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Global Culture *and* Culinary Trends

Authentic and undiscovered global flavors were highlighted as important trends in Les Dames d'Escoffier's 2018 Trends Report. The top three regions expected to have the most influence in the coming years are the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Latin America. Looking three to five years ahead, expect to see foods from East Africa and the Balkans take on more importance.

Mediterranean dishes are expected to gain an even broader following thanks to their healthy, light, colorful, and tasteful characteristics. Dishes from countries that have a rich and diverse mixture of herbs and spices will continue to captivate consumers. Spicy flavors are also gaining popularity with consumers of all ages. Greater availability of Indian spices and other exotic flavors are already kicking up the flavor profile of standard fare.

Foods that are healthy and sustainable continue to gain momentum. Flavorful ingredients that promise functional benefits like antioxidants and anti-inflammatory benefits will also be in high demand. Modern consumers are interested in sustainable foods that are gentle on the planet as well as being produced with care for everyone involved in the process of bringing them to the table.

Food trends are often linked to travel trends with consumers enjoying flavors of the world when they are travelling or by simply exploring ethnic neighborhoods and restaurants at home. Today's travelers are often curious about seeing less traveled places before they become crowded mainstream destinations. Dames contributing to the trends report expect the exploration of foreign cultures and smaller countries' cuisines to command a stronger presence in the future.

Geopolitics are having an increasing impact on food trends as newsworthy places around the world draw attention to global comfort foods and world flavors. Americans are embracing the comfort foods of many immigrant

cultures. Newcomers use food as their voice to share their heritage and authentic recipes while keeping a connection to faraway homelands. Among some of the notable dishes that are trending are flavorful bowls, handheld delights, ancient grains, and satisfying street foods. Some examples include:

- **Puebla Hot Pot** from Latin America and Mexico with the bold flavors of ancho chile, smoked paprika, and spices served with chicken or pork, corn, avocado crema, and fresh garnishes.
- **Manouri**, a semi-soft fresh white cheese made from goat or sheep milk from Greece.
- **Millet**, an ancient grain harvested from small-seeded grasses in India used in porridge, side dishes, and entrees.
- **Mishkaki**, marinated meat skewers from East Africa and Tanzania are made with a blend of lemon, tomato, green papaya, curry, garlic, red pepper, and ginger.
- **Jianbing**, a popular street food breakfast crepe from North Asia and China is brushed with umami-rich hoisin and chili sauce layered with egg, pickled vegetables, herbs and sometimes customized with sausage or bacon.

Many members of Les Dames d'Escoffier have unique knowledge about foods and flavors of specific and surprising parts of the world. They shared their unique insight in the 2018 survey and identified some of the global trends ready to come alive in American kitchens and on menus.

Members of Les Dames d'Escoffier received exclusive first access to the comprehensive trends study report earlier this year. Since then, more than 20 media outlets have published selected results. The board welcomes your thoughts and comments and your participation in next year's study.

Puebla Hot Pot. Photo: McCormick & Co.



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DINNER
SOMETHING
MEMORABLE.



MADE FOR THIS MOMENT

*Made in Ireland
with milk from grass-fed cows,
it's a taste that says
a thousand words.*

Note: This will be a reoccurring column in the Quarterly. Visit the Global Culinary Initiative at the LDEI website to read their current newsletter, "The Middle East: A Culinary Crossroads."