



Menu trends: Carbs, ethnic foods, dessert are popular

August 22, 2014 — Staying on top of or even ahead of trends is goal of many hotel restaurants, and a number of food trends—from breakfast to dessert—are making their mark in 2014.

One big trend is breakfast, at both full-service and limited-service establishments, according to Report Linker. The group estimates that restaurant breakfast sales will reach \$47.4 billion in 2013, up 5 percent from 2012. Sales are expected to rise 5.6 percent in 2014 and 5.1 percent in 2015.

Report Linker's study shows that at limited-service restaurants, growth is being driven by player entrants; menu item innovation hitting healthfulness, indulgence, and quality notes; and coffee, tea and juice platform innovation.

When it comes to dessert, the results of a recent study conducted by Culinary Visions Panel show that the sweet stuff can be a major draw.

A significant finding was that nearly one-third (31 percent) of respondents think about dessert before they order the main course because they want to save room for it.

Furthermore, 15 percent of survey respondents (and twice as many men as women) choose a restaurant that offers a dessert they crave, and another 14 percent love dessert so much that, for them (slightly more women than men), the main course is an afterthought.

More than two-thirds (68 percent) of consumers say they prefer cheesecake at the end of lunch or dinner, according to the survey. The second-most-ordered dessert, cake (62 percent), is followed by pie (55 percent) and ice cream/sorbet (54 percent).

To measure food trends, the New York Times recently launched a tool that shows when particular food trends emerged and how quickly they made the transition from urban elites to mass acceptance. The tool shows how frequently specific ingredients and dishes appeared in the pages of the newspaper.

According to the tool, some of the terms most mentioned recently are quinoa (117 times), pork belly (93 mentions), ramen (104), kale (264), short ribs (56) and hummus (43).

