juice with agave syrup and jalapenos, mojo sauce and oil; set aside.

Poach shrimp until they just start to turn pink; shock, peel and halve lengthwise. Slice fish and mushrooms into medium-sized cubes.

Divide marinade among the shrimp, fish and mushrooms, keeping separate. At service, divide avocado, tomatoes, cucumbers, onion and cilantro among the three proteins. Season to taste with salt and chili oil.

CEVICHE PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF LACO

▶ FLASH-FRIED SIDES

▶ **Why it's easy:** A quick saute of marinated seasonal vegetables requires no finishing touches and gets out of the kitchen fast.

▶ **Why it works:** Brussels sprouts, snap peas, cauliflower and all things vegetables remain popular with diners.

▶ **Try it:** Chef Dan Jacobs of DanDan in Milwaukee swears by marinating snap peas in a puree of garlic, fermented black beans and black vinegar, then wok-frying until tender. “It sells itself,” he says. The combination works just as well with Brussels sprouts in the fall and cauliflower year-round.

▶ Crispy Spring Snap Peas

*Chef Dan Jacobs
DanDan and EsterEv, Milwaukee*

145 grams black vinegar

65 grams garlic, minced

25 grams fermented black beans

12 grams chili crisp

3 grams sugar

3 grams salt

3 pounds snap peas, rinsed and trimmed

Flavorless oil, as needed

Crispy shallots, recipe follows

Toasted sesame seeds

Green onion, finely chopped

Combine all ingredients except snap peas, oil and garnishes and puree. Add snap peas to the marinade and refrigerate overnight.

Strain snap peas and heat a wok or large saute with oil. When smoky, add snap peas and wok-fry/char until crisp-tender.

Transfer to desired serving vessel and top with shallots, sesame and scallions.

To make crispy shallots: Peel and thinly slice 3 to 5 shallots and heat slowly in enough flavorless oil to cover. Simmer low until golden brown; drain and sprinkle with kosher salt.



Marinated, high-temp seared vegetables easily satisfy the meatless crowd.

Carrot cake gets fancy and indulgent. See recipe on page 12.



6

Time-Saving Hacks

Reducing the overall size of the menu and cross-utilizing ingredients are the first steps to easing labor constraints. Now dig a little deeper.

Sous vide proteins. Steaks and chops eat up time at the stove. Cook them via sous vide to set textures and temperatures, then quickly finish on the grill or flat top.

Lean into sauces and marinades. These require pre-service labor and inactive time while packing dishes with flavor, reducing touches during execution. They also keep well, reducing potential product loss.

Keep it simple. Few diners desire overly complicated dishes, especially for takeout. You can't go wrong with quality ingredients prepared to deliver flavor, texture, aroma and color.

Consider cold. Can any item on the menu be flipped into a cold presentation? Grain salads, hummus, raw fish and on-trend charcuterie boards, such as low carb, keto or meatless, offer endless variety and batch-store easily.

Question new ingredients. Pandemic-era inflation means costs are rising. Rather than experimenting with unfamiliar dishes, minimize product loss by sticking close to tried-and-true favorites with minor tweaks.

Consider your staff. The pandemic has heightened the stressors of working in hospitality. Make sure your staff is well paid, safe and respected, and they'll keep showing up.



Pastry chef Stephen Collucci's cake pops, top, ice cream sandwiches and premade fried dumplings need little to create excitement.

► NOSTALGIA-BASED FROZEN DESSERTS

► **Why it's easy:** Frozen items last long, can be cost-effective and easily impress.

► **Why it works:** "It's just what people need when the world is tough," says New York pastry chef Stephen Collucci of The Tavern and Sweetsies by SC on how a little nostalgia goes a long way. "Who doesn't want a vehicle to escape to easier times? Smart menu strategy helps items sell themselves."

► **Try it:** Collucci's recent trio of ice cream sandwiches includes chewy gingersnaps with vanilla ice cream, whoopie pies with cookies 'n' cream ice cream and peppermint candy, and brown butter chocolate chip cookies with coffee ice cream and nibs. Combinations are endless.



► FRYER FAVORITES

► **Why it's easy:** These bulk-prepped items rely on your prep team, cook quickly and need few finishing touches.

► **Why it works:** Diners love items they don't make at home.

► **Try it:** Consider various root vegetable fries, vegetable and meat dumplings, wontons and pot stickers—anything that builds flavor during prep time and needs little or no accompaniments other than a dipping sauce.



► TACOS AND ENCHILADAS

► **Why it's easy:** Braising proteins, building sauces and prepping fresh ingredients in advance means service is assemble and go.

► **Why it works:** Diners want intense, authentic and comforting flavors packed in fun presentations.

► **Try it:** The possibilities are endless. Focus on marinated and braised proteins, flavor-packed sauces and prepped vegetables to ensure few finishing touches.



Tacos, such as these from LaCo, are inherently suited for on-the-go, making a la minute easy.

► SHARED PLATES

► **Why it's easy:** Featuring one main component and often batch-prepped, tapas and shared sides offer endless variety and can be plated simply.

► **Why it works:** "People are more accustomed to family-style, shareability of a menu," says Bartholomew. An extra side or shared plate also helps increase the check average.

► **Try It:** Consider customer favorites like patatas bravas, baked cheeses and anything that can easily be shared. Then vary flavors or accompaniments to keep things fresh for your regulars.

► HIGH-RATIO CAKES

► **Why it's easy:** High-ratio (when the recipe has more sugar than flour) and oil-based cakes have a long shelf life, and some get even more flavorful and moist as they sit. They're fast to plate too.

► **Why it works:** Even with the rise of healthier items, diners still want comfort, nostalgia and indulgence.

► **Try it:** Collucci relies on his carrot cake in the spring, finishing it with accompaniments like coconut ice cream and braised pineapple prepped in advance.

Carrot Cake with Braised Pineapple, Meringue and Coconut Ice Cream

*Chef Stephen Collucci
The Tavern and Sweetsies by SC, New York City*

1¾ cups flour
¾ teaspoon baking soda
¾ teaspoon baking powder
1½ teaspoons cinnamon
½ teaspoon kosher salt
3 eggs
1 ⅔ cup sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
10 ounces carrots, shredded
Braised pineapple, recipe follows
Meringue topping, recipe follows
Coconut ice cream, prepared
Candied cashews or walnuts, prepared

Sift together dry ingredients; set aside. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whip eggs and sugar until light and ribbons form. Slowly add oil and beat until emulsified. Fold in dry ingredients, carrots and pineapple.

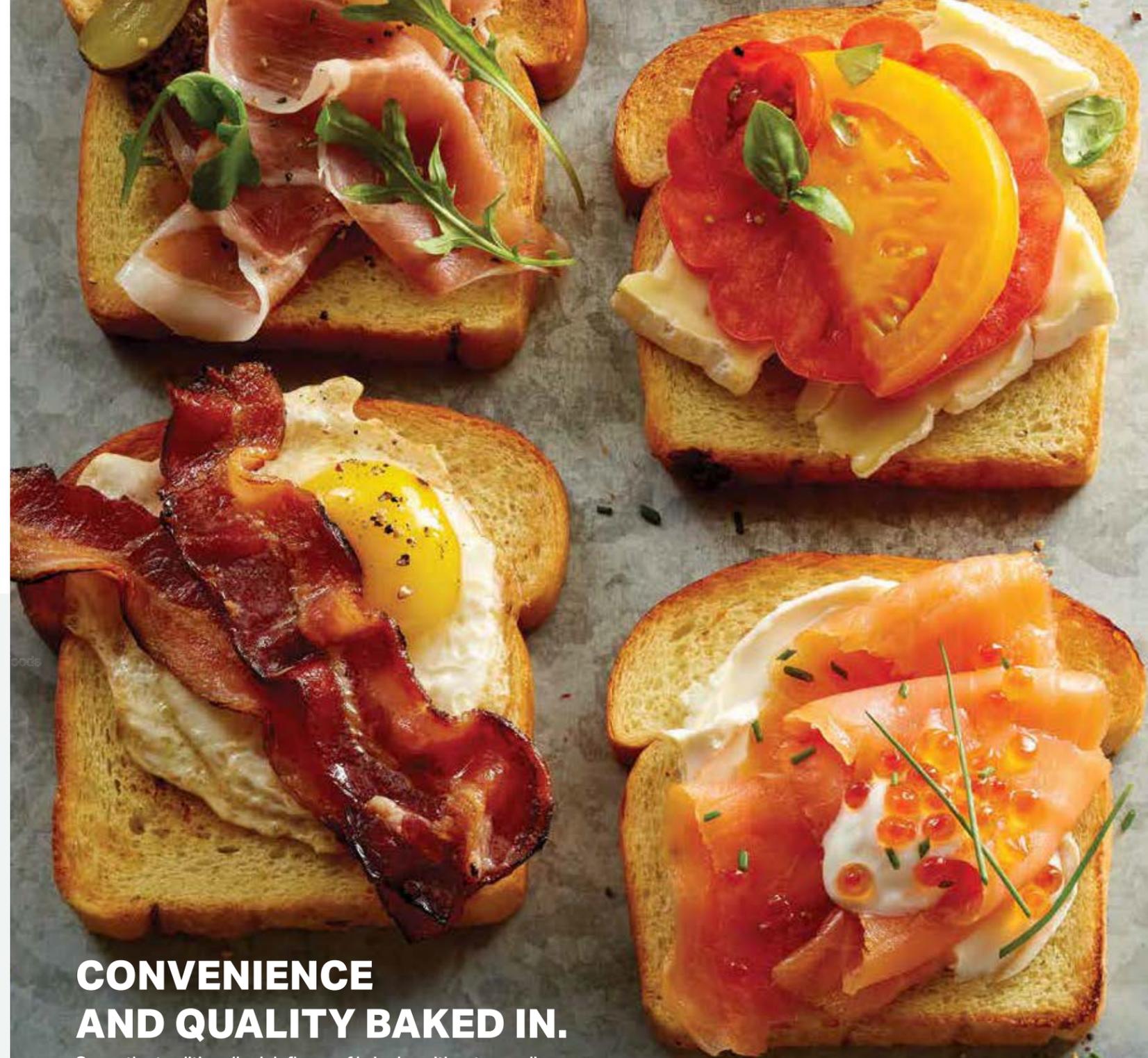
Pour batter into silicone smooth-sided cups and bake in a 350 F heated oven for about 20 minutes. Cool.

To plate: Pipe stars onto a baking sheet, bake at 350 F for a few minutes to set and brown with a hand torch. Pipe meringue onto each cake and transfer to individual plates. Garnish with meringue stars, pineapple and braising juices, a sphere of ice cream and candied nuts.

To make meringue: Whisk 4 egg whites with ¼ cup sugar in a bowl over simmering water. Whisk until very hot, remove from heat, add a pinch of salt and ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract and beat until shiny and holds a peak.

To make braised pineapple: Halve ½ of a peeled and cored pineapple and place into a baking dish. Sprinkle with ¼ cup brown sugar, 2 tablespoons cubed butter, a little orange zest and a few dashes of cinnamon. Cover with foil, vent with a few slits and braise in a 250 F oven for 1 hour. Slice into thick pieces and keep warm in braising liquid. ■

TACO PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF LACO



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SAVE THE DAY

9 ways to switch up the menu right now

By Amber Gibson
Photography by Matt Armendariz
Food styling by Adam Pearson
Prop styling by Stephanie Hanes



Cafe Gratitude goes for unexpected flavor combinations, see page 16.

WHEN

kitchens are fully staffed, freshening up menus and impressing guests—without stressing out your team or budget—will always be important, especially during challenging times. Think about these ideas from fellow restaurateurs to upsell, build customer loyalty and build your brand.

1

Unexpected flavor combos

At Cafe Gratitude in Southern California, the grilled peach and asparagus salad is a popular, quick-prep, seasonal special, served with cashew mozzarella, toasted pumpkin seeds and coconut bacon. “This salad is visually beautiful and the sweet and savory combination of the peaches and asparagus are unusual,” says executive chef Seizan Dreux Ellis.

Vegan Seasonal Good-for-you

A pork trotter ragu adds an unexpected richness and depth to monkfish and matsutake mushrooms, says Eric Bost, executive chef at Michelin-starred Jeune et Jolie in Carlsbad, California. Seafood is often paired with smoky bacon in North Carolina, where Bost grew up, and he fondly remembers the gooey texture of pork trotter croquettes he made at Les Ambassadeurs at the Hotel de Crillon in Paris. “It’s meant to be a playful combination,” Bost says.

Unexpected pairing Chef expression
 Humble ingredients Bacon!

2

Family-style feast

At chef Travis Swikard’s restaurant Callie in San Diego, around half the diners opt for the \$65 per person Mediterranean feast, essentially a five-course tasting menu served family-style, from dips to desserts. “Guests are given an opportunity to expand their palates and broaden their horizons to try dishes they might not gravitate towards on their own,” Swikard says. It also ensures that guests can experience Callie as it’s intended to be—fun and communal with bold, exciting flavors and the best ingredients. The family-style menu also allows the kitchen to reduce waste.

Reduces waste Value
 Variety Fun for diners

Charcoal grilled Aleppo chicken, sumac pickles, yogurt and coriander honey are a part of the tasting menu at Callie.

Grilled Asparagus and Peach Salad

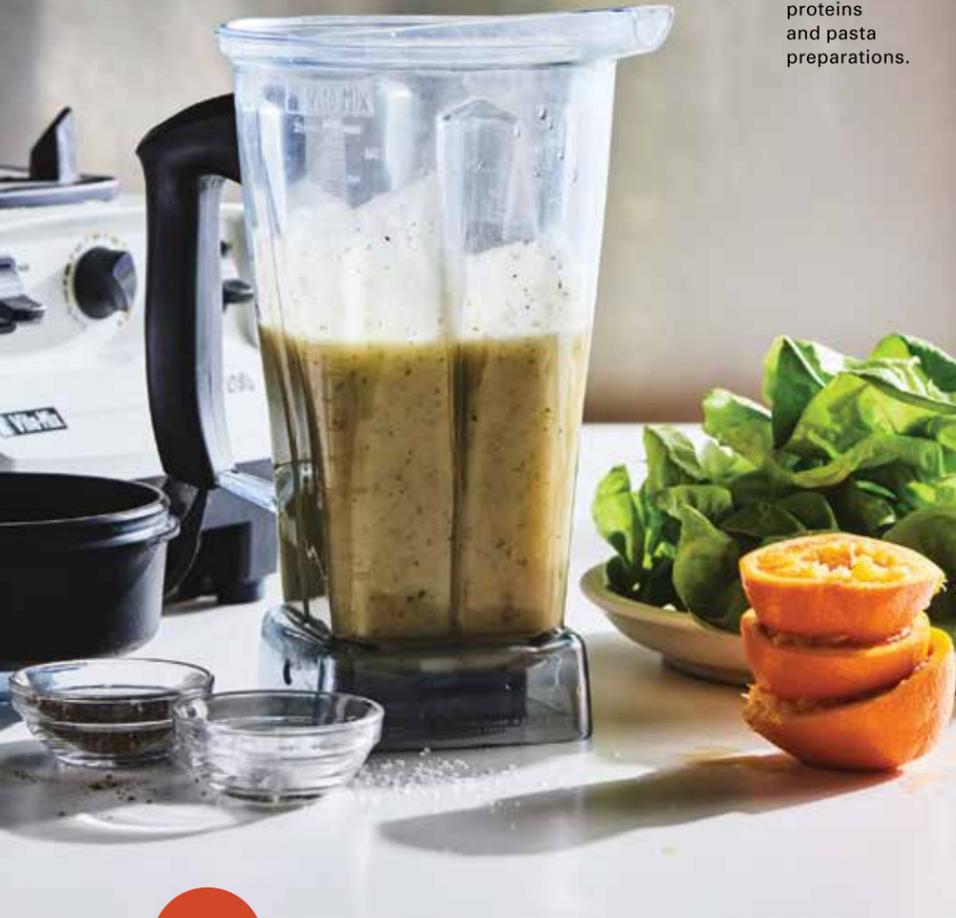
Executive chef Seizan Dreux Ellis
Cafe Gratitude, Los Angeles and San Diego

4 tablespoons pumpkin seeds, soaked overnight
2 tablespoons dried goji berries, soaked overnight
2/3 cup orange juice, freshly squeezed
4 tablespoons lime juice, freshly squeezed
2 Medjool dates, pitted
1 1/2 teaspoons Himalayan sea salt
1/2 teaspoon chipotle powder
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
4 large peaches, sliced and grilled
16 medium asparagus, trimmed and grilled
6 cups arugula
6 cups baby spinach
1 cup fennel, shaved



Grilled Oysters, see page 20.

Vinaigrettes can dress salads, grilled proteins and pasta preparations.



3

Get saucy

Housemade sauces are an easy way to let diners customize a popular menu item. At Benh Mi in Miami, guests choose from yuzu kosho ranch, roasted banana ketchup and tamarind barbecue sauce to accompany extra-crunchy chicken tenders. At Shota Nakajima's Taku in Seattle, eight dipping sauces are available, including Japanese tartar, togarashi ketchup and miso honey mustard, to accompany karaage chicken nuggets. Nakajima even bottles his teriyaki sauce and sells it at the restaurant and on Amazon.

- Cross-utilization of ingredients
- Made in advance

Orange Tarragon Vinaigrette

*Chef Matthew D'Ambrosi
Blue Ridge Kitchen at The Barlow, Sebastopol, California*

- 2 cups orange juice
- 2 shallots, finely minced
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 tablespoons pepper
- 2 cups honey
- 4 cups oil
- ½ bunch tarragon, chopped

In a blender, process orange juice, shallots, salt and pepper. Then add honey and blend till smooth. Slowly add oil until emulsified. Add tarragon.

4

Dress up pre-made

Guests would never guess the spring pea hummus at Wood in Chicago started with Sabra hummus. Chef Devin Keller blends spinach and spring peas into the prepared hummus, seasons it with cumin and lemon zest, and tops it off with blanched spring peas and crispy chickpeas for a restaurant-quality dish. "Seasoning is the key and brings new freshness to the final product," he says. The hummus is also paired with grilled chicken.

- Time-saving
- Seasonal
- Cross-utilization of ingredients
- Multiple substitutions

5

Swap in or out

At Ka'ana Kitchen at Andaz Maui, chef Chance Savell makes 'ulu tater tots, using locally grown Hawaiian breadfruit instead of potatoes. Ripe 'ulu is steamed, chilled, shredded and mixed with manchego cheese, cream, chives and parsley. At Clinton Hall in New York, executive chef Darryl Harmon gives traditional Greek spinach pie an Asian twist by filling spring roll wrappers with spinach, feta, onion, dill and scallions. They're fried and served with harissa aioli.

- Small change, big returns
- Familiar but different

Chicken in Ham Brine

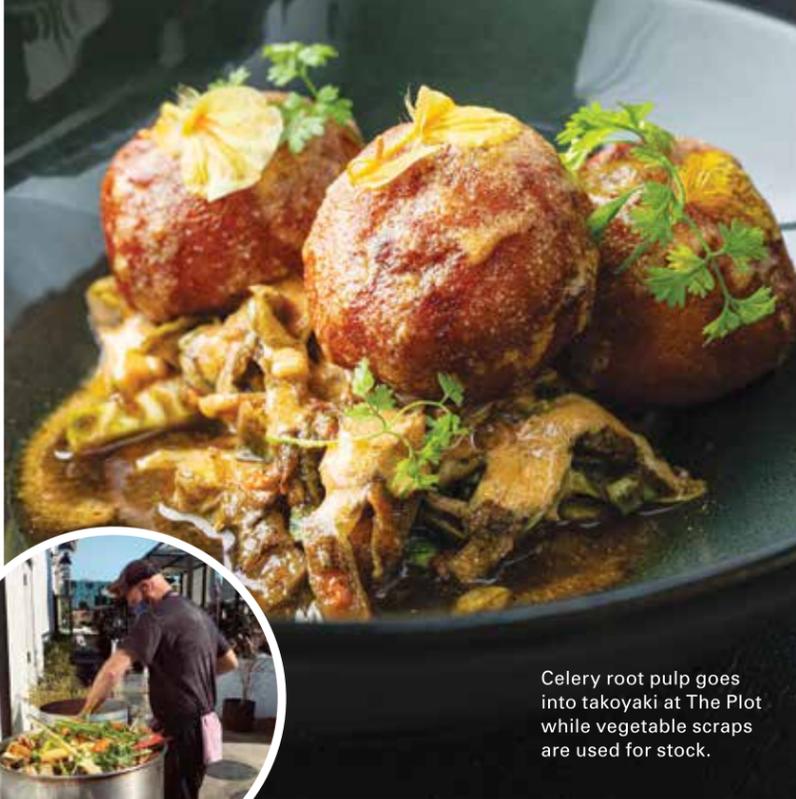
*Chef Matthew D'Ambrosi
Blue Ridge Kitchen at The Barlow, Sebastopol, California*

- 1 gallon water
- 1 cup kosher salt
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup honey
- ¼ cup molasses
- 10 cloves garlic
- 5 fresh bay leaves
- 5 star anise pods
- 1 whole chicken

Bring all ingredients except chicken to a boil, cool and add chicken. Brine overnight. Smoke or roast bird.



Add flavor by swapping out ingredients for the unexpected, whether the brine for chicken or smoking it instead of roasting.



Celery root pulp goes into takoyaki at The Plot while vegetable scraps are used for stock.



6

Save scraps

Finding use for anything that might otherwise be thrown out will help reduce food costs and offer a creative challenge. At zero-waste, plant-based restaurant The Plot in Oceanside, California, celery root pulp becomes the base for takoyaki, a crispy ball-shaped Japanese snack typically filled with minced octopus.

- Reduces waste
- Good price point

7

Go Beyond Burgers

Now that plant-based meat is ubiquitous, it takes more to impress diners. The Plot makes plant-based proteins in house, including "cräb" from lion's mane mushrooms and beluga lentil "cavier" flavored with kombu and ogo seaweed. Fried chicken restaurant Kowbird in Oakland, California, serves a vegan crispy fried oyster mushroom sandwich with plant-based aioli.

- Unique but familiar
- Appeals to flexitarians

8

Soup shots

Serving soup in shot glasses is an easy upsell, and fun way to begin a meal with shots all around rather than asking guests to commit to a bowl of soup for an appetizer. Spring gazpachos are especially refreshing, and it's easy to prepare a large batch in advance. At Bazaar Meat in Chicago, shots of chilled beet gazpacho are garnished with crispy beet chips and shaved truffles when available.

- Widely applicable
- Endless possibilities
- Seasonal

9

Playing with fire

At Chicago's El Che Bar, chef John Manion grills most of his proteins over an open fire and guests love watching the leaping flames. Grilled oysters are an impressive sizzling dish that Manion and his team can quickly cook up on the live fire grill, with a seasonal garnish prepped in advance. Think smoked onion aioli, bacon bits and crushed potato chips, and in summer he turns to sweet corn, lime aioli, cilantro and tortilla chips.

- Twist on a classic
- Unexpected prep and pairing

Grilled Oysters with Onion Aioli

Chef/owner John Manion
El Che Bar, Chicago

- 2 large onions, chopped
- Olive oil, as needed
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon pimenton
- ½ cup chives, snipped, divided use
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- Kosher salt, to taste
- ¼ pound slab bacon, diced
- 1 dozen Delaware or other briny East Coast oysters
- ½ cup potato chips, such as barbecue, smashed

Caramelize onions in oil; cool. Puree with sour cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice, spices, ¼ cup chives, pepper and salt to taste; set aside.

Cook bacon slowly until crispy, drain and reserve fat. Shuck oysters, keeping the oyster and as much liquor in the bottom shell. Add about ½ tablespoon reserved bacon fat to each oyster and place over hot coals; cook until liquid comes to a boil. Garnish with 1 tablespoon onion dip, bacon, potato chips and remaining chives. Makes 3 to 4 servings. ■

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Elderflower
Blueberry
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Martini

Twisted
Manhattan



By Sophie Lee
Photography by Matt Armendariz
Food styling by Adam Pearson
Prop styling by Stephanie Hanes



A limited menu with twists on classics and simpler drinks helps ease the labor crunch at the bar.

Elderflower Blueberry Aquavit Martini

Ocean Prime, multiple locations

- 3 ounces blueberries, divided use**
- 2 ounces Aquavit New York white cranberry or plain Aquavit**
- 2 ounce elderflower cordial, preferably St. Germain**
- ½ ounce dry vermouth**
- 1 pinch salt**
- Lemon twists, to garnish**

Muddle 2 ounces blueberries and shake with remaining ingredients and ice. Strain into a martini glass and garnish with a few blueberries and lemon twist.



Crushing seasonal fruit is an easy way to change up a martini.

MICHAEL JORDAN'S RESTAURANT PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK LAWLOR

Behind the bar,

labor shortages can cause backups and sloppily poured drinks. Beverage directors and bartenders can go hard on hiring and double-down on better training, but all of that takes time. What's needed now are tactics that can be implemented fast to prevent the restaurant's most profitable center from any losses. This means taking a hard look at the bar and revamping service to make it easier, yet still creative, for limited or lower-skilled staff.

STREAMLINE THE MENU

Throwing new staff or the few bartenders you already have into a service with dozens of drinks to remember can stress an already fragile ecosystem. Offering just a few easy-to-make, specialty cocktails allows your team the freedom to excel at a simple task, rather than struggle through a difficult one.

"I am a huge fan of 'less is more,'" says Ryan Robinson, wine director for Michael Jordan's restaurants in Chicago, Las Vegas and Connecticut. "Reducing the amount of specialty cocktails that a restaurant offers allows the staff to perfect the few that they do feature."

KEEP EXPECTATIONS IN CHECK

Working through the challenges of nearly two years of the pandemic—from sanitation and cleaning supplies to taking extra care to keep guests at a distance from employees and other guests—has made operators more realistic. Yohsuke Kimura, a bartender who has served at Chicago's Radio Anago and Maude's Liquor Bar, emphasizes the importance of focusing on what "staff is capable of" rather than lofty expectations. This strategy, he says, is sure to result in a better bar experience for workers and customers.



ANYONE CAN DO THIS

When staffing is low but drink orders are high, it's easy to overlook the importance of presentation. To ensure that cocktails are as visually enticing as they are tasty, lean on garnishes. Just make sure that they work in tandem with the drink's flavor profile.

- Aromatic herbs, such as lavender, lemon verbena, chocolate thyme and golden mint
- Nasturtiums
- Flowers, including mini roses and chrysanthemums (be sure they're nontoxic)
- Corkscrew strips of citrus peel
- Chewy candies skewered with a toothpick that can sit on the rim of a glass, such as Swedish Fish or a row of fruity gummies
- Fruit leather
- Cookie or candy sticks
- Large or small ice cubes with any of the above frozen inside

PUT A TWIST ON THE FAMILIAR

With tried-and-true cocktails serving as the foundation of the bar experience, only a few specialty cocktails are needed to round out the customer's options. "Common drinks such as an Old Fashioned or a Manhattan are well known by both guests and bartenders," explains Robinson. "Because of this familiarity, they do not need to take up precious real-estate space on a limited menu." Menu items can be easy twists on the basic recipes, or to highlight house liquors, like the cocktail made with Michael Jordan's Cincoro Tequila.

UP THE WOW FACTOR

Simplicity doesn't always mean underwhelming. A fun presentation can make a basic cocktail feel new and exciting. Unique glassware creates a playful feel. Cubed or circular ice never fails to impress and can be made ahead of time. The inclusion of dry ice in a drink adds a mysterious flair. For Robinson, the best garnish serves a purpose.

"It's important to remember that we first taste with our eyes," he says. "Drinks that are visually appealing, such as a fun, creative garnish, or perhaps a differed type of glassware, tend to be more favored than a great tasting drink in a Collins glass. Flowers and herbs are some of my favorite garnishes as they show color, dimension and add aromatics to the drink."

BE BASIC

Your business may have its own signature drinks, but it's likely your patrons do as well. Whether it is a martini or a negroni, most people already have a favorite, classic cocktail in mind. With limited time to train staff, focusing on the fundamentals of bartending should be established first. What it all boils down to, suggests Kimura, is to "just make sure that the glass is cold, pay attention to the details while preparing the drink, and use fresh ingredients." ■

Twisted Manhattan

Bartender Kyle Cozart
Michael Jordan Steakhouse, multiple locations

- 1 ounce rye whiskey
- 1 ounce Domaine de Rancy
- Dash angostura bitters
- Dash rhubarb bitters
- Strawberry, speared

Combine all of the ingredients and pour over a large round ice cube. Place strawberry spear across the rim.

Cincoro Cocktail

Bartender Kyle Cozart
Michael Jordan's Restaurant, multiple locations

- 2 ounces Cincoro blanco tequila
- ½ ounce cinnamon simple syrup
- ¼ ounce lime juice
- Seltzer, such as Fever Tree Grapefruit

Mix Cincoro tequila, cinnamon simple syrup, and lime juice. Topped-up with seltzer.



The Cincoro Cocktail, above, features a different tequila and flavored seltzer for variations.

MICHAEL JORDAN'S RESTAURANT PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK LAWLOR



A garnish is all it takes to dress up any cocktail.

Familiar classics can stand on their own or can easily be riffed on by switching out related ingredients.

French 75 Cocktail

Bartender Yohsuke Kimura
Chicago

- 1½ ounces gin
- ¾ ounce lemon juice
- ½ ounce simple syrup
- Sparkling wine, as needed
- Lemon, to garnish

Combine all ingredients except for sparkling wine. To order, add 6 ounces of mixture to a tall glass with chipped ice and top with 3 ounces sparkler. Garnish with lemon slice.



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ON THE RADAR



Not the Bread That's Baked. Breadfruit, aka 'ulu, is an ancient Hawaiian canoe crop that's nutritionally dense, starchy and versatile (think sweet and savory applications). Ka'ana Kitchen in Maui uses it to make tater tots. See page 18.



More Magic in Mushrooms Lion's mane, reishi, cordyceps and chaga are blowing up menus, but there's more to them than variety. Chef Tom Colicchio recently invested in Meati Foods, a new vegan meat company that makes proteins from mycelium, the root structure of mushrooms.

FROM LAB TO PLATE

Wildtype, grower of salmon cells, has opened a cultured salmon sushi bar in San Francisco, while Gourmey raised \$10 million to make cell-cultured, cruelty-free foie gras. Is an all lab-cultured restaurant in our future?



Tea Time. Afternoon tea could maximize earning potential between lunch and dinner. It's easy to prep as a set menu and photogenic, as Instagram can attest.

HIGH ALERT



Flying High. Flights are taking off again, but in a different direction. Any item, such as sliders or pancakes at Denver's Snooze A.M. Eatery. This gives indecisive diners a way to discover something new while operators upsell and highlight seasonal flavors.



When Man's Best Friend is Your Wing Man. Menus and restaurants catering to our four-legged friends are on the rise.



SIGN UP

Independents can also cash in on subscription revenues that have helped brand and improve the bottom line of chain restaurants. Offer a subscription of what you do best.



Have-It-Your-Way Salad 2.0. Up the ante on customizable and leave the designing to your customers. Recently opened Grain Traders in Los Angeles offers mushroom duxelle barley topped with char siu pulled jackfruit.

FADING OUT



Bowled Over and Out The explosion of fast casual poke chains never truly represented this beloved Hawaiian dish. **▶ TRY THIS INSTEAD:** Hawaiian musubi, originally Spam and rice wrapped in seaweed. Noreetuh in New York expanded its musubi selection to great success.



Over-the-Top

Turning a meal into an event doesn't always mean plumes of dry ice or elaborate tableside presentations.

▶ TRY THIS INSTEAD: A bonsai plant accompanying a dish of wagyu served at Jose Andres's Bazaar Meat promotes conversation while the bubble gun Flavour Blaster proves to be a bartender's new favorite theatrical toy.



Hating on Bots

We get it—roaming robots in the front of the house aren't exactly warm and fuzzy.

▶ TRY THIS INSTEAD: Bots may be better suited for delivery. Coco's cute robots, which launched in Los Angeles last year, are expanding nationwide with a new fleet of larger robots in Miami, Austin and more cities. See page 47 for more.

PETERED OUT PLATTERS

Charcuterie boards had their 15 minutes of fame, specifically on Instagram, so it will take more to impress diners.

▶ TRY THIS INSTEAD: Produce themes or sea-cuterie, like Funkenhausen's pastrami swordfish in Chicago, brined in coriander, black pepper, mustard and fennel seeds, then glazed in honey mustard and smoked.

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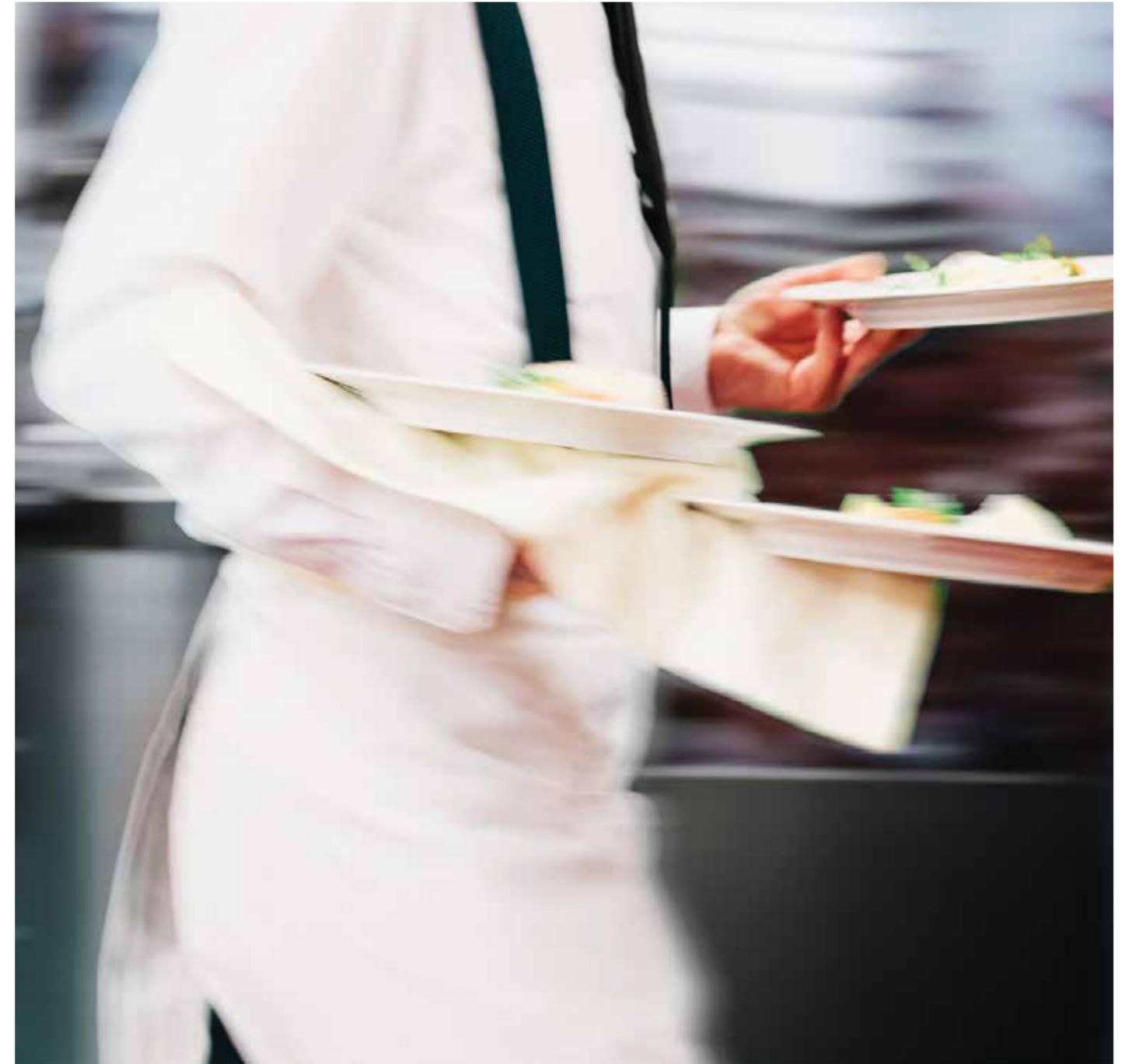
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FRONT OF THE HOUSE

Labor-saving ideas for smoother operations, from hiring and retention to social media and automation



NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

How teens and older workers can help fill the labor gap

By Diana Hubbell



Record-high wages, impressive flexible hours and innovative recruiting tools are especially attractive to teens and older adults right now.

For restaurant owners looking to bolster hiring, it's worth emphasizing certain benefits.

RESTAURANT JOBS OFFER FLEXIBLE HOURS AND STABILITY.

Many jobs available to retirees or older workers are often seasonal positions, such as warehouses like Amazon, which force employees to eventually seek other work. Restaurants, in contrast, can typically offer the highly coveted combination of stable, year-round employment, but with flexible hours and shorter shifts.

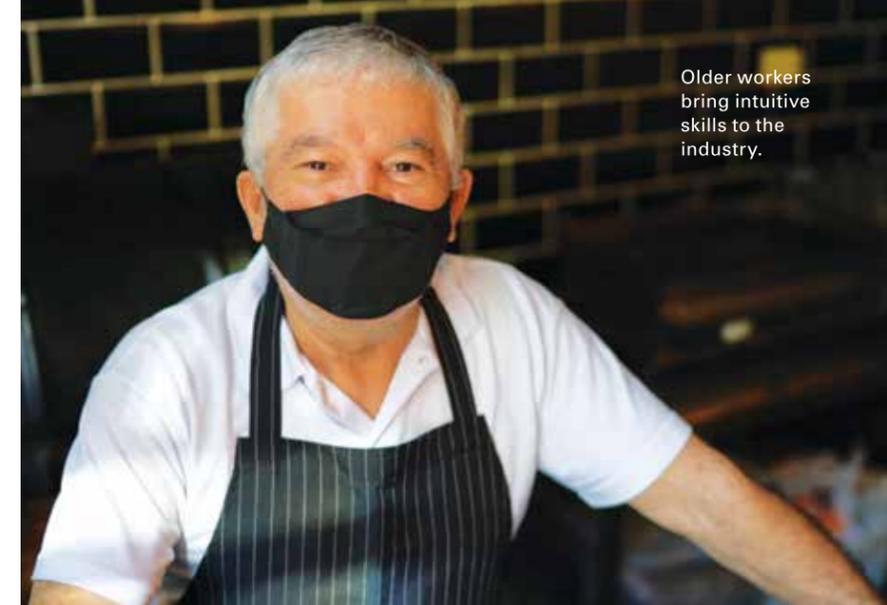
"In today's market, the employee has a lot more leverage than they used to," says Jonathan Horowitz, founder and CEO of Convive Hospitality Consulting. The current labor shortage works to the advantage of employees seeking flexible hours. "That includes older workers coming back into the workplace who are able to dictate their schedules and, to some extent, what they want to do."

RESTAURANT WORK IS BETTER PAID THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN.

Last year marked the first year that restaurant wages across the nation averaged \$15 an hour. "We've documented 3,000 restaurants paying \$15 an hour plus tips," says Saru Jayaraman, president of One Fair Wage.

In January, Darden, Olive Garden's parent company, bumped up hourly rates to \$11, instead of the federal or state minimum wage, and promised to raise that number to \$12 by next year, while McDonald's raised its average hourly wage to \$13, with some entry-level positions paying \$17 an hour.

"I think it's become much more attractive to retirees and older folks who may want to consider jumping back into the workforce for a while," Horowitz says. "Some of these retirees are seeing that wages have increased so dramatically in the hospitality industry out of necessity."



Older workers bring intuitive skills to the industry.

Why Them

Restaurateurs are tapping into underutilized groups to fill vacancies. According to the Current Population Survey, older Americans in October 2021 unretired at a rate of 2.6%—a noticeable rise since the early days of the pandemic—while the percentage of teens seeking employment shot up by 35%. Many restaurant groups, especially McDonald's, which launched a partnership with the American Association of Retired Persons in 2019, have been pushing to hire senior citizens for several years with highly successful results.

Why Now

"What we're seeing is that older folks are considering coming back to the restaurant industry, but they're coming back to it in different ways," says Jonathan Horowitz, founder and CEO of Convive Hospitality Consulting. Most of these former retirees are coming back as dining managers or hosts—positions that draw on their years of professional experience. "I think a lot of business owners are recognizing that it's a significant advantage to have those kinds of experienced people back in the restaurants. They're dependable. They don't get flustered. And they're there because they want to be."

"THE CURRENT LABOR SHORTAGE WORKS TO THE ADVANTAGE OF EMPLOYEES SEEKING FLEXIBLE HOURS. THAT INCLUDES OLDER WORKERS COMING BACK INTO THE WORKPLACE."

—Jonathan Horowitz of Convive Hospitality Consulting



Operators who plan to devote more resources to recruiting and retaining workers

Portion of new hires found equally from other restaurants, former employees and those with no prior experience.



Source: National Restaurant Association State of the Industry 2022

IT'S EASIER TO BREAK INTO RESTAURANT WORK.

While the restaurant industry has long been an important source of jobs, getting them has been a challenge for workers without considerable restaurant experience. Particularly in New York, Los Angeles and other major metropolitan areas, restaurant jobs have historically been highly coveted and competitive. This was previously a deterrent to never employed teenagers and seniors from unrelated fields.

TRAINING SHOULD BE OFFERED.

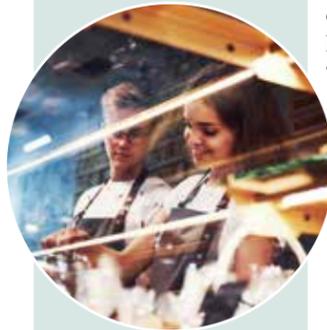
Investing in training will pay off. For high school and college students, this opportunity is invaluable. Many younger applicants now entering the restaurant workforce will go on to build a career in hospitality or may return to part-time work as they later pursue other career paths. Either way, restaurant experience is a lifelong asset.

High school and college students, often working for the first time, are also likely to share their positive experience with friends, essentially becoming a personal recruiter for their employer.

Quick Read

Chef Bryan Dayton owns two restaurants in Boulder: OAK at Fourteenth and Corrida. He has a couple in Denver, and one in Big Sky, Montana.

"We hire college kids all the time," Dayton says, referring specifically to the Boulder restaurants. "We have discussed reaching out to high schools as well for host and back wait positions. I'm going to put my 14-year-old to work this year."



"We have two older dish stewards that work for us. It seems like the labor shortage is here to stay, so while we try and avoid hiring college kids (it's challenging to manage their schedules), we have to take what we can get. We probably have six to eight college-aged workers at each restaurant."

Younger workers can be a possible pool for operators.



RESTAURANTS OFFER A SENSE OF COMMUNITY THAT CAN BE PSYCHOLOGICALLY BENEFICIAL.

Older people are especially likely to benefit from a multi-generational work environment, which is precisely what restaurants offer.

"A lot of people are attracted to the industry because of that sort of family environment—it's nice to be a part of a team," Horowitz says. For older people, working with a dynamic, diverse group of co-workers of different ages can offer a welcome change of pace and sense of connection. Meanwhile, younger employees grow from the varied perspectives that their older counterparts bring to a work environment. "There's the chance to pair somebody who has not only restaurant experience, but also life experience, which is very beneficial to the younger employees. You have the opportunity to create those sort of mentor relationships."

RESTAURANTS ARE MAKING IT A BREEZE FOR GEN-Z TO APPLY.

According to the Department of Labor, 33.2% of teenagers ages 16 through 19 were employed last year, the highest number since 2008.

Tech-savvy restaurant groups are making it a snap for teens to apply. Wendy's, for instance, has streamlined the process so Gen-Zers can apply with a few taps of a smartphone, while Chipotle began using TikTok Resumes this summer to give younger applicants a chance to show off their strengths on the platform. ■



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Tips on TikTok to Boost Sales

The world's fastest growing social media platform can translate to big business

By Diana Hubbell



99K



99



Share



“TO BREAK THROUGH THE NOISE YOU NEED TO HAVE SHAREABILITY AND STRONG STORYTELLING BUILT INTO YOUR SOCIAL CONTENT ON TIKTOK.”

—Tressie Lieberman, Chipotle's vice president of digital and off-premise dining



DO have a solid foundation.

Successful social media begins with a strong foundation, a place to drive traffic that tells customers more about your restaurant and what you're all about. That means a formidable website and a solid social media strategy for Instagram and Facebook before diving into TikTok and reaching out to influencers. Your video content—15 second clips—can be leveraged on all three platforms. Menu specials, instructional step-by-step plating of popular dishes as well as customers enjoying food and drink are all ways to get started.



DON'T forget micro influencers.

While it may be tempting to simply reach out to influencers with millions of followers, micro influencers on TikTok and Instagram can be a valuable tool. Parade, the Gen Z and millennial-focused online clothing brand, went from a scrappy startup to a powerhouse valued at \$140 million in part by reaching out to influencers with followers in the low thousands. Unlike their more famous counterparts, micro and nano-influencers are often easier to work with and their content tends to feel more relatable to the average TikTok user.

▼ **When Chipotle launched #GuacDance, a TikTok challenge asking users to show off their dance moves in honor of National Avocado Day, the restaurant group received more than 250,000 video submissions, garnering a whopping 430 million views.**

“The promotion also helped to drive Chipotle's biggest guac day in history at the time, with over 802,000 sides of guac served,” says Tressie Lieberman, vice president of digital and off-premise dining.

Chipotle has continued to leverage TikTok. Chipotle Royalty challenge, which offered a \$10,000 cash prize to a fan with the best video describing their Chipotle order, drove engagement through the roof.

Launched in 2016, TikTok has shot up to more than 1 billion users, becoming the fastest-growing social media platform in history. It's become a formidable marketing tool for restaurants—and not just large-scale brands like Chipotle. Last March, a video of Sushiya, a casual Japanese restaurant in Dallas, set to Bad Bunny's “Cloud 9,” scored more than 2 million views. Months later, the business continues to experience increased sales.

Like any unfamiliar digital medium, TikTok can be tricky and even a waste of resources for the uninitiated. If used correctly, however, it has the potential to reach enormous audiences and drive up revenue. Some do's and don'ts to bear in mind.



DO know your audience.

According to research published last April, 25% of TikTok users in the U.S. are in their teens and nearly half the platform's audience is under 29. For a brand like Chipotle, that made the platform particularly attractive. "Over half our customers are millennial or Gen Z, which aligns with the TikTok audience," Lieberman explains. "There is a ton of organic conversation about Chipotle on the platform, and we want to be where our customers are." The restaurants that stand to gain the most by engaging with TikTok are ones that already have a younger clientele.



DON'T push it if it's not an organic fit.

A fine dining restaurant specializing in tasting menus is less likely to benefit from TikTok. These sorts of establishments are less likely to attract a Gen Z customer base, meaning they'll see better return on their investment by spending the money on public relation firms, which engage with traditional media channels, as well as high-quality visual materials for Instagram, which has a more even age distribution.



DO use TikTok to show other sides of the restaurant. Everyone loves getting in on a secret and TikTok users are no exception. Videos that show how a signature dish is made tend to perform well, particularly if they feature an inside look at the back of the house led by a charismatic employee. To create even more engagement, consider showing special off-menu creations on the platform and encouraging TikTok fans to order them.



DON'T forget that TikTok can be a recruiting tool. With the current labor shortage showing no signs of abating, it's more important than ever for restaurants to reach out to prospective employees in their early 20s. TikTok can be an effective means of showing the kind of fun, team-oriented working environment a restaurant strives to foster. See related story on page 34.



DO know the lay of the digital landscape before diving into it. TikTok memes and trends rise and fall with dizzying speed, meaning it's crucial to have a sense of what's in and what's not before producing content. "Being aware of social trends and working to tell real stories that create authentic connections with users will help ensure longevity on the app," Lieberman says. Whether that's mind-tingling ASMR in a behind-the-scenes cooking video or using a viral song as background music, correctly applying of-the-moment trends can make a restaurant brand seem savvy and relevant.



DON'T think that TikTok is only for big-name restaurant brands. When it comes to Twitter and other social media platforms, Popeyes, Domino's and other large chains with multimillion-dollar marketing budgets have long led the way. On TikTok, however, all it takes is one viral video to dramatically boost sales for months. Gen Z TikTok creators tend to favor less polished content in contrast to the overly stylized imagery that once dominated Instagram, meaning restaurants don't necessarily need to shell out big bucks to produce a catchy video. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANGELO MOLELE



DO focus on shareable content. "In the attention economy, we are competing with countless brands, creators and media outlets for consumers' time and engagement," Lieberman says. "To break through the noise and influence purchasing decisions among influential groups like millennials and Gen Z, you need to have shareability and strong storytelling built into your social content on TikTok." Challenges, which encourage TikTok users to create their own clever take on a viral trend, are particularly effective for restaurants.



DON'T take yourself too seriously. "One of the key reasons people come to TikTok is to have fun, and brands can't make the mistake of taking themselves too seriously," Lieberman says. TikTok videos that read like conventional advertisements are likely to flop or come across as painfully out of touch.

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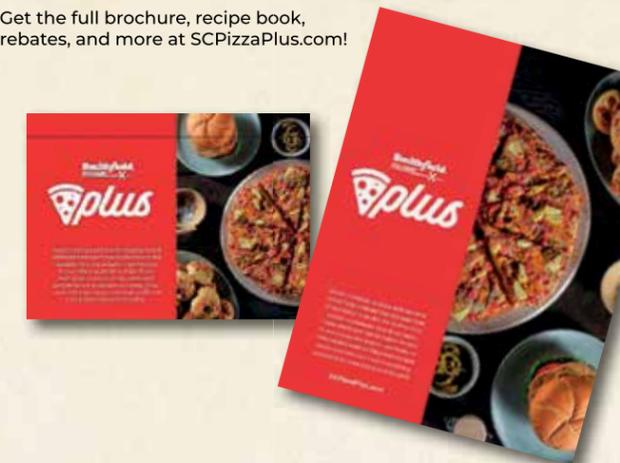


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FOR HIRE

8

smarter approaches to staffing

By Jacqueline Raposo

► **If you heed the headlines, no one wants to work in hospitality.** While the industry has faced a shortage of workers—double the national workplace average—there's still plenty this sector has to offer potential employees.

Yes, the competition is stiff, but you can stand out as the employer of choice. Consider these eight approaches to help you staff up and staff strong.

1 **STRENGTHEN THE "SPRAY AND PRAY" METHOD**

Some 80% of hospitality jobs are posted on sites like Indeed and Craigslist, according to Jordan Boesch, CEO of 7shifts. But only 2% of candidates actually get hired from them, implying these sites lure quantity and not necessarily quality. So make sure you stand out from the crowd. Are you committed to local? High on sustainable farming? Do you feature local artists on your walls? Millennials and Gen Zers want to find purpose at work so make sure that comes out in your posting. Also highlight flexibility to comfort employees caring for children or relatives. List perks like free shift meals, tuition reimbursement and the potential to work with partnering restaurants or events. Mentorship opportunities and job growth are also vital. "Sixty-five percent of chefs are interested in being part of the restaurant's growth and learning new skills," says Boesch. "Restaurants have a huge opportunity to get creative and pave the path of what that growth looks like."

Designating a spot on your website can reel in potential hires.

2

RECRUIT YOUR WEBSITE

Adjust or expand your website to feature available jobs. But also be sure to include a page describing your company's culture—job seekers today want to make sure their front line labors are worth it. What behaviors will you not tolerate from staff? What values do you foster? Does your staff participate in social events or health initiatives together? What advocacy organizations do you support? Link to this page on your job postings or summarize these points succinctly within your job post. "Employers that can really speak to that are going to win over the candidates," says Lisa Shuster, chief people officer of iHire. "They're looking for a greater sense of purpose."

GO NICHE

Niche hiring companies like iHireHospitality, iHireChefs, Snagajob, The Restaurant Zone and Snap Chef lure a smaller pool of applicants compared to general hiring sites but they offer tools to help you stand out, such as a general company profile page to share descriptions and images of your company's culture, offering all candidates a glimpse of what it will be like to work with you. Support staff help with the hiring and scheduling process, too, minimizing time and costs associated with this area. And iHire's ad builder helps you detail everything necessary before you post.

4

HEAD TO WHERE YOUR PEOPLE ARE

With everyone always scrolling on their phones, social media has increasingly become a smart place to reach job seekers as long as you have a strong following and investing in paid social strategies. Leverage the platform potential of Instagram and Facebook by sharing more than just a graphic that you have a job open. Post pictures with details of the food they'll make. Share videos of staff having fun in the kitchen. Promote accolades or selfies with celebrities who come into dine. Show your team executing an event so that candidates witness your culture of teamwork. Your job posting isn't just about what the candidates will do. It's also about who they'll work with and how they'll feel about the result of their labor. So, remember to tag your staff on posts and have them share on their personal feeds too.

5

BE NONTRADITIONAL

Every possible contact with a guest can be a path to potential hires. Use takeout bags as well as receipts to deliver the "we're hiring" message. Include it in email correspondence, promotions and texts sent to diners after dining at the restaurant. If you use Google Ads to increase visibility, use that space as well.



6

TAP YOUR CURRENT STAFF

According to Boesch, 51% of hires are referrals and custom links to restaurant website hiring pages—not job boards. This means your current staff is the greatest asset to finding new talent. "These folks work in the restaurant already," says Boesch. "They can talk about the culture and the managers they work with and sell their friends on it." With relationships more important than ever, ask your staff to refer friends and former colleagues. Let them share job openings through email, social media and word of mouth, honestly articulating to candidates what it's like to work for you.



of hires are referrals and custom links to restaurant website hiring pages—not job boards.

7

CONSIDER SECOND-CHANCE HIRING:

"Second-chance hiring is an important, untapped talent pool," says Shuster of hiring formerly incarcerated. To prepare this pool of workers, organizations like Fortune Society and The National Restaurant Association train former inmates in areas like work readiness and food safety—making such programs an excellent resource for hiring. Campaigns like Ban The Box urge employers to consider job qualifications before criminal history too, and can help you learn more about this potential avenue.



8



GET CREATIVE WITH VIDEO:

Rather than invest time in a new app or platform, get creative and fold videos into website and social media accounts. Record a quick walking tour of your dining room and kitchen so that applicants can get a feel for your space. Have your managers make a video about themselves and the company. "...Personal moments can help attract those right candidates," Boesch says. He points out that this works both ways: invite interviewees to record a video introducing themselves or showcasing their talents. "People are getting very scrappy in terms of getting more candidates in the door. The creativity is there." ■

3

A futuristic food runner bot with a blue and black frame and a white top section is positioned in a restaurant. The bot has a digital display on its top surface. The restaurant has a modern aesthetic with dark wood tables, black chairs with cane backs, and large windows with decorative light fixtures.

What Bot Are You?

Humans on working with their new co-workers

By Peter Ganovsky

A man in a grey jacket is interacting with a white, cat-shaped service robot. The robot has a black face with large blue eyes and a small mouth. The man is holding a glass and looking at the robot. The background shows a restaurant interior with a window and a person in a white shirt.

Bella and La Duni, opposite page, are food runner bots.

▼ **Robots have evolved from prognosticator predictions to a seat at pre-service shift meetings. But they're far from a front of the house takeover.**

“Long before the pandemic, it was really hard to fill shifts and maintain full staffing on a daily basis,” says Jacob Brewer, chief strategy officer of Miso Robotics. “COVID absolutely exacerbated the problem, but make no mistake, this problem was here long before it and will persist long after. These are roles going unstaffed every day and robots are simply aiming to assist those who are showing up to make their days and nights sustainable.”

The impetus to implement robots and the automation they bring addresses the labor shortage and ultimately the bottom line. But they are not a panacea to the 1 million-plus individuals who have exited hospitality since the start of the pandemic. Not all restaurants have experienced success. Robots work best when their presence fits the concept and they help alleviate, not create, problems.

It's “a ripe time for innovation to make its mark on the future of the restaurant industry,” says Juan Higueros, co-founder and CEO of Bear Robotics, creator of the robot Pudu.

EXPERIENCES SO FAR



LA DUNI IN DALLAS

Started: June 2021

“You can’t replace what you don’t have,” says owner Espartaco Villar. “There is no one to hire.” Bots have allowed La Duni to remain open and lucrative.

→ **ROBOT: Temi**

Responsibilities: Host duties such as welcoming guests, managing guest flow, delivering food and beverages to tables and checking in with diners.

Cost: \$45 monthly

“They replace tedious repetitive functions,” Villar says, adding that the robots assist his current staff, which means a less laborious shift for the humans.

→ **ROBOT: Pudu**

Responsibilities: Does the heavy lifting of delivery, such as the physical labor of expo and bartending positions.

Cost: \$180 monthly

“EXPO NO LONGER GOES HOME SORE AFTER MAKING 60 HEAVY TRAY TRIPS PER SHIFT. AND WE HAVEN’T LOST A PLATE SINCE IMPLEMENTATION.”

—Espartaco Villar of La Duni



THE XPOT IN CHICAGO, LAS VEGAS AND LOS ANGELES

Started: Fall 2021

“The human component will never be replaced. The robots are there to lighten the pressures of the more mundane tasks,” says Jerry Ngo, events and marketing director.

→ **ROBOT: Bella**

Responsibilities: Similar to runners, delivering food to guests. With its feline facade, the robot purrs when petted.

Cost: \$33 daily

“Our presentations are very intricate and heavy,” Ngo says. “These robotic server assistants relieve the main servers from a lot of heavier lifting so that they could better focus on walking our guests through their culinary journey.”

The added benefit has been the marketing, Ngo says. “The draw and hype of the robotic server assistants has more than paid themselves off across all our venues. Robots, when priced correctly, are actually reasonable.”

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CAROLINA VALENCIA



Bot Spotter

Robot assistants aimed at automation and easing labor woes in the back and front of the house are expected to grow and improve. Companies expect more door-to-door deliveries in high density urban areas, especially college campuses (see story, page 54) as well as drones in suburban communities.

Sergio’s, Miami and Florida-wide

Bot: Servi, serving bot by Bear Robotics

Cost: \$999 monthly
Implemented late spring 2021

CaliBurger, Pasadena, California and nationwide

Bot: Flippy, kitchen/cooking bot by Miso Robotics

Cost: Corporation-wide \$3.1 million investment
Implemented in 2018

Buffalo Wild Wings, nationwide

Bot: Wingy, kitchen/cooking bot by Miso Robotics

Cost: Not yet announced
Implementation slated for later in 2022; currently in beta phase

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK LAWLOR



The XPot bots are assistants and a part of the restaurant’s vibe.





**ROGER BAR AND RESTAURANT
AT THE AMESWELL HOTEL IN
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA**

Started: June 2021
"Over the course of one shift alone, employees are likely to have up to 30% extra time to tend to the guest," says Jacky Li, the food and beverage manager.

ROBOTS: Servi Robots Walle and Eva

Responsibilities: Checking on tables, running food to guests, side work

Cost: About \$1,000/monthly

"Our mission is to use this technology to enhance the staff's job, not replace them," Li says. "As much as I love using our robots, it is simply a tool to help us provide the best quality of service to our guests and would not be possible without our staff." ■



PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK LAWLOR

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This versatile container is ideal for premade grab-n-go items as well as carry-out and delivery. The clear lid makes for easy order identification.



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This multi-compartment container with a full perimeter seal creates SKU simplicity for staff and spill-proof satisfaction.



EarthChoice® Dual Color

This “do-it-all” container is heat lamp safe for to-go staging and microwavable for end users convenience.



TRUST THE QUALITY OF KRAFT REAL MAYO FOR EVERY DISH, CUSTOMER & OPERATION.

Performance: Maintains quality appearance and does not water off.

Taste: A balanced and well-rounded taste profile for just the right amount of flavor in every bite.

Consistency: Coats evenly and effortlessly for flawless flavor and uniform texture.

OPTIMIZE YOUR MENU & INNOVATE WITH CREATIVE APPLICATIONS OF PRODUCTS YOU TRUST



12% of Operators are using more value-added products to address labor situation

2021 Technomic, Inc. Technomic's 2022: The Year of the Climb



The restaurant industry is about **1.6 MILLION** workers short of its pre-pandemic employment base¹

2022 Technomic, Inc. Technomic's State of the Industry; U.S. Foodservice Planning Program

PRODUCT INFORMATION

KRAFT Real Mayo

Jugs 4 x 1 Gallon

GTIN 10021000642196

APN 42192

Spoon-friendly gallon jug with extra-wide mouth, screw-tight cap and easy-to-grip handle.



MENU VERSATILITY

One product, many applications. So many ways to mayonnaise! Visit the Kraft Heinz Foodservice website for the full recipes and additional menu inspiration!



Chesapeake Potato Salad

Mustard- and mayo-based potato salad seasoned with Old Bay. Great side for fried fish and seafood.



Kimchi Hot Dog With Gochujang Mayo

Hot dog topped with kimchi, peanuts, onions and gochujang mayo.



Elotes Dip

Blend of cheeses, corn and mayo that makes a craveable dip with a pop of spice from jalapeño peppers and chili powder.



TIME SAVING TECH



PHOTO © SUNDAY

1

The fastest way to pay

Waiting for a server to drop the check is a thing of the past at restaurants like Buckhead Life Restaurant Group, which include Pricci in Atlanta, Lobster Bar Sea Grille in Fort Lauderdale and Chops Lobster Bar in Boca Raton, Florida.

They're among the thousands of restaurants worldwide, from quick service to fine dining, that have adopted end-to-end technology solutions like Toast and Sunday. They're fully integrated with a variety of POS systems, so guests can simply scan a QR code, split the bill, pay the bill (using Apple Pay, Google Pay, American Express, Visa and Mastercard) and leave a tip at their own leisure. The payment process is fast, helping restaurants turn tables more quickly, saving servers' time and surprisingly increasing check averages and tips. There's no monthly subscription or setup fee, just a processing fee based on usage, which is lower than most credit card processors.

"Most importantly, our guests love getting their check at their convenience and quickly paying with their phone when they want to leave," says Niko Karatassos, president of Buckhead Life Restaurant Group, who uses Sunday.

Servers still place orders and answer questions about the menu but have more time to upsell menu items, rather than spend time away from guests and bogged down at the POS system.

2

Remotely piloted robot delivery

When delivery demand outpaces the availability of drivers, robots like Coco fill in. Coco's fleet of remotely piloted robots delivers food more efficiently, sustainably and reliably than human couriers within a 2-mile radius, operators say.

"Delivery doesn't always bring your food in the best condition," says Coco CEO Zach Rash. **"We typically get it there 30% faster than other services and it is preserved much better since it's in the robot the whole time.** Plus, having an organized line of robots instead of couriers coming in has been one of the biggest selling points. We make sure the order's cooked and out the door as fast as possible for the customer." Robots are fully operated by remote human drivers, who are full-time Coco employees with extensive training. The job is much more accessible and less taxing than being a delivery driver since drivers work from home and don't need a car. Coco robots can fit 18-inch pizzas and up to four grocery bags in an insulated container, with an advanced suspension system to navigate uneven terrain. Merchants scan any robot, put the order in and Coco handles the rest. Coco, which works especially well in dense areas such as college campuses, is already integrated with delivery platforms like DoorDash and UberEats and is currently available in Los Angeles and Miami, launching in more U.S. cities soon.

PHOTO © COCO / SAM DRAKE PHOTO



3

Extend the shelf life of cooking oil

Sustainable, cost-efficient and now fully biodegradable, FreshFry pods save operators time, labor and cost by extending the life of cooking oil by two to three days with no additional equipment needed.

Simply drop a FreshFry pod into your commercial fryer at the end of the day and it attracts and catches the water, metals and acids that come from the food and destroy your oil. The next day, toss the pod in the trash and resume cooking with your clean oil.

"We fry a lot of chicken at Hattie B's, so oil is an essential ingredient for us," says executive chef Brian Morris. **"FreshFry oil filter pods allow us to fry perfect Southern-fried chicken all day, every day.** The pods capture and remove impurities that make oil smoke and taste bitter, ensuring cleaner cooking oil—and it's a sustainable, plant-derived product."

FreshFry pods eliminate the laborious, time-consuming need to dispose of oil on a daily basis. And with ingredients across the board, including cooking oil, skyrocketing in price, it's nice to save money whenever you can. New this year, FreshFry also launched frying oil test kits, which test the contaminant levels in your oil so you know when to filter or change out your oil. ■



Scan the code to learn about US Foods® CHECK® Business Tools

PHOTO © FRESHFRY



Three of-the-moment ways to streamline operations

By Amber Gibson

Technology is shaking up and waking up the restaurant industry like never before with the goal of improving efficiency and saving time. A closer look at three developments shows how technology is working for early adapters.



Executive chef Chris Pandel and staff at Cira in Chicago know that the most successful restaurants are made of teams that support each other.

CARING IS IN

Survival lies in nurturing

By Peter Ganovsky

It's cool now to care. The thin veil between staff treatment and customer pathos is coming undone. People are paying attention to where they spend their money and who profits. "Customers are much more aware of how staff is interacting with each other and with management," says Aldo Zaninotto, owner of Chicago's Osteria Langhe and Testaccio. "It's making an impact on their interactions with staff as well."

The most progressive restaurateurs already value a positive and nurturing company culture, but the catastrophic exit of hospitality workers caused by the pandemic is forcing the industry as a whole to reevaluate the importance of the health and happiness of staff everywhere. It's not enough for management to appropriately handle surly guests. **What can be done?**



● **Checking in with members of your team on a personal level should be normal for the functioning of any restaurant.**

"We have an open line of communication with all staff—top to bottom," says Alexis Percival, managing partner of Kindred in New York City. "Anyone can text or email the four managing partners at any time or talk to their direct managers. It's an extremely close-knit team."

At Osteria Langhe and Testaccio, all staffers have been included in the decision-making processes, says Zaninotto. "They're the backbone of the restaurant(s) and we want to make sure they know we're listening and prioritizing them. We love when our team has a sense of ownership over the restaurant."

● **A workplace that cares about its people is especially important now,** says Bella Greco, a college student who worked as a host at Bar Mezzana in Boston until a study abroad program started recently (See related story on page 34).

"It felt like a family," she says. "For example, on Thanksgiving, anybody who wanted to was welcome to get together for a big group dinner. Every time there was an event, not only did they want me to participate, I wanted to be there."



"THEY'RE (STAFF) THE BACKBONE OF THE RESTAURANT(S) AND WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THEY KNOW WE'RE LISTENING AND PRIORITIZING THEM."

—Aldo Zaninotto, owner of Chicago's Osteria Langhe and Testaccio

HOW TO CARE



For Employers:

Be Creative
Creative and fun team-building events and dinners will strengthen the bond of your team and make work more welcoming and streamlined.

Get Educational
Provide opportunities for your team to learn and grow together. Allow the seeds that have been sown to grow. Nurture the continued growth of your staff.

Commit to Caring
Free meals and birthday celebrations are wonderful. But employees need to know their health and happiness are a priority. Encouraging days of rest by providing trustworthy protective measures is crucial for the vitality of any restaurant.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANNA VIDUJIC

“WE BELIEVE IN TRANSPARENCY AND STAFF RETENTION. TRUST IS CURRENCY.”

—Alexis Percival, managing partner of Kindred in New York City



Good communication is essential for healthy teams.

● **Practicing good communication and executing it effectively should be the norm.** Kindred distributes nightly staff emails as a way to easily share important information and to allow a comfortable, in-the-moment space for questions and concerns among the team. “We believe in transparency and staff retention,” she says. “Trust is currency. On a micro level, we reach out to individuals and ask after their health (issue) if we are aware of sickness or other personal challenges.”



Cross-training staff helps the restaurant and workers.

● **The importance of cross-training the team, emphasizing the importance of being able to hop into any position at random, cannot be overstated.**

While this may seem to benefit the restaurant, a staff that operates as a team will see how it helps everyone. “Last minute things can always happen, and many of our team members have families, second jobs or other responsibilities outside of work.”

● **Buy-in, working for the same goals is also essential.**

Many roads lead to a positive environment but a staff-wide tip distribution weighs heavily because it benefits everyone. By utilizing a “pooled-house” approach to staff tipping, a culture of teamwork, friendship and good communication became instilled among everyone in the workplace, Greco says.

HOW TO CARE



For Employees:

Be Vocal

If you see something, say something. Voice your concerns and be honest with management and coworkers.

Take Initiative and Take Care

At the end of the day, it’s up to ourselves to make change. Set up a group chat with coworkers, create an open line of communication, cover for others who need it and check in on each other.

Self-Awareness is Essential

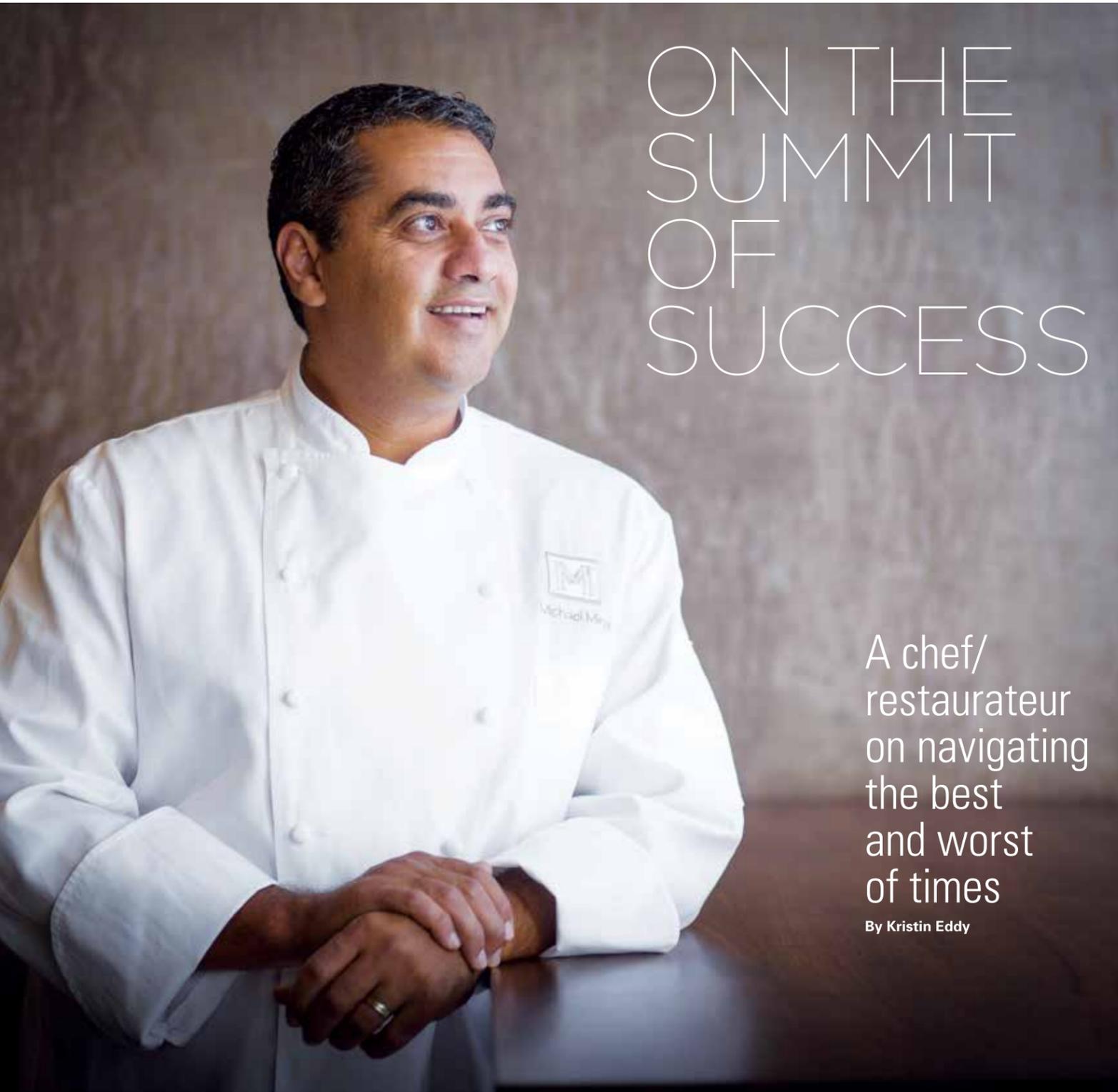
If you need a day, you need a day. Be aware of your mental and physical health needs and be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Any good employer should respect your needs.



● **Meaningful perks matter most.** Kindred offers gratis “field trip” meals to visit other comparable businesses, cited as “a treat and a source of inspiration.” Wine and beverage courses are also taught a couple times a month to engage the staff in a pedagogical environment, one that supports the growth and learning of every member, Percival says. Kindred offers health insurance for all full-time employees, defined by anyone working just four shifts a week. “No 80-hour weeks,” Percival says.

On her birthday, Bar Mezzana management went above and beyond to host Greco and several friends. “Everyone was so warm and happy to have us. If I ever return (to Boston), I know I’m welcome. Had I not moved, I would have happily stayed.” ■

Staff perks go a long way to creating loyalty.



ON THE SUMMIT OF SUCCESS

A chef/
restaurateur
on navigating
the best
and worst
of times

By Kristin Eddy

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC WOLFINGER



Success begins with a staff who feel their work is valued along with a clear path to advancement, says veteran chef/restaurateur Michael Mina.



Michael Mina has the restaurant world covered, with 40 restaurants, fine dining to casual, from Hawaii to Dubai, and a surprising number of venues in Idaho. You could say this heralded chef has that world conquered, with a Michelin star, multiple James Beard awards and praise from media nationwide. But like every operator, he's been knocked sideways by the wrath of the pandemic, struggling with many of the same challenges. Yet, the MINA Group continues to expand, opening restaurants and finding promising ways to adapt.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MINA GROUP

Q. Are there lessons to be learned from the worst first year? What would you say is happening now as the industry tries to move forward?

A. What we all found is that there are some similarities around the country. The price of product has gone up. Product is definitely more expensive than ever before and hard to source. Up to six months to get a stove, and even equipment has had a lot of delays, so opening a restaurant might be delayed. That's everywhere. So you have to plan for the delays each step of the way. Be conservative about dates.

Q. How do you accommodate guests with the shortages in your restaurants?

A. We take a lot less reservations than we used to. If we normally take 200 reservations, then now we maybe take 100. If we're fully staffed that day, we will take more walk-ins; open up the books more. People for the most part have been really understanding. Occasionally you have to do more explaining. The Bungalow Kitchen in Tiburon (Calif.) is really hot now and guests will see tables open but we can't seat them. There's a give and take and a lot of communication that goes on. If we're sold out, we tell them to try again in the evening. Not everyone is rushing to get back inside.

“WE ARE ALSO ABSOLUTELY HIRING SOMEONE WITH A GOOD ATTITUDE EVEN IF THEY HAVE LESS EXPERIENCE THAN WE FOCUSED ON BEFORE.”

—Chef Michael Mina

Q. How do you manage any frustrations?

A. I'd say for the most part people have been pretty gracious and in all honesty something like this is not a specific problem for Mina Group restaurants. Customers know that restaurants are dealing with more obstacles than they did before and they're seeing it in any restaurant they go to. But our protocol now if there is a problem is we immediately get management involved. No matter how much training we do for staff, we decided it's not for them to deal with questions or issues that arise.

Q. Is it harder or easier to staff restaurants with your history and reputation?

A. The struggle to find staff can be difficult in the best of times, and labor has become the No. 1 problem, hands down. The biggest wild card you face every day even when you do get staff

is that when people are not feeling good this year, we've gone from worried about COVID to even a cough or a cold that might be COVID. We used the J-1 program as well with employees from other countries and that has started up again. We partner with a lot of hotels (we're in 20).

Q. How do you get people to apply?

A. One thing is we've had to up our wages. We've always loved getting referrals from employees and now we have upped our referral bonus a lot. We are also absolutely hiring someone with a good attitude even if they have less experience than we focused on before.

Q. Once you've hired, how do you get staff to stay?

A. You can motivate people with raises but the best way is really a career path and giving them an education. We're offering more learning and development than we've ever had. More structure



Better pay and the willingness to train has helped ease labor woes.

“WE’RE OFFERING MORE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT THAN WE’VE EVER HAD. MORE STRUCTURE THAN WE’VE EVER HAD. BEING ABLE TO GIVE GOOD DIRECTION ON WHAT THEIR JOB ENTAILS.”

—Michael Mina, restaurateur/chef

than we've ever had. Being able to give good direction on what their job entails. And we've shortened the transitions. There's a certain onboarding to get new employees familiar, but once you are familiar with culture of the restaurant, then it's more about career "path-ing." Chefs in the '70s, '80s and '90s did a lot of prep before they got on line and then were on stations longer. Garde manger was a year and a half before the hot line, now with us it might be six months. Shadowing might be one or two weeks.

Now we're adding more digital learning because people are learning differently. We have a website we've created called recipe exchange. Every recipe from every restaurant, the wine pairings, when you drop the plate. We have 40 restaurants and 3,000 videos and now staff can learn from home at their own pace.

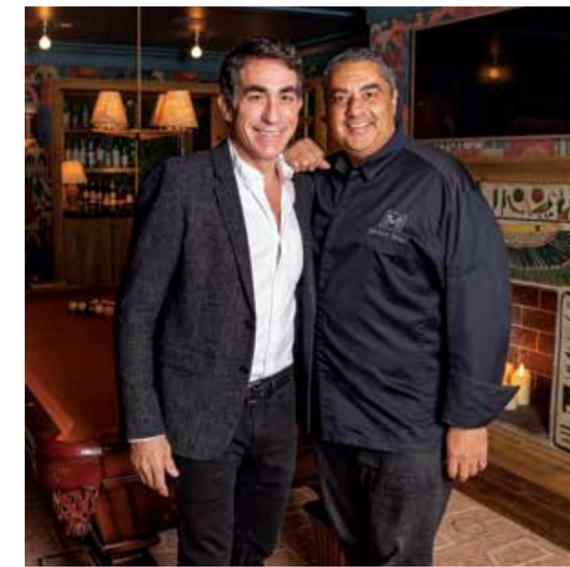
Q. You've operated at an elite, successful level for a long time. Do you think you've got a handle on things now?

A. I think that every day is a learning experience. Risk is risk. It's not like the problems are going to get solved next week. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF MINA GROUP



Mina, left, knows mentorship and training help retain a solid staff.



Michael Mina 2020 to 2022

Started MINA Family Kitchen and several other virtual brands

Closed his flagship restaurant, Michael Mina San Francisco, launched in 1989

Opened Estiatorio Ornos in its place, the same spot that once housed Aqua, the restaurant that launched his fame as executive chef from 1993 to 2002

Opened The Bungalow Kitchen by Michael Mina outside of San Francisco

Added another location of Bourbon Steak, this time in his home state of Washington

Launching Mother Tongue later this year in Los Angeles.

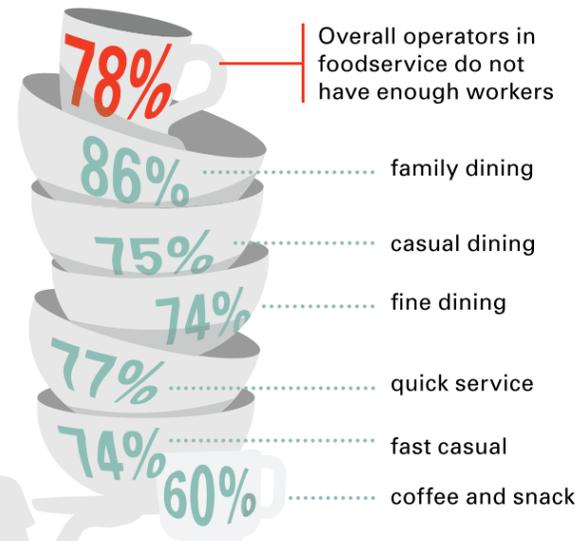
BY THE NUMBERS

▶PLAY THESE NUMBERS FOR A BIGGER PAYOUT

MAY THE WORK FORCE BE WITH YOU

Getting through the labor shortage begins by facing the challenges and developing a strategy knowing these numbers.

HELP WANTED



50%

Restaurateurs who say recruiting and retaining workers will remain a top challenge this year.

JOB MARKET*

300,000
Average annual job growth, 2010 to 2019

200,000
Projected average annual job growth, 2023 to 2030

16.5 million
Projected jobs by 2030

*Restaurant and foodservice positions

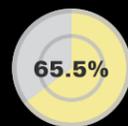
FOR HIRE

With so many job openings, the hospitality industry will need to stand out

- 1.82 million** Healthcare and social assistance
- 1.81 million** Professional and business services
- 1.59 million Restaurants and accommodations**
- 1.05 million** Retail
- 1 million** Manufacturing
- 611,000** Transportation, warehouse and utilities

Easing the Burden

(operators in every segment)



reduced hours

8 in 10

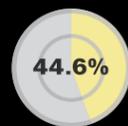
operators say technology provides a competitive edge.



cut menu items

2/3

of all operators in every segment will use more technology and automation this year to help with the labor shortage.



closed on days normally opened

75%

Operators who plan to devote more resources to recruiting and retaining workers.

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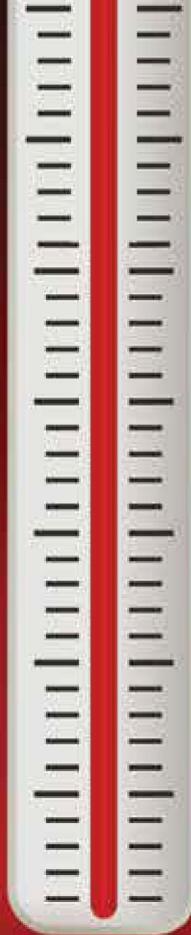


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