

## Segment Spotlight:

# Senior Living

### Menu changes are booming at this senior living facility

To please baby boomers' sophisticated palates, one Dallas community is giving its food a makeover.

**M**ost senior living homes aren't known for serving fresh, innovative food in their dining rooms. But Presbyterian Village North (PVN) isn't like most senior living homes. The Dallas-based facility, which serves some 1,200 meals daily, recently underwent a \$93 million expansion to offer residents more amenities—including some seriously delicious food.

As a new generation of seniors begins to take advantage of dedicated senior living communities, facilities are modernizing their menus. "Baby boomers have bigger expectations from traveling, from business and from what's been available to them at home," says Director of Dining Services Dane Cummins. "They have those same expectations going into retirement. They're wanting more choices."



**UPPING THE ANTE:** An expanded menu in the main dining room includes 22 choices daily and upscale signature specials.

Delivering called for some big changes. As part of the expansion, PVN added a third kitchen to its 65-acre property, allowing for more everyday options to be served in the campus's nearly 20 dining locations. The biggest menu updates took place in the main dining room, where Cummins and Executive Chef Kevin Neff expanded the five-week menu cy-

### INCOMING SENIORS: 4 WAYS "NEW" SENIORS WILL SHAKE UP FOODSERVICE

The baby boomers may be getting older, but this generation isn't fading away. Surveys of seniors currently living in senior communities have shown high levels of satisfaction with the food. But "new" seniors—starting at age 55—are apprehensive about what will be on tap when and if the time comes to move into senior living. "Aging baby boomers are driving pressure for higher senior living standards, particularly when it comes to food," says Sharon Olson, executive director of Culinary Visions Panel. — Tara Fitzpatrick

#### 1 Menu fatigue and institutional food

The study found that the seniors had negative perceptions toward dining options in senior living communities. The main concerns were: menu fatigue (the same menu repeated week after week) and uninspired foodservice due to the perception of an institutionalized setting.

#### 2 Focus on fresh foods, uptick in fruit and vegetable love

The study also revealed a keen focus on fresh foods. When prompted to list their favorite foods for dinner, 31 percent of "new" seniors named vegetables, as opposed to only 19 percent of seniors who currently reside in a senior living community. The gap was even larger for fruit: 35 percent of "new" seniors crave it, while only 21 percent of current residents do.

#### 3 This is the dinner party generation

Baby boomers grew into adulthood by hosting dinner parties in their homes and learning French cooking techniques to wow their friends. They don't want to let go of this when they move to senior living. Having food that makes them "proud to invite their family and friends" was important to 92 percent of the "new" seniors surveyed. Right now, 73 percent of current senior residents believe the same thing.

#### 4 Variety, snacks are a big deal

Foodservice options that feed "new" seniors' craving for independence and social interaction will be key. And 83 percent say that access to snacks is important, compared with 71 percent of current residents.

