

Countertrends in Food-Away-From-Home Market

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You can't have your cake and eat it (too). Or can you? Today's food-focused culture takes the both-and idea to the point of opposition, such as the desire for wordly, yet local cuisine.



Those kinds of contradictions emerged repeatedly in the **Culinary Visions Panel** titled What's Trending in Foodservice: Cultural Contradictions Driving the Trends. The report explored the expectations, attitudes and tendencies of more than 2,000 U.S. consumers in regards to eating out. The results present a bit of an oxymoron as to how and what consumers want when it comes to food.

Emerging trends cited in the study:

- **Food that doubles as an experience.** Food festivals, food trucks and food halls all cater to food being both an attraction and a fuel source. The goal for these food-centric consumers is to eat for energy as well as entertainment as people seek food experiences worthy of sharing either via social media or in person.
- **Locally sourced, yet wordly.** Consumers will pay more for locally sourced food when dining out. These food-savvy consumers also expect global flavors, such as exotic spices and unique ingredients, as they explore new cultures through food and sometimes even travel to food destinations.
- **Both healthy and indulgent dishes.** Consumers expect both delicious and healthy meals when dining out. They won't trade taste for health and diets are out; the trend line shows a preference toward limiting certain ingredients vs. eliminating them. At the same time, over-the-top menu items and indulgent foods can prove worthy of a splurge.
- **Nostalgia tossed in with sophistication.** That reminder of childhood times and "just like grandma used to make" items are strong when dining out. However, consumers also say they want artistic presentations and avant-garde cooking techniques.