

Olson Study Maps Casual Diner Preferences

When It Comes To Burgers And Pizza, Americans Still Prefer Them Prepared Traditionally



January 24, 2012 - America's casual diners like their burgers and pizzas prepared traditionally and are less likely to order ethnic variations, according to a Culinary Visions™ Panel study done by Chicago-based Olson Communications.

High percentages of respondents said they'd order traditional burgers and pizzas at their favorite casual dining restaurants, while far fewer said they'd order those dishes if they were changed to match particular ethnic flavor profiles. Of the three ethnically inspired burgers, 44 percent of respondents would try Latin burgers,

while 36 percent and 28 percent respectively would try Mediterranean and Asian burgers.

In the pizza category, the Asian concept was most likely to be ordered followed by the Mediterranean, 36 percent, and the Latin with 33 percent. On the gender breakout, ethnic pizzas were not well received with less than 35 percent of females responding favorably to the Latin and Mediterranean pizzas, and less than 30 percent of males responding favorably to the Asian pizza. Ethnically inspired burgers and pizzas were also the least likely to be ordered of all five categories of ethnic menu items tested. The other categories were salads, ice creams and side dishes.

“One trend we are seeing is that Americans have some favorite flavors in certain menu items and they are less likely to be adventurous when ordering those items,” said Sharon Olson, president of Olson Communications in Chicago. “We’ve also seen that some traditional menu items may transition to particular ethnic flavor profiles more successfully than others.”

Indeed, of those who said they'd order ethnically inspired menu items, more than half would order the Latin burger and slightly fewer than half would order the Asian pizza. As expected though, respondents who described themselves as “foodies,” or those who “always or usually like to try new dishes and flavors,” were more likely to order the ethnically inspired concepts.

About Culinary Visions™ Panel

The Culinary Visions™ Panel explores a wide range of culinary topics with food industry professionals and consumers. Consumers surveyed were those who frequented casual restaurants and comparisons were made between male and female consumers. A closer look was taken at self-described foodies with more adventurous menu preferences.