

FOODSERVICE CONSULTANT

SUSTAINABILITY SPECIAL: how foodservice is taking a holistic approach

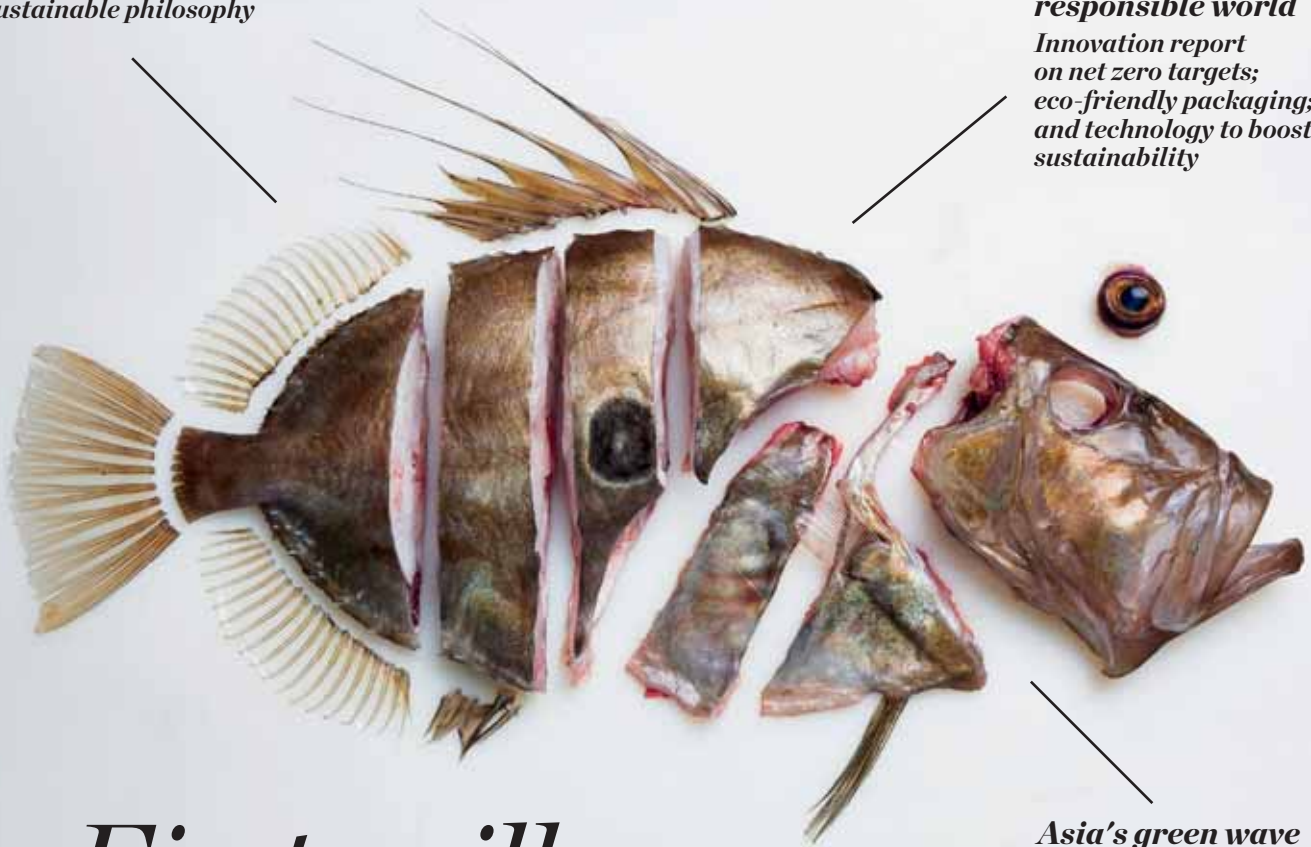
Pioneering responsible practices in food, from mindful sourcing and cutting waste to backing people and technology

The human factor

*Putting people at
the center of a
sustainable philosophy*

Tech for a more responsible world

*Innovation report
on net zero targets;
eco-friendly packaging;
and technology to boost
sustainability*



Fin to gill

Australian chef Joshua Niland on
his singular approach to cooking fish
without the waste

*Asia's green wave
Ingenious initiatives to
further ethical behavior
in foodservice*



Join us at the MIK for Immersive Consultant Training

 Scan the QR code to register



 **MIDDLEBY**
INNOVATION KITCHENS

CHEF-DRIVEN INNOVATION AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Contact us for the complete Middleby experience
mik@middleby.com | www.middleby.com/mik

THE SUMMER OF SUNSHINE

It's hard to believe that as I write this piece, we are in August, 2021. The warm summer sun here in the beautiful mountain State of Colorado in the USA parallels the feeling of positivity that I see and hear in many of our members throughout the world.

Yes, the news of the day states that the Delta variant of the Covid-19 virus is upon us in full force here in the US and elsewhere in the world, and caseloads have been increasing in many places. I know that our colleagues around the world are faced with the same issues especially in South America, Australia, parts of Europe, Africa and on and on. However, we are now seeing bright rays of hope throughout the world and our industry is leading the way back to some sort of normalcy.

“We are now seeing bright rays of hope throughout the world and our industry is leading the way back to some sort of normalcy”

As many of you know, the NAFEM show was recently cancelled in Orlando, Florida US due to rising pandemic case concerns. However, the TAD Division of FCSI is planning a wonderful annual seminar to take place in the historical city of Montreal, Canada in April, 2022.

Similarly in Europe, our EAME Division has had to “go back to the drawing board” on numerous occasions to reschedule its annual conference, but with various countries now opening up, we should be hearing some definitive news about this conference in the near future. And this event is not one to be missed.

Our APD colleagues remain busy and a special shout out goes to their officers and board of directors for their work in bringing in a large contingent of new members while creating a continuous array of high-quality virtual events, including webinars and new product meetings – all ready to expand into face-to-face reunions in the not-too-distant future.

Our equipment factories are busy, our hopes spring eternal...now, if we can only attract, educate and employ our leaders of tomorrow, we will really push ahead to our sure successes of the future.

Keep the faith. Plan on attending one of the events noted above and reconnecting face-to-face with friends and colleagues in the near future. You can be sure these occasions will be outstanding.

Be well and stay safe...



**William Caruso FCSI (PP)
President, FCSI Worldwide**

**We share,
we support,
we inspire**

**We want to hear your views
feedback@foodserviceconsultant.org**

STEELHEART

Built to withstand the chops, slams, spills,
and kicks of a well-used kitchen.



Hoshizaki's Steelheart Refrigeration is engineered to meet the tough demands of commercial kitchens. Steelheart uprights, undercounters, worktops, prep tables, and chef bases are durable with an all-stainless steel construction inside and out. These Steelheart models also feature an exclusive design that distributes cold air through a system of ducts and louvers to maintain uniform temperature at every level.



HOSHIZAKI



Scan to view more
about Steelheart
hoshizakiamerica.com

Realistic expectations



**Eric Norman FCSI
Chair, FCSI The Americas**

Unpredictability continues to be the theme of 2021. In my Q2 letter I touched on supply chain in our industry and the impact it was having on equipment procurement and project flow. I was hopeful that these issues would be rectified in short order, but it is apparent it is a longer-term problem than first suspected.

We have now seen lead time extensions grow from a few additional weeks to months. We are experiencing

direct impacts on many of our design projects as equipment manufacturers struggle with a high demand and a broken supply chain. Another major issue plaguing our industry is a shortage of labor. Many establishments in the US have reduced staff, forcing cuts in the hours of operation.

For consultants, new project starts are continuing at a rapid pace. I have spoken to numerous colleagues who are all very busy and do not see this

trend changing anytime soon. This is welcome news, but there will still be a struggle in equipment procurement.

Consultants need to be fully transparent about these issues with our clients. Yes, there will be more price increases and longer lead times, which may impact project timelines. Educating clients as to what is happening in the industry and setting realistic expectations is our duty as professional consultants.

This is my last message as chair of the FCSI Asia Pacific Division (APD).

What an honor it has been. Thanks to Toni Clarke FCSI and Clara Pi FCSI who worked tirelessly for several years before passing the leadership baton to me. Our division was at its lowest point, with member disengagement and our finances in dire straits. I was fortunate to be mentored by Greg O'Connell and more recently Bill Caruso FCSI,

There's no beauty without struggle



**Mario Sequeira FCSI
Chair, FCSI Asia Pacific Division**

our Worldwide president.

The APD board embarked on a strategic plan to stimulate member interaction, source a quality administrator and relocate our official registration to a more user-friendly environment in Australia. Our member base is enjoying member benefits including the webinars with Glenn Flood.

I express gratitude for the efforts of active members of our board – Andrew Brain

FCSI, Steve Sidd FCSI and Greg O'Connell. The new board led by Andrew, Steve and other professionals will carry on the commitment to make FCSI APD stronger and better.

Optimize your FCSI membership by collaborating with other Professional and Allied members. I have forged many wonderful professional and personal relationships across Asia Pacific, the Americas and Europe. I urge you to do the same.

New insight



**Remko van der Graaff FCSI
Chair, FCSI Europe, Africa, Middle East**

As I write this, the European Championship football tournament, the Tour de France 2021 and Wimbledon have all finished, while Max Verstappen is still in the race for the Formula 1 title. These sporting events were organized with public crowds and were able to offer food, drinks and hospitality. The Olympic Games in Tokyo, meanwhile had to be hosted without the public, which is sad for all the sportsmen and

women that trained so hard. We live in a new world and are all looking for the new normal. Offices and companies are slowly filling with employees who are eager to exchange their work at home for the office environment, meeting colleagues again in person.

The EAME Conference is now scheduled for April 2022. We are looking forward to meeting each other to talk and dine together. Let's hope the world remains open. I hope

everyone is back in business and anticipating better times.

I am writing this welcome shortly before my first cycling tour from my hometown to Santiago de Compostela, Spain. Gaining inspiration and meeting other people are central for me on this challenging cycling tour. Here is a question: when was the last time you did something that you've never done before? New things can bring new insight and fresh ideas.



ANY



MARKET.



ANY



BUDGET.

From molded fiberglass serving lines for school cafeterias, to custom configurations for corporate dining areas, LTI has the widest breadth of high-quality serving systems for every application, price point, and style. Our American-made serving counters incorporate innovative serving technologies and are backed by best-in-class warranties to help you serve food reliably and efficiently. Visit www.lowtempind.com/any to learn more or find your local rep.



Changing
how food is served.™

CONTENTS

NEWS & VIEWS

3 WELCOME LETTERS
From your FCSI Worldwide president and regional chairs



11 ONLINE ROUNDUP
Find out about additional content on the fcsi.org website

12 AROUND THE WORLD
What's going up around the globe



14 THE INTELLIGENCE
The Secret Chef has something to say about the staff shortages facing foodservice businesses. The Talkback panel, with representatives from the US, UK and Singapore, ponder what sustainability means to each of them. There's a call for responsible foodservice businesses to take a lead on mitigating climate change plus industry news from all FCSI regions.

17



FEATURES

40 Joshua Niland
The Australian chef/restaurateur talks to Tina Nielsen about his novel approach to cooking and serving fish. Will his perspective prevail?

46 The FCSI interview
After 50 years in foodservice consultancy, Stephen Arnold FCSI has plenty of stories about the business to relate. Michael Jones listens.

50 Company spotlight
Giorik's CEO Paolo Candiago and MD Alessandro Tonelli explain how the firm has blends tradition with an understanding of its clients needs.

63 Operator profile
Going from one store in Milan to 40 across Europe, Poke House is a fast-casual success story. Co-founder Matteo Pichi talks about his vision.

COVER STORY

54 Foodservice 2021: sustaining staff
Foodservice businesses have met the challenge of the worldwide pandemic with ingenuity and hard work. Now different issues are becoming apparent as a shortage of people willing to work

in the industry threatens to finish what the pandemic started. Tina Nielsen talks to industry professionals about the necessity to start investing in hospitality staff, their physical and mental wellbeing, and creating workplaces that are a joy to work in and encourage more workers into foodservice.

"I've always wanted to create a workplace that was disciplined but friendly... making people happy about working here"



WORLDWIDE

THE AMERICAS

ASIA PAC

EAME

88

70 Project: Charlie & Joe's at Love Street

In Jupiter, Florida, US, Russell Stilwell FCSI, the founder and principal of Next Step Design, faced the problem of fitting four different foodservice concepts into one space.

74 Project: Alegria

Filipino chef and restaurateur Charles Montanez wanted to set up in Singapore, but he was stuck in Manila. He called upon local consultant and FCSI Associate Ben Ho.

78 Project: Andaz Munich

Michael Flatow FCSI of Flatow & Drews Consulting talks about how he helped to build the first Andaz Hotel (a Hyatt Corporation brand) in Germany.

83 City focus

Former Madrid resident Tina Nielsen explores the resurgence

in the city's food and restaurant scene that has made it one of the world's most dynamic, and delicious, culinary destinations.

88 Covid stories

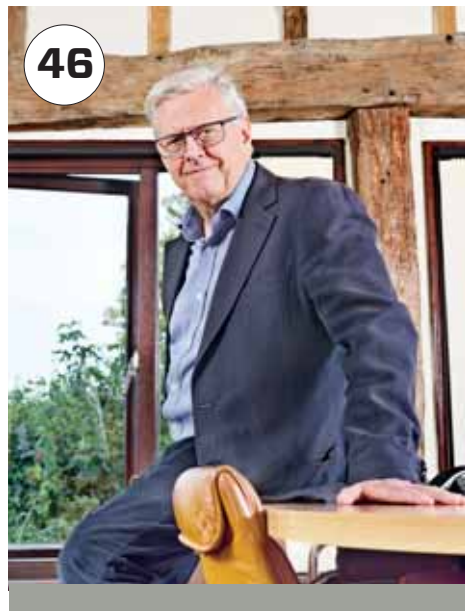
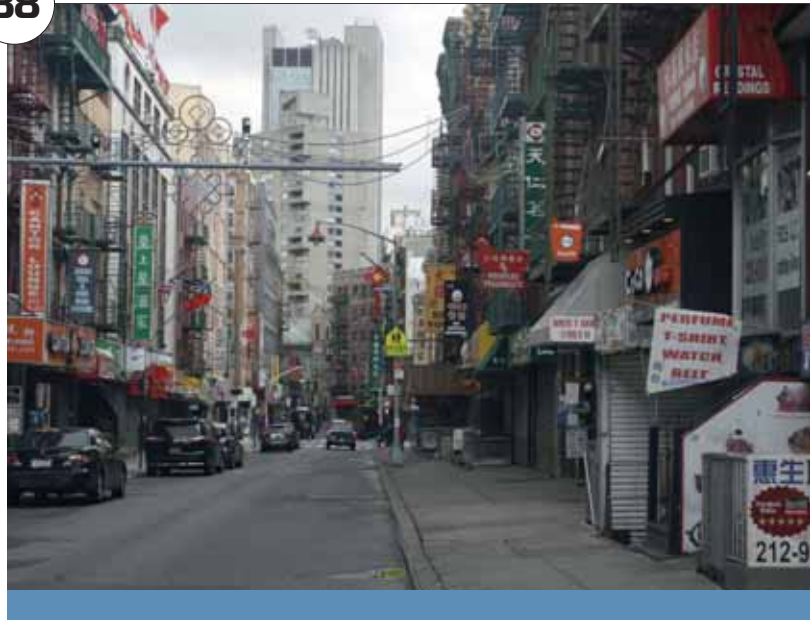
When the coronavirus closed businesses around the world Grace Young gave a voice to beleaguered Chinatowns across the US through her *Coronavirus: Chinatown Stories* video series

92 Growing greener across Asia Pacific

Amy Snelling reports on the groundswell of sustainability schemes and initiatives across the Asia Pacific region.

96 Better food

Pre-pandemic, an independent review of National Health Service catering in England showed there was room for improvement. Ely Earls examines what progress, if any, has been made.



SPECIAL FOCUS

102 NET ZERO CARBON

Jim Banks examines the benefits and challenges of cutting carbon in the foodservice sector.

108 PACKAGING SOLUTIONS

Sustainable ways for businesses to meet demand for takeout and delivery.

111 IoT FOR GREENER KITCHENS

We examine how connected kitchens can help the foodservice sector achieve green goals.

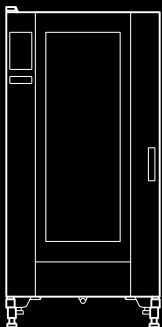




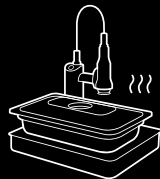
CHEFTOP MIND.Maps™ PLUS BIG + EVEREO® + MULTI.Day

THE WINNING COMBINATION

Cook, seal, preserve and deliver.



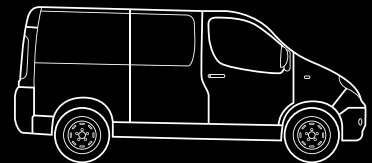
COOK LARGE QUANTITY OF FOOD



VACUUM SEALED HOT FOOD WITH HOT VACUUM



PRESERVE IT IN EVEREO® FOR UP TO 72 H



DELIVER YOUR HOT FOOD EVERYWHERE



unox.com





VECTOR[®] WIDE MULTI-COOK OVENS

Wider chambers. Wider 16" pizzas. Wider menu options. Alto-Shaam's latest innovation in the Vector[®] H Series Multi-Cook Oven product line features expanded oven chambers to now fit 16-inch pizzas. Cook extra-large pizzas, appetizers, desserts and more—all at the same time in a compact, ventless footprint.

Learn more at
alto-shaam.com/vector

ALTO-SHAAM[®]



BRIEFING

116 US/EU Trade agreement
 Foodservice businesses both sides of the pond hope there will soon be an end to punitive tariffs.

119 Picking up the tab
 Facing rising costs in food and labor, the only way is up for restaurant prices.

122 A place to grow
 Many QSR chains are looking to the Chinese market for future growth.



127 Healthy regulation
 All UK foodservice consultants need to know about new healthy eating laws.

130 My kitchen
 Brazilian chef Rafa Panatieri shows off his Barcelona restaurant Sartoria Panatieri.



119



122

DIGITAL UPDATES

A wealth of extra content is waiting on the *Foodservice Consultant* website. Go to fcsi.org for digital-only interviews, regular blogs, event coverage and expert analysis of the latest industry news. You can also sign up to the *Foodservice Consultant* weekly newsletter, a comprehensive roundup of the stories affecting the global food and beverage industry. The *Foodservice Consultant* app is also available on Apple and Android devices. Top online stories include:

- We report from the Commercial Kitchen trade show in London where editorial director Michael Jones hosts

a panel session, speaking to FCSI UK & Ireland members about the status of foodservice in a post-Covid world.

- A fresh series of virtual panel sessions and roundtable events, featuring FCSI members tackling issues including how new technology can further foodservice businesses;



the future of institutional foodservice; and designing for modern and functional foodservice operations.

- Progress reports on FCSI Asia Pacific Division's *Project Excellence* campaign, celebrating outstanding design from members, as the judging process begins.

- Regular blogs from contributors including Marius Zürcher, Tim Smallwood FCSI and Francis Loughran.

- Tina Nielsen reports from the World's 50 Best Restaurants celebration as the 2021 list is unveiled in Antwerp, Belgium, after a year's break.

FOODSERVICE CONSULTANT

Editorial director **Michael Jones**
 Editor **Tina Nielsen**
 Contributing editor **Amelia Levin**
 Chief sub-editor **Jacquetta Picton**
editorial@foodserviceconsultant.org

Group art director **Ian Hart**
 Designer **Poppy Seabrook**
 Picture editor **Nana Agyeman**
 Head of production and delivery **Rob Manning**

Publisher **Stuart Charlton**
 Commercial manager **Natasha Merkel**
sales@foodserviceconsultant.org

FCSI WORLDWIDE

Executive administrator **Nick Vaccaro**, nick@fcsi.org
FCSI board of directors: Below are board members for 2020 **Officers:** President **William Caruso** FCSI, Secretary/treasurer **Mario Sequeira** FCSI
Directors: **Eric Norman** FCSI, **Remko van der Graaff** FCSI

Allied representatives: **Greg O'Connell**, **Jack Scott**, **Mick Jary**

Foodservice Consultant is published by Progressive Content
progressivecontent.com
 Printed in the UK by Stephens & George
 Subscriptions: isubscribe.co.uk/Foodservice-Consultant-Magazine-Subscription.cfm

ISSN: 2752-6062

© Progressive Content 2021. All rights reserved. The views expressed herein are not necessarily shared by FCSI. If you want to reproduce or redistribute any of the material in this publication, you should first get Progressive Content's permission in writing. No responsibility for loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from action as a result of any material in this publication can be accepted by FCSI, the publishers or the author(s). While every care is taken to ensure accuracy, FCSI, the publishers and author(s) cannot accept liability for errors or omissions. Details correct at time of going to press.



editorial@foodserviceconsultant.org
twitter.com/FS_Consultant
Foodservice Consultant
Foodservice Consultant

WORLDWIDE

THE AMERICAS

ASIA PAC

EAME

AROUND THE WORLD

Here's a selection of some of the leading construction projects being planned and built across the globe

Pan Pacific London, UK

Architect **Yabu Pushelberg**

Builder **Yabu Pushelberg**

Opens **2021**

Pan Pacific's first property in Europe fuses together elegant design, wellbeing and leading destination restaurants and bars. Led by award-winning executive chef Lorraine Sinclair and executive pastry chef Cherish Finden, the hotel's five F&B venues will each incorporate unique elements of the flavor, diversity and elegance of modern Singapore. They include The Orchid Lounge, all-day dining Straits Kitchen and a destination cocktail bar.



The Codrico Terrain, Rotterdam, Netherlands

Architects **Powerhouse Company**

Builder **TBC**

Opens **2027**

Working closely with the municipality of Rotterdam, Powerhouse Company has created a unique masterplan with an ensemble of new and existing buildings that both celebrates the city's industrial heritage and embraces the future. The 190,000 sq m (227,238 sq yd) Codrico Terrain will include space for approximately 1,500 new rental and owner-occupied homes, 50% of them in the affordable segment, as well as offices, shops, restaurants and cultural spaces.





The Tampa EDITION, Florida, US
 Architect **Morris Adjmi, Nichols Brosch Wurst Wolfe & Associates**
 Builder **Strategic Property Partners**
 Opens **2021**

The Tampa EDITION will be the city's first five-star hotel, featuring 172 hotel rooms and 37 hotel-branded residences. The property will also be home to a 204 sq m (2,200 sq ft) Penthouse Suite, an expansive spa, a fitness center and over 550 sq m (5,900 sq ft) of flexible meeting and events space. With interiors designed by the renowned Roman & Williams, the whole project will be underpinned by the creative vision of Ian Schrager. There will be six F&B outlets, including a signature restaurant, a rooftop bar and a terrace.

Ilot Queyries, Bordeaux, France

Architect **MVRDV**
 Builder **Kaufman Broad**
 Opens **2021**

Located next to the larger ZAC Bastide-Niel masterplan, also by MVRDV, Ilot Queyries is a new neighborhood in the UNESCO Heritage city of Bordeaux with over 300 apartments, commercial premises, a rooftop restaurant and a park. The larger building at the riverfront will have a distinct gold-splashed façade with different shades of ceramic tiles, while the glass-fronted rooftop restaurant will offer panoramic views of the historic city and river. At the heart of this collective of dwellings is a large public courtyard with a garden of alder, birch and high grasses.



Intercontinental Khao Yai National Park, Thailand

Architect **Bill Bensley**
 Builder **Ritta**
 Opens **2021**

Inspired by the area's history as a gateway for rail transportation to north-east Thailand during King Rama V's reign, InterContinental Khao Yai National Park will offer 45 luxury rooms and 16 suites repurposed from heritage train cars. Woven into the design will be threads telling the story of a train conductor who loved to explore the region by rail. Somsri's Kitchen is the main dining experience, named after the mother of the train conductor. In addition, the Caboose Bar is located next to the pool and the Tea House is in a converted train car on the main lake across from the hotel. There is also a function lawn perfect for outdoor tented garden style parties.





During the first stages of the pandemic, FCSI Educational Foundation received a grant application from Dan Jin (above), a graduate student doing her thesis on consumer behavior in the restaurant industry. She was examining customer touch points in relation to food and service in the restaurant industry.

The Foundation board was enthusiastic about this grant application because:

- *it would provide original research into an area that would be beneficial to the consultant community*
- *it would allow the applicant to complete her graduate degree*
- *it would support an individual who may consider a future career as a foodservice consultant.*

She delved much deeper into the touch points than has been done so far, exploring many variables that influence the customer experience against what company training manuals and videos desire of employees. Here she shares a summary of her findings.

Report from Dan Jin

In the hospitality sector, service experiences are not much used to match customers' demand and service providers' supply in terms of creating value for both parties. Accordingly, this study examines the business logic throughout three objectives to build a level of advocacy, **1.** brand-identification, **2.** employee facilitation, and **3.** customer outcomes that powerfully distinguish business strategies.

The foodservice industry provides a unique setting to investigate because it has clear definitions about its business model (e.g., ethnic, fast food, fast-casual, casual dining, premium casual, family-style, fine dining, etc.), which are sufficient for undertaking all possibilities of the value proposition, from delivering and communicating to acknowledging.

Analysis of semi-structured interview responses indicated general themes in terms of the business model: quick service, interactive service based on recommendations, and interactive service based on accommodations.

First, customer journey mapping is structured as a sequence of phases: the customer journey starts with "the moment of truth". Knowing that a service failure has the potential to damage "the moment of truth", the results of my study indicated that service providers' facilitation can yield a considerable range of emotional and physical inputs within their sphere, depending on the corresponding business model. This means the business ability of foodservice operations, should not be restricted by the type of business model or its predominant service delivery methods. Instead, service operations should focus more on the diversity in value conceptualization, which can construct a service experience with multiple co-creation practices.

Additionally, foodservice businesses

encourage customers to provide feedback. Customers' complaints can be another way to measure customer engagement with the firm after a service failure. Specifically, hospitality firms can reduce the costs they otherwise would squander on situations that are not appreciated by their customers. In doing so, service organizations can improve the service recovery without depleting customers' emotions (e.g., psychological losses of self-esteem, social support, and self-efficacy), due to the stress of service failure. Neglecting the role of customers during the service recovery may lead to incomplete service recovery or biased evaluations of service outcomes.

Last, my survey findings demonstrate that when the service provider's facilitation complies with business logic and brand commitment, customer-brand identification can be strengthened, which further leads to positive referral and repatronage behaviors. Therefore, the boundary condition of service provider facilitation and customer-brand identification are considered driving forces of service recovery success because they turn the challenges of service failure into "opportunities to elevate" customer service outcomes.

Recommendations for industry

Frontline service providers need to be trained to identify the early warning signs of customer dissatisfaction in the aftermath of a service failure. It is essential to align the mutual expectations of the interacting service systems (i.e., to reduce the discrepancies between these mutual expectations) or be prepared to recover from the occurrence of misuse. ■





Cuisine Series®



MAXIMUM POWER

Featuring 7" and 9" Starfire Pro burners delivering 35-40K BTU's with one piece dual venturi



EASY TO CLEAN

A removable burner head, one piece cast grates/bowls over each burner and split grease trays



NEW MODERN APPEARANCE

Striking die cast knobs with an easy to grip belly bar and oven handle round out the designer flue cap and oven side panel



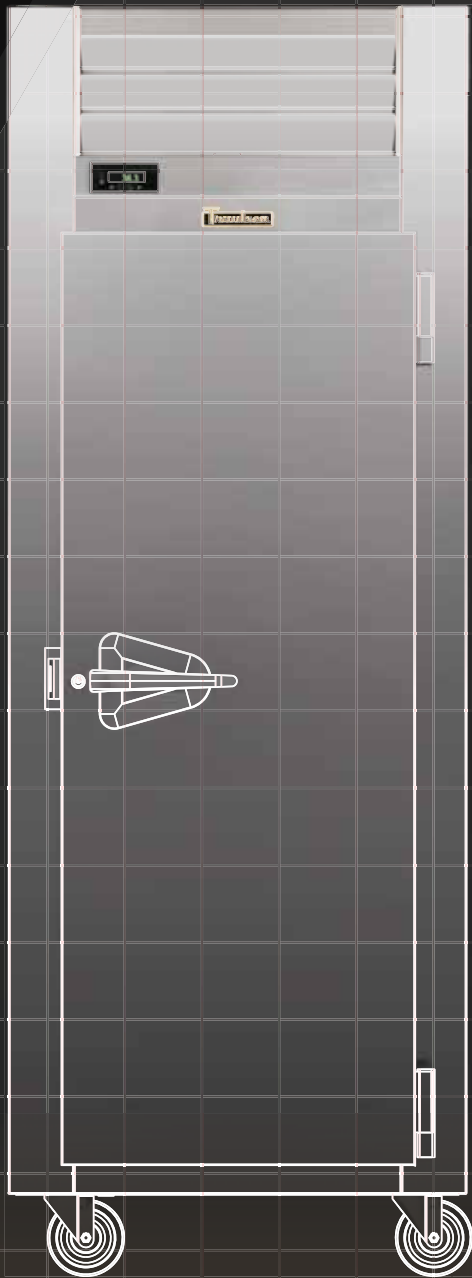
THE BEST

oven and burner system in the food service industry only from Garland



GARLAND®

A Welbilt Brand



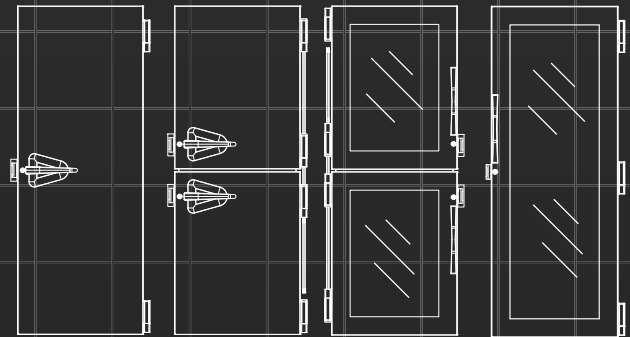
CUSTOMIZE YOUR REFRIGERATION EXPERIENCE

Select the Right Configuration for Your Kitchen

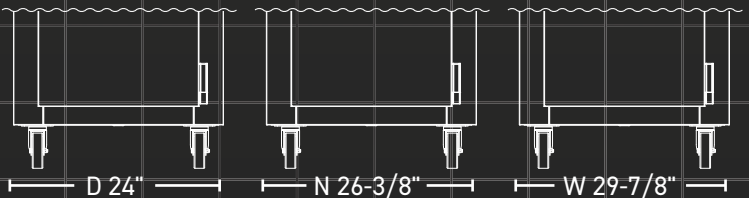
MODEL TYPES

Reach-In, Pass-Thru, Roll-In or Roll-Thru

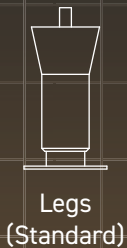
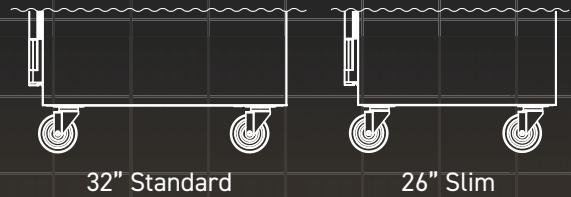
DOORS



CABINET WIDTHS



CABINET DEPTHS



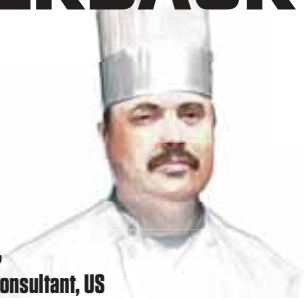
NOBODY DOES IT BETTER

Beyond delivering superior temperature maintenance and unsurpassed reliability, Traulsen Spec-Line Refrigerators and Freezers also give you the ability to custom configure your cabinets to your unique kitchen needs or space requirements.



TALKBACK

Three foodservice professionals give their views on one question



John Reed,
foodservice consultant, US

The term 'sustainability' is a vague word in the complex world of a restaurant or foodservice operation. The public perception ranges from using sustainable ingredients to energy use. However, those two elements are not the only aspects that make a restaurant sustainable. It also encompasses hiring, operational and financial sustainability.

Our approach to sustainability and growth in our business is to look at every aspect of what we make, where we buy from and how we present it to our customer. We ask ourselves, do our current and potential customers want to return and buy the same thing, hoping they will purchase other products of the same or higher quality. We support locally produced ingredients, adapting to seasonality and availability on the day.

It's our goal to utilize as much of the raw ingredient as possible, produce in smaller batches and reduce the need to bulk purchase. Minimalizing is a key to sustainability. Using less and storing less, means less demand up and down the line.

Mass-produced large volume production benefits the industrial side of the business. That complex system doesn't promote sustainability – only net gain.

After the pandemic the supply chain is a mess. We deal with shortages every day. If restaurants are dependent on bulk commodity items and don't adapt, they can't be sustainable.



Sam Buckley,
chef, Where the light gets in, UK

A sustainable restaurant takes into consideration the environment in which it exists and its impact on that environment. This includes everything from the atmosphere of the workplace, to ensure the team's wellbeing, to its decisions of where to source produce and how to treat that produce so the relationship between farmer and kitchen is healthy, ethically minded and conscious of a fundamentally limited food source. Energy, at all times, must be considered to increase efficiency and reduce irresponsible activity.

We take communication seriously in our approach to sustainability at Where the light gets in. We listen to our team and consider suggestions. We ask ourselves if our processes are the most effective for our own health and for the health of our environment. We strive to maintain a healthy work/life balance.

Our processes evolve with our learning. Our systems are rigorous and the elements that feel most effective are given more precedence. Eating together twice a day is vital for us. Recycling food waste back into our garden compost is a given, but we're always trying to improve our approach.

After the pandemic there seems to be a rise in support of independent businesses. People seem more connected to their creative sides with baking, gardening and crafting becoming popular. A comprehension of the necessity for quality time seems more present than ever.



Daniel Sia,
managing partner of The Coconut Club, Singapore

At The Coconut Club, our approach to sustainability touches both the practice of our craft; sourcing, cooking and packaging, as well as how we engage our team and community. In addition to buying ingredients that are grown locally or nearby (in Malaysia), we try to reduce food waste in the production process, using as many parts of each vegetable or protein as possible to enrich flavors and textures in our food. One of the most recent changes was to our homemade otah, a traditional recipe of charcoal-grilled fish paste, fresh fish and spices wrapped in banana leaf. We switched from using batang fish caught in Indonesia to kühlbarra barramundi farmed locally in Singapore. Our signature ayam goreng berempah (spicy fried chicken), the most popular item on the menu, is made with organic French poulets from local farmer Toh Thye San.

As for packaging, we replaced our plastic takeaway boxes with biodegradable boxes made of waxed cardboard and recyclable lids. Seeking greener packaging is a constant challenge, but something we do our best to prioritize.

Striving for sustainability also applies to our people practices – from its inception The Coconut Club defied industry norms with our salary packages that started significantly above the market rate. This was designed to make sure that even the most junior role in the restaurant offered a liveable wage, making the job and career prospects in the F&B industry sustainable for our team members in the long run. This, in addition to a team culture that encourages everyone to embrace full self-expression in the spirit of hospitality, makes us proud that many on our team have been with us for many years.

What does sustainability mean to you?

HYBRID SPEED SINK



Space-saving hybrid underbar design
(24" depth x 18" width)

Includes hand sink and dump sink
with dedicated drains for each bowl

Optional electronic sensor faucet
upgrade for hand sink (top sink)


Integrated soap and
towel dispensers

KR24-HX18-E: Includes
electronic sensor faucet


KR24-HX18: Includes
manual faucet


Now available on
BarFlex3D™v2




 krowne.com

 sales@krowne.com

 800.631.0442

 @krownemetal

 @krownemetal

 @krownemetal



LEARN MORE

KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

The Secret Chef wades in on the hospitality labor crisis

RUNNING ON EMPTY



Crisis is a big word. It's a concept that suggests an immediate, present, untenable situation that presents itself with little to no warning. It boldly hints at significant short-term pain and a unified approach to resolve the situation, whether it is a natural disaster or a demonstrable and impactful shortfall in the number of people who are willing to work long, unsociable hours for little financial recompense.

I've now been reading about the hospitality labor crisis in almost every news source – both related to the profession and those that aren't – for about six months. Once economies began tentatively reopening after successful vaccination campaigns, the news stories began rolling, slowly at first and then as a deluge.

It's hard to overstate the knock-on economic effects of this, particularly with regards to an industry that has suffered a more brutal pummeling than most others since March of 2020. In the UK, Le Gavroche, a long-established, double Michelin-starred London stalwart, announced that they would no longer be serving lunch for the foreseeable future, and they are far from alone in having to curtail hours to prevent burnout among the staff restaurants have managed to retain. The fact that there is clearly pent-up demand from consumers, not to mention swollen bank accounts, makes

this all the harder to swallow. A bumper summer bonanza is merely an elusive back-waiter away.

The accepted narrative is that we can easily blame Covid, or, in the UK, Brexit. Both events led to a repatriation of young and migrant workers to their homelands and travel restrictions (both pandemic and political) have prevented them from returning, or others following in their stead. But to do this is to ignore some fundamental long-term truths that have been conveniently masked by short-term upheaval.

It became widely accepted that staff were as disposable as single-use cutlery

Doubtless, the labor shortage has been exacerbated by the pandemic but the reality is this is a crisis that has been decades in the making rather than 18 months.

A PERSISTENT, LONG-TERM PROBLEM

A 2010 paper by hospitality scholar Dr Anthony Brien from New Zealand cites references to difficulties “attracting and retaining high-quality employees” going back to the early 1990s.

The paper pithily summarizes the issue in question by referring to jobs within hospitality as a stop-gap employment

position “only till I get a real job”.

It became widely accepted that staff were as disposable as single-use cutlery, that as owners we were doing these people a favor by offering them terrible pay for working precisely when we needed them and never when we didn't.

We offered them hourly contracts for unguaranteed work on salaries made only bearable (and legal) thanks to customer tips. We expected them to work hard for overly long shifts in uncomfortable conditions with few, if any breaks, and then wanted gratitude when we offered them some leftover food to stem the pangs of hunger.

We took advantage of a young, transient, cheap labor force, preferring to constantly recruit rather than invest in training and reward those who showed promise. It suited our accounts to stagnate wages by replenishing this workforce from the bottom up, instead of trying to raise-up the system and begin to make self-imposed changes to improve working conditions.

This unacceptable treatment has been our undoing and the veil has now been lifted thanks to the tragedy of a global pandemic. So, yes, in one sense Covid has ripped a hole through this profession we profess to love, but let's not pretend that long before March 2020, we hadn't already done an excellent job of tearing and shredding it into a painfully brittle and fragile state already. ■

THE INTELLIGENCE

News, insight, opinion and reviews





Climate crisis

A new report on climate change stresses the gloomy prospects for all sectors, including foodservice, without immediate action

The world's climate is undergoing unprecedented and potentially catastrophic changes, according to the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The climate crisis has profound consequences for food production and foodservice, putting in danger food security.

The report provides new estimates of the chances of crossing the global warming level of 1.5° Celsius in the next decades and asserts that, without concerted efforts, limiting warming to even 2° Celsius will be beyond reach.

Some of the changes that have already been instigated to a large degree caused by human behavior and activities, such as rising sea levels, are now irreversible. The report does offer hope in emphasizing that “strong and sustained reductions in emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases would limit climate change”.

Foodservice companies have a leading role to play in changing the direction, according to Kip Serfozo FCSI, director of design, East Coast

Cini-Little. “Other industries have a more direct impact on climate change than foodservice – transportation, farming, building and manufacturing. But the foodservice sector relies on so many of these industries to bring food and service to customers,” he says.

“So, the foodservice sector is indirectly tied to climate change. The fact that everyone on the planet has to eat and people’s eating behaviors do affect CO2 emissions leaves us with a responsibility to take action.”

Serfozo says there are many ways operators, consultants and chefs can start to help mitigating the devastating impact of climate change. “They include buying local as much as possible; reducing portion size; minimizing food waste; reducing packaging; cutting back on beef and lamb on menus; and reducing energy costs through solar/renewables, energy star appliances, and optimizing building energy usage,” he says. “We need responsible foodservice companies to take a leadership role.” ■

INDUSTRY NEWS

Expansion for HOPES program

The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) announced that the US Department of Labor awarded \$4m to its HOPES (hospitality opportunities for people (re)entering society) program. The grant will be used to launch additional outposts in four new states, including Delaware, Michigan, Ohio and Texas.

HOPES is a job skills training program, in partnership with departments of corrections around the country. Its aim is to train and prepare individuals, who are involved with the justice system for jobs and careers in the restaurant, foodservice and hospitality industries with a focus on reducing recidivism and increasing employment opportunities for the industry. The new sites will join existing programs in Chicago and Boston as well as in Richmond and Farmville, Virginia.

Chicago HOPES participant Ernest Green completed the program and was hired by MOD PIZZA. Within a month he was promoted from MOD Squad Team Member to MOD Squad AllStar at a location in Evergreen Park, Illinois. "My life has changed for the better already with MOD," Green says. MOD Pizza is the HOPES program's first national employer partner.



Home kitchens fired up

The City of Berkeley Environmental Health Division approved its inspection of the first microenterprise home kitchen operation (MEHKO) in the San Francisco Bay Area, authorizing home chef Akshay Prabhu to sell hot meals from his home restaurant. Prabhu is the founder of Foodnome, one of the first legal marketplaces for homemade food, to advocate for more inclusive food laws, provide resources for home-based food entrepreneurs, and connect chefs with their neighbors. He is a longtime supporter of the Homemade Food Operations Act, AB 626, which was passed unanimously in the Legislature and was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown in September 2018.

Changing delivery habits

More than half (51%) of consumers surveyed said that online delivery services were their lifeline for meals, according to a Culinary Visions® study surveying 4,000 consumers of all ages in the US. Consumers are beginning to scrutinize the cost of delivery, with 68% saying that delivery fees will determine whether they order takeout from a restaurant. Home delivery that made lockdown life a little easier is losing favor now that restaurant dining experiences are more widely available.

One year ago, 56% of participants in the Culinary Visions® study of pandemic era consumers preferred online delivery services over going somewhere in person. Although 81% now agree that their new normal is going to include more dining at home, it is not necessarily going to involve cooking. In fact, 51% prefer purchasing fully prepared foods over making food from scratch. 59% of those surveyed said they have gained a new appreciation for the supermarket deli as a source for meals.

Appreciation for hospitality staff

The Culinary Visions® survey also found that consumers have gained greater appreciation for everyone involved in bringing those meals to the table, from chefs to restaurant employees. The majority (73%) agreed that chefs became heroes working to serve communities during the past year. And consumers say this new appreciation is impacting their behavior. More than half (53%) said they have changed the restaurants they patronize based on how employees were being taken care of in recent months.



PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



The Plant Based Foods Association (PBFA) announced that Nicole Negowetti joined the association as its new senior director of policy. Negowetti is an attorney, educator, and scholar whose work focuses on the laws and policies shaping the US agriculture and food system.

Alto-Shaam has announced a new partnership with BSE North, as its manufacturers' representative in MAFSI Region 2. BSE Marketing, a fourth-generation foodservice equipment company, has represented Alto-Shaam for decades in MAFSI Regions 3 and 4.



Iron Chef winner and renowned New York City chef **Jeff Haskell** has joined Nextbite, a virtual restaurant group, as culinary director. Haskell heads up the team in Denver and will lead menu development as the company expands with innovative concepts for its thousands of restaurant partners across the country.

CHAIN NEWS



Luby's will sell all 92 of its Fuddruggers locations to Black Titan Enterprises for an estimated \$18.5m following the planned liquidation of the brand.



BBQ Holdings, the parent company of Famous Dave's announced the expected acquisition of Village Inn and Bakers Square for \$13.5m following bankruptcy filings less than a year ago.



Family owned brand Donatos announced a new partnership with the delivery-only REEF Kitchens to expand its presence in Nashville.

FAT (Fresh. Authentic. Tasty.) Brands Inc., the parent company of Fatburger, Johnny Rockets and others announced the purchase of Global Franchise Group, the parent company of Hot Dog on a Stick, Round Table Pizza, Great American Cookies, Marble Slab Creamery, and Pretzelmaker.



Curry Up Now signed the lease for its first location in the Austin, Texas, area.

Slim Chickens expanded to its first location in Maryland.

OPENINGS

iViva!, a new Mexican restaurant from Chef Ray Garcia, opened this summer in Las Vegas. Designed by Celano Design Studio, the restaurant draws inspiration from Mexican culture with Las Vegas touches. In addition to a main dining room, iViva! offers an indoor promenade patio, a vibrant bar, outdoor patio with lush greenery, and a private dining room housing iViva!'s exclusive tequila and mezcal collection. Highlights of the space include an 'exploding flower' infinity mirror that doubles as an art installation and interactive Instagrammable experience; and a main bar featuring a bottle display influenced by the architecture of ancient ruins around Mexico.



The Continental by chef Sean Brock opened in Nashville, as part of the Grand Hyatt Nashville hotel in the Nashville Yards development. Designed by Nick Dryden of DAAD, the dining room at The Continental complements the cuisine as an ode to American hotel fine dining in the Gilded Age with a modern twist. It features plush banquettes, two bars – one open and lively while the other is warm and intimate – and large booths to create a comfortable atmosphere, encouraging guests to relax and enjoy.

Dallas-originated Kirchen + Kocktails by Kevin Kelley expanded with a second location in Chicago. The 10,000-square-foot restaurant, seating 207 patrons, features two bars, and a private 44-seat dining area.



Empress by Boon opened this summer in San Francisco's Chinatown neighborhood, with a menu of modern Cantonese cuisine by Michelin-starred chef Ho Chee Boon. The expansive restaurant, with several unique dining areas and striking city views, occupies the former location of Chinatown's celebrated Empress of China.



The newly opened Boozehounds in Palm Springs combines desert influences and mid-century design with a laid-back Californian atmosphere inspired by the nearby San Jacinto Mountains. The interior design by Jenni-Kate Rogers, owner and creative director of Raven and the Willow, drew in elements of the brand identity and palette of terracotta, mustard and sage to complement the expansive restaurant and create distinct and inviting spaces across the main dining, lounge, atrium, and patio.



TAG Restaurant Group launched two new concepts, **Tiny Giant Sushi** and **Little Chingones**, at the Milepost Zero food hall located in McGregor Square, Denver's new multi-use development in historic lower downtown, across the road from Coors Field.

Brothers Michael and David Morton opened **One Steakhouse** at Virgin Hotels Las Vegas. Designed to capture the energy of the vibrant Virgin Hotels Las Vegas property, the 9,000-sq-ft restaurant presents a striking entry with an open, stylish lounge under an awning of scintillating lights – a chandelier made of 3,000 individual handcrafted pieces of glass lit by LED lights that change colors throughout the night.

EXPAND Your Options



HURRICHILL™

DO MORE AND KEEP IT LONGER

American Panel has high quality blast chillers/shock freezers perfect for every size and shape kitchen. **Over 50 models to choose from**, 30 lbs. to 1,590 lbs. chilling capacity. Expand your menus, reduce waste, maximize labor and production, **expand your possibilities**. HURRICHILL offers the easiest to use controls, reverse airflow design, 90 minute chill times and more. Check out why **HURRICHILL** is the go to name for blast chilling and shock freezing. www.americanpanel.com



Versatile, Dependable Walk-Ins & Blast Chillers

800.327.3015 | www.americanpanel.com



American Panel



THE QUICKSERVICE AND FAST CASUAL SEGMENTS WERE DOWN

143,000
JOBS ↓

FROM PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS

BETWEEN APRIL 2020 AND APRIL 2021, FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS ADDED

2.8 MILLION

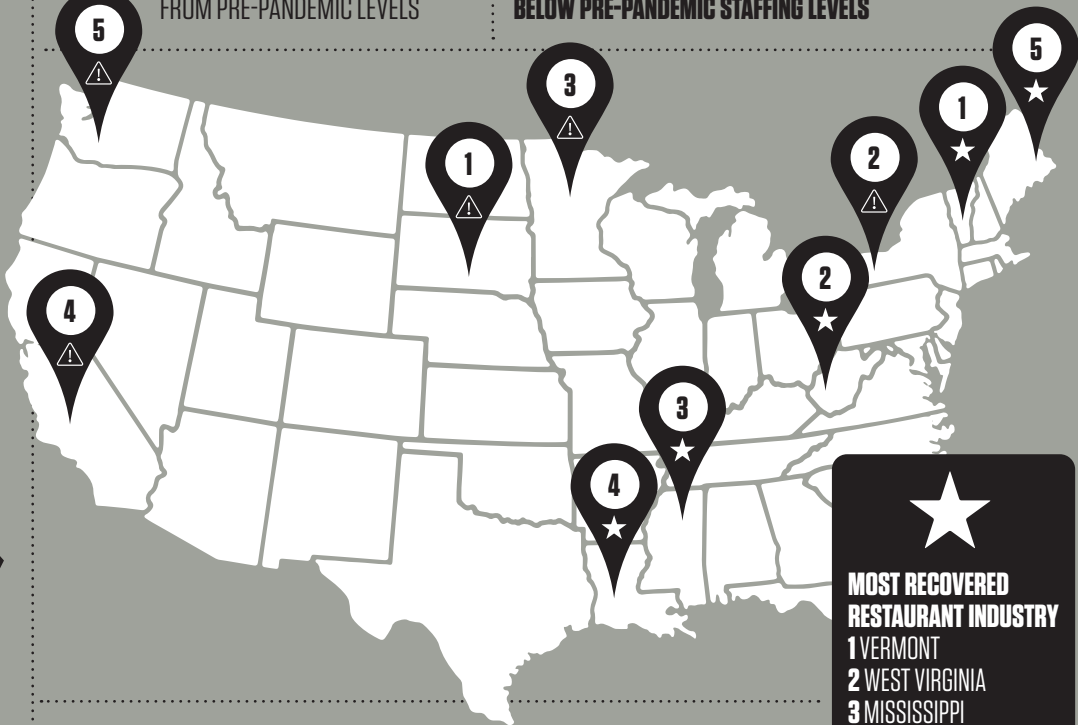
JOBS, LEAVING THE SEGMENT **750,000 (OR 14%) BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC STAFFING LEVELS**



IN TOTAL DURING THE LAST FIVE MONTHS, EATING AND DRINKING PLACES ADDED A NET

830,000

JOBS. THAT IS EQUIVALENT TO THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RESTAURANT JOBS ADDED IN THE 42 MONTHS PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC



EMPLOYMENT COUNTS

-58%

THE CAFETERIAS/GRILL BUFFETS/BUFFETS SEGMENT

-37%

FOODSERVICE CONTRACTOR SEGMENT

-32%

MOBILE FOODSERVICE SEGMENT

-25%

BARS AND TAVERNS SEGMENT; STILL SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS.

STAFFING LEVELS REMAIN BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC READINGS IN EVERY SEGMENT

VISITS TO DINING OUTLETS WERE

45%



HIGHER ACROSS THE NATION THIS SUMMER COMPARED TO FIGURES FROM SUMMER 2020

MOST RECOVERED RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

- 1 VERMONT
- 2 WEST VIRGINIA
- 3 MISSISSIPPI
- 4 LOUISIANA
- 5 MAINE

LEAST RECOVERED RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

- 1 SOUTH DAKOTA
- 2 NEW YORK
- 3 MINNESOTA
- 4 CALIFORNIA
- 5 WASHINGTON

NEWS & VIEWS:

Pandemic economic recovery in foodservice in the US

TOUCH LESS



Award winning
7 and 15 Series
now with sanitary
touchless dispensing

Visit follettice.com/touchless

FOLLETT[®]

REACH 100% OF ALL FCSI CONSULTANTS GLOBALLY

EVERY DAY

Keep up to date with the latest foodservice news and views at fcsi.org



EVERY WEEK

News and market intelligence in a weekly e-newsletter



EVERY QUARTER

A multi award-winning print magazine for FCSI members and the wider industry



FOODSERVICE CONSULTANT IN PRINT ● ONLINE ● IN YOUR INBOX

To advertise across these channels contact: sales@foodserviceconsultant.org



fcsi.org

sales@foodserviceconsultant.org

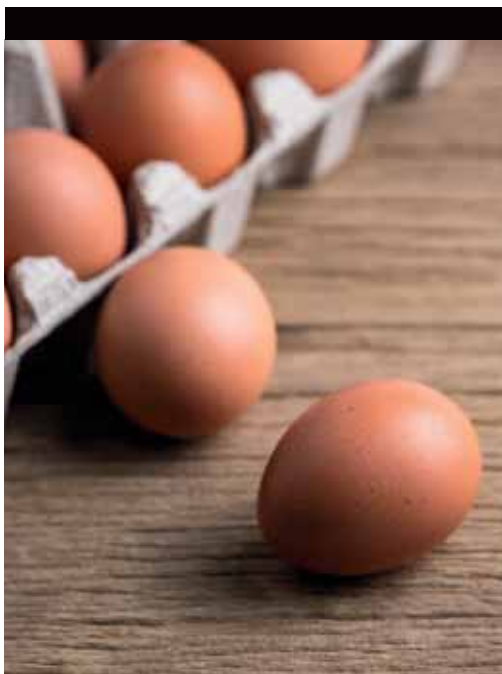
editorial@foodserviceconsultant.org



Japan food exports at record high

The agriculture ministry reported that Japan's exports of farm and food products surged 30.8% in January to June 2021 from a year before to ¥540.7bn. It exceeded the ¥500bn for the first time in the first half of the year. The increase can be attributed to the increased shipments of beef and alcoholic beverages such as sake. Exports of beef from Kyushu roughly doubled. Exports of alcoholic beverages rose by 83.1%, with increased interest in sake and Japanese whisky. Exports rose by 16.8% to Hong Kong, Japan's biggest export destination. While exports to the US shot up 43% and 34.4% to China. Exports of food products aimed at dining at home have also fared well, following the stay-at-home lifestyle adopted in many countries around the world due to the pandemic.

Japan's government is aiming to boost farm and food exports to ¥2trn in 2025 and ¥5trn in 2030.



Vegan eggs the solution to demand outstripping supply in Singapore

With panic buying rife during the first lockdown in Singapore, food security became a serious concern. The government responded with the Singapore Food Agency (SFA)'s target to produce 30% of the nation's food by 2030 or the "30 by 30" goal. Hoov Foods announced a plant-based subsidiary Hegg Foods. It aims to create sustainable food products, addressing the demand for healthier, environmentally friendly, plant-based alternatives.

Eggs are an affordable source of protein. According to Hegg Foods' CEO Ow Yau Png, Singaporeans consume over five million eggs daily, but local production meets less than 27% of the demand. Hegg is working to fill the gap, by tapping into alternative protein. Manufactured in Singapore, Hegg Food is made with legumes and plant-based ingredients. One serving of Hegg compares to the protein content of one regular sized chicken egg, with less fat. It is also free from cholesterol, soy gluten, and has no added preservatives. In its powdered form, it is easier to manufacture, with no refrigeration required. It also offers a longer shelf-life and is more convenient to transport. It is also cruelty-free, has a lower carbon footprint, and is free from hormones and antibiotics. Consumers can expect to buy plant-based eggs from 2022.

Bangkok's fine-dining chefs create frozen meals to help community

While Bangkok's restaurants are badly hit by lockdowns, its top chefs continue to help. In March 2020, Marisa Chearavanont founded Chef Cares Foundation, tapping 70 of Thailand's top chefs and corporate sponsors to donate nutritious meals for the Covid-19 frontliners. Dutch chef Henk Savelberg's Chef Cares Ready Meal is tender pork in a rich cream sauce with macaroni. For Thai chef Chumpol Jangprai of R-Haan, kaeng pa pla is a comforting fish jungle curry with riceberry and vegetables. There is also spaghetti with green curry sauce with chicken breast by chef Nutthapol PavaPaiboon of Wang Hinghoi, and chicken tikka masala with turmeric rice by chef Deepanker Khosla of sustainable fine-dining restaurant Haoma.

Chef Cares Ready Meals are sold in 7-Eleven stores and Makro with 100% of the profits going directly towards the foundation's charitable activities. They have delivered over 30,000 nutritious meals for doctors, nurses, and front liners in 17 hospitals in Bangkok and Phuket.



Online food market rises 45% in South Korea

The first half of 2021 recorded a jump of more than 45% in South Korea. Asia's fourth largest economy valued its online food transactions at 27.8 trn won (US\$24bn) from January to June this year, a rise of 45.4% from last year according to Statistics Korea and industry sources. It was the largest half year tally. The spike is likely due to the increase in contact-free consumption due to the pandemic. The figure includes online transactions of food, groceries, farm produce, meat and fishery goods, and food delivery services. South Korea's online food market is expected to top the 50 trn won mark this year.

K-Wave boosts Korean food exports

With the immense popularity of BTS, the South Korean boy band and the massive following for K-dramas on Netflix, K-Wave has overtaken the world. The rising popularity of all things Korean is credited for the 7.7% increase in South Korea's agri-food exports. With the popularity of Korean fried chicken, it's no surprise that processed chicken rose by 59.5% to US\$21m, an all-time high. Exports of Korean condiments such as gochujang rose by more than 25%. The Korean International Trade Association (KITA) credits the increase in exports to the rise in Korean pop culture. The

craving for Korean music and K-dramas has transformed into a craving for Korean food such as tteokbokki rice cakes, Korean fried chicken, spicy instant noodles and dumplings. The US is South Korea's largest market for chicken with shipments last year reaching US\$5.9m, accounting for 28.1% of the total chicken exports. Hong Kong ranked second largest export market at US\$4.96m, with Japan at third, taking 22.7% of its exports. Kimchi, the traditional Korean food also reached an all-time high last year. The fermented spicy dish is now recognized for its health benefits.



Australia's unicorn vintage

While 2021 has not been a good year for the restaurant industry in Australia, with numerous lockdowns, it is a different story for the wine industry. The past two years have been challenging with poor weather conditions, droughts, bushfires, flooding and frost. Wine Australia, the research and regulatory body published its National Vintage Report. It called 2021 a "unicorn" vintage with its near perfect growing and ripening conditions, across most states and regions. The result is the largest recorded crop, a whopping 2.03 million tonnes. Shiraz production was up by 41% at a record 538,402 tonnes. Spanish variety Mourvèdre took the largest increase in red production at 96% to 9,552 tonnes. On the white front, the prosecco rose by 53%.

With the stellar unicorn vintage and China's punishing tariffs, wine companies are expected to target new domestic and international markets. If wineries are left with significant volume of this year's vintage it may drive down prices for the 2022 vintage. The biggest winners this year are the Australian wine drinkers who will have more excellent quality wines coming out of this year's prolific vintage. They will also have access to wines that would have otherwise been exported to China.

GIORIK

INNOVATIVE COOKING EQUIPMENT SINCE 1963

The new era
of multifunction
ovens

MOVAIR

FROM SIDE TO SIDE



Touch control

An intuitive 7" graphic touch-screen with an innovative design.



One Touch

Users are able to save time by starting up their favourite recipe with just one move.



Easy Service

Enables different dishes to be cooked at the same time at various levels.



Mirrored version

it can be ordered in two different versions L model (left side hinges and right side panel) or R model (right side hinges and left side panel).





Washing System

Available on request a cooking chamber wash system with 4 cleaning programs to meet specific needs: soft, normal, hard and rise.



ONLY FOR FOOD LOVERS

  www.giorik.com



New European sustainable fishing law approved

A new regulation establishing the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) was adopted on 6 July by the European Parliament with an overwhelming majority.

The new simplified European Fund will provide €6.1bn for the period 2021-2027 to sustain and modernize the fisheries sector, with particular emphasis on supporting small-scale coastal fisheries and vessels up to 24 meters long as well as promoting aquaculture.

Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius said: "I welcome this vote by the European Parliament. The new fund enters into force at an important juncture.

The coming years will be crucial for our efforts to make EU fisheries still more sustainable, while securing the livelihoods of our fishermen and -women. The EMFAF will also enable us to support the green recovery of Europe's blue economy and underpin EU's leading role in promoting sustainable ocean governance worldwide. I now call on member states to finalize their national programs as a priority, so together we can continue delivering on our shared commitment to a healthier ocean."

Member states are expected to finalize their programs in the coming months, to ensure the funds can be put to work as soon as possible.



EU rolls out plant-based research fund

Horizon Europe, the European Union's funding program, has launched a EUR32m (US\$38.3m) fund for research into plant-based meat alternatives. "These investments will help accelerate the green and digital transitions and will contribute to sustainable recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic and to EU resilience against future crises," the European Commission (EC) said in a statement.

This came after the European division of Washington, DC-headquartered The Good Food Institute, a non-profit organization promoting non-animal protein alternatives, teamed up with 21 other companies to write an open letter to the EC imploring them to invest in sustainable protein research and development.

The Good Food Institute said, "This is a strong signal that the EU is betting on sustainable proteins playing an important role in meeting its climate and biodiversity targets. Governments should take this as encouragement to invest in the research and infrastructure we need to advance plant-based and cultivated meat."

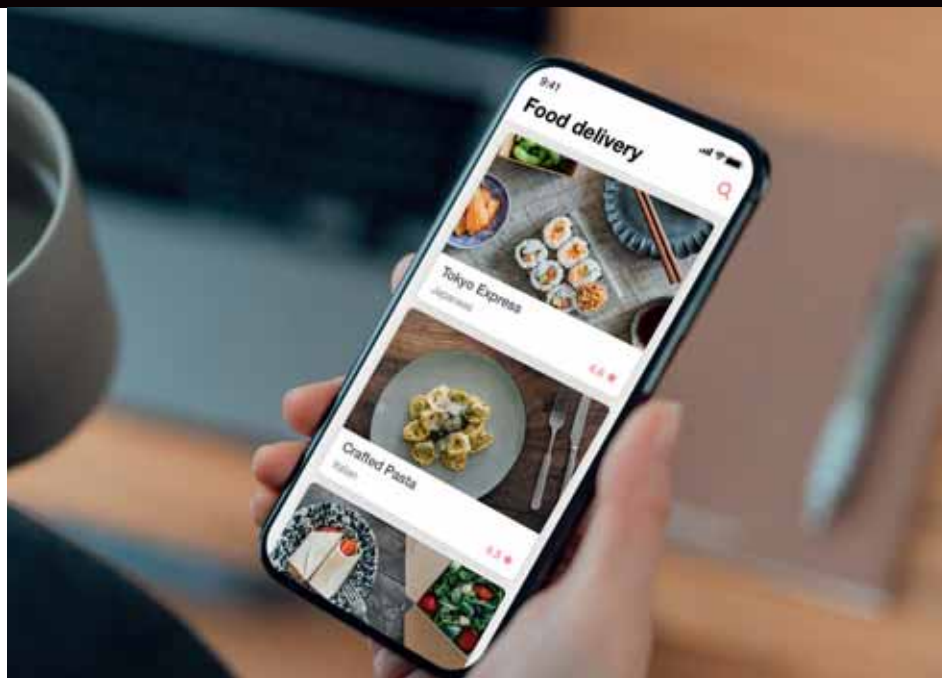
Meanwhile, more funding is pouring into plant-based meat companies like Paris-based Umiami. The start-up, which invented a new process that can reproduce the texture of large whole pieces of meat using exclusively vegetables, has completed a seed funding round of €2.3m.

Kenya-based food delivery service receives funding boost

Founded by French entrepreneur Robin Reecht in 2020, Kenyan food tech start-up Kune delivers freshly made, ready-to-eat meals at affordable prices. In June it closed a \$1m pre-seed round to help it scale after a successful pilot.

Aimed at busy Nairobians from all social groups, Kune's ready meals promise to be at least half, if not three times, cheaper than restaurant food. Following a successful pilot in early 2021, the on-demand delivery service was launched in August.

The company will have the capacity to produce 5,000 servings a day using cloud and dark kitchens. All meals will be made and packaged on site at its factory hub and delivered to online, retail and corporate customers.



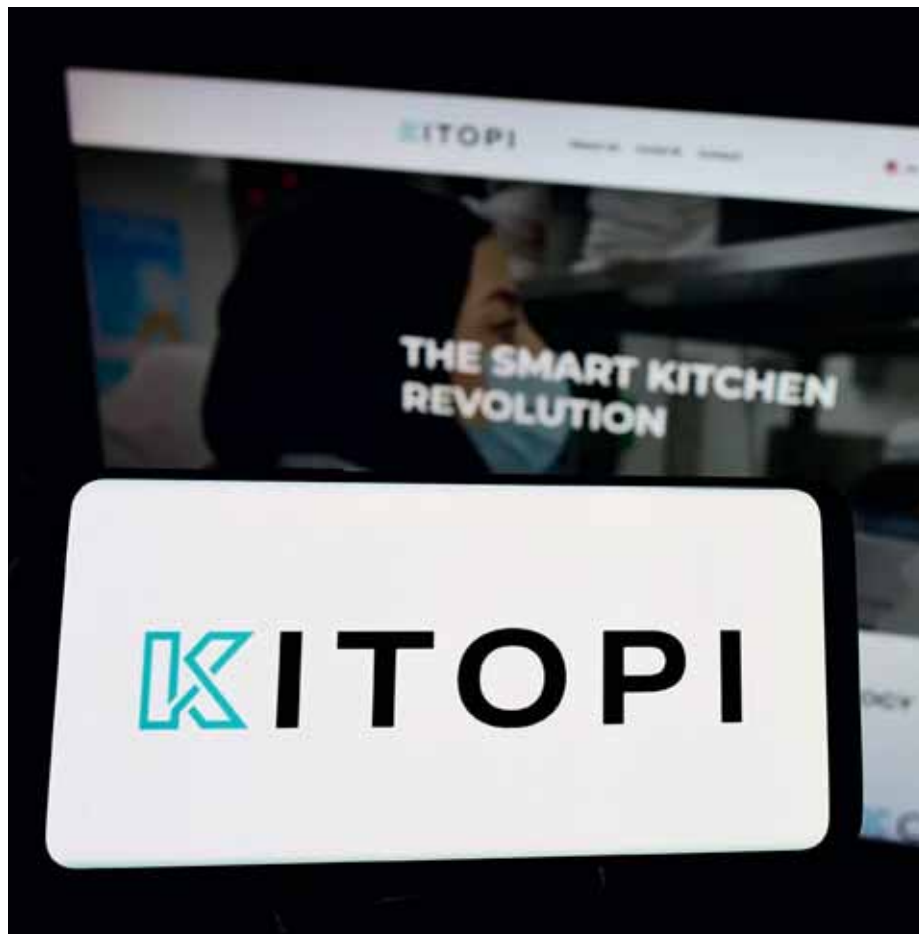
Dubai-based cloud kitchen start-up crosses the billion-dollar valuation mark

In one of the largest funding rounds for a Middle East technology company, Dubai-based cloud kitchen start-up Kitopi has raised \$415m from a group of investors including SoftBank Vision Fund 2, propelling it to unicorn status.

Despite the pandemic, Kitopi, which was founded in January 2018 and currently operates 60+ kitchens in the UAE, KSA, Kuwait and Bahrain, saw a growth of 300% in 2020.

Kitopi will channel the new funding into its continued Middle East expansion and support entry into new markets such as Southeast Asia, which has a fast-growing online food delivery market. The company will also continue to innovate and expand its tech stack.

A large part of its competitive advantage is its proprietary Smart Kitchen Operating System (SKOS), a suite of applications that optimizes the performance of its cloud kitchen operations in real time.





British food and drink exports to the EU plummet post Brexit

British food and drink exports to the EU fell by £2bn in the first three months of 2021, while dairy product sales plummeted by 90%, according to an analysis of HMRC data by the Food and Drink Foundation (FDF).

“The loss of £2bn in exports to the EU is a disaster for our industry and is a very clear indication of the magnitude of the losses that UK manufacturers face in the long term due to new trade barriers with the EU,” said Dominic Goudie, head of international trade for the Food and Drink Federation (FDF).

Figures from HMRC show that dairy products were down more than 90% and cheese exports were down by two-thirds compared to 2020. Whiskey exports fell by 32%, chocolate by 37% and lamb and mutton by 14%.

Meanwhile, total food and beverage

exports to Ireland fell by 70.8% year-on-year, exports to Spain by 63%, Italy by 61% and Germany by 55%.

Trade in the other direction was also affected. British imports of wine from the EU decreased by 20%, fruit by 15.7% and vegetables by 13.9%. Cheese, chicken and beef imports from Ireland and elsewhere also declined.

The drop in exports to the EU meant that sales to the rest of the world, which have stabilized, now account for more than 50% of all UK food and drink exports. The FDF warned that it expects the fall in EU-UK trade to “increase when full checks are implemented at UK borders in 2022”, pointing to the fact that UK checks on EU imports will be gradually phased in over the remainder of this year.



Ronaldo chooses agua over Coca-Cola, causing huge drop in Coke shares

In June, Portuguese football superstar Cristiano Ronaldo pushed aside the two bottles of Coke that had been placed in front of him during a European Championship press conference, raising the bottle of water he'd brought in instead and mouthing “agua”.

Coca-Cola was a major sponsor of the Euro 2020 tournament and, according to *The Guardian*, the company's share price fell from \$56.10 to \$55.22 “almost immediately” after Ronaldo's press conference. As a result, the market value of Coca-Cola dropped by a massive \$4bn, from \$242bn to \$238bn.

Some organizations, including Obesity Health Alliance in the UK, have praised the health-conscious star. “It's great to see a role model like Ronaldo reject Coca-Cola for water, setting a positive example for young fans and showing his disdain for a cynical marketing attempt to link him with a sugary drink,” the organization tweeted.

OPENINGS



Banyan Tree: Angsana Corfu Resort & Spa

Banyan Tree Group has opened its first European hotel, under the Angsana brand, in Corfu, Greece. An experience-driven luxury retreat, it's home to 10 F&B outlets, including four signature restaurants: Botrini's, a Greek fine-dining destination curated by Michelin-starred chef Ettore Botrini; Koh, an Asian fusion restaurant; contemporary all-day dining outlet Ruen Romsai; and Sofrito, a tavern serving Corfiot and Greek flavors and fresh seafood.

Fast-casual pizza brands expand across Europe

Papa John's International plans to open 250 restaurants in Germany over the next seven years in collaboration with its franchise partner PJ Western Group.

"This expansion into Germany follows a record year of sales and growth that has positioned Papa John's to further accelerate development in international markets," said Papa John's International chief operating officer Jack Swaysland.

At present, PJ Western operates 200 Papa John's restaurants and 10 dough production plants in Europe and Asia. It is looking for new franchisees to join the Papa John's family and fast-track the expansion.

Meanwhile, California-based pizza innovator Pieology has announced its first opening in the UK, another step towards spreading its brand of fast-casual pizza across Europe.

One in five casual-dining restaurants in London's city center closed during the pandemic and chains are capitalizing on the massive supply of available restaurant space.

The new owners, Kim Nagpal and Gavin Sutharmasellan of CAMYABCO LTD, said they were excited to be part of the Pieology expansion. "Pieology boasts a strong franchising team, a huge fan base and a creative product for sale," said Sutharmasellan.

They hope the UK opening will provide the company with a gateway for opening additional restaurants in other parts of the UK and Europe. It already operates in Mexico, Spain and China.



STAVROS HARAKIS

MULTI-UNIT OPERATIONS

Let's revisit existing ways of achieving kitchen output.



**Reducing
manual
tasks**



**Reducing
waste**



**Controlling
costs**

robot coupe[®]

**Your Experts in Time,
Labor & Cost Savings.**

#THEsolution

The widest range
of Food Preparation Machines

**Scan Code to
Request a Demo**



Robot Coupe USA, Inc.
1-800-824-1646
www.robot-coupe.com

THE BIG PICTURE



Project
**SUNGANG MIXC MARKET HALL,
SHENZHEN, CHINA**

Architect **10 Design**

Builder **China Construction Third Engineering
Bureau Co. Ltd**

Opens **2022**

Located in a former industrial zone, Sungang MixC Market Hall will offer a new destination for retail and gastronomy in Shenzhen, forming an important part of the old town's regeneration plans.

Its sculptural stainless-steel canopy will give a dynamic first impression to visitors, pulling them in with its sweeping form, while its highly reflective –metallic skin is designed to add vibrancy in both sunlight and the glow of the early evening.

Breaking away from the conventional shopping mall, its interior design draws inspiration from a traditional market forming around a central square.

Inside, MixC Food World will offer products made by local and international artisans, food-oriented boutiques, restaurants, specialty coffee shops and food halls, as well as more interactive offerings such as cooking classes and chef demonstrations.

The development will also benefit from a rich mix of arts, culture and entertainment spaces. In total, MixC Market Hall will accommodate 78,890 sq m (94,351 sq yd) of retail and F&B dining space, with two towers above providing 102,320 sq m (122,373 sq yd) of office space ■





The fish, the whole fish and nothing but the fish

A sustainable and responsible approach guides Australian chef Joshua Niland in his mission to effect a sea change in the wasteful ways the world treats fish. He tells Tina Nielsen about his culinary journey







Left: Niland aims to use 95% of a fish such as this Spanish mackerel. Below: A fish dish from Niland's Sydney restaurant, St Peter

Opposite page: Niland set up The Fish Butchery to supply his restaurant and provide an outlet to sell items he creates from the whole fish



He etched his name into the global gastronomy world with a radical nose to tail approach to cooking fish, exhorting consumers to eat eyeballs, sperm and livers. Since 2016 from his small Sydney restaurant Saint Peter and later through his 2019 book *The Whole Fish Cookbook*, Joshua Niland has steadily gone about starting a revolution in how the world perceives fish.

The headline grabbing parts of his philosophy were accompanied by a thoughtful curiosity as he experimented with ageing fish and making charcuterie with offcuts; the lingering attention he captured for the more shocking ideas has given the Australian chef a platform to share his message of sustainability and responsible behaviors around our sea and fish stock.

Accepting that most people are uncertain when it comes to fish – the smell and texture is unfamiliar and we are often not sure how to handle it, he is challenging conventions. He sees his purpose to be changing people's perception of the value of fish. "It is really to broadcast a message that the way we have behaved with fish in the west is unacceptable, it is so ignorant and neglectful and pretty disgusting," says

Niland. "We settle to just take the center out of the fish and then set everything else aside."

A nurturing start

Though he didn't grow up in a home of culinary excellence – "everybody had a meat and three veg upbringing and we were spoiled to have a hot cooked meal a day" – Niland's route into cooking was mapped out early.

When he was eight years old, he was diagnosed with a cancer that meant he had to have one of his kidneys removed and spent months undergoing chemotherapy. His mother nurturing him back to health taught him the importance of being cared for. "I think the experience of a meal being specifically cooked for you, at a time when you feel really lousy, can be very impactful; even something as insignificant as a toasted sandwich or chicken pie," he says. "I was eating the food made by somebody extremely worried and scared and I think that in itself – more than any book or magazine – was critical to my decision to become a chef."

He had his first taste of the kitchen aged 14 when he went to work in a local café, making coffees, washing dishes and

doing basic kitchen tasks. Just over a year later he left school after year 10, to pursue his dream of a cooking career with his parents' blessing. "They knew it was what I wanted and that I had my head screwed on and I desperately wanted to be in a professional kitchen," he explains.

After leaving school he went to work at The Brewery Restaurant in Newcastle, half an hour from his home in Maitland, a small city equidistant from the beach and the Hunter Valley wine country. It was to provide him a with a perfect introduction to his chosen career path – the real basic 101 of a kitchen, as he describes it.

"The people I worked for invested so much energy and time in training and I think that is quite a novel thing today," he says. "To be led very directly, to be shown how to make mayonnaise or fresh pasta from scratch or how to wash your hands after each task. It was all drummed into me really gently."

He knows he was lucky to land his first job in a nurturing kitchen and the experience has helped to shape Niland as a manager overseeing the training of young chefs in his own kitchen. "My overarching sentiment to young chefs now is to make sure you go and work somewhere where they are as desperate

to teach you as you are to learn,” he says.

Aged 17, the big city beckoned as he moved to Sydney keen to learn in the big kitchens. “It was a rude shock and I knew it would be hard, but I also knew that if I was ever going to aspire to what was in my head, I needed to push myself,” he says. The job was in the 300-seat Glass Brasserie. “I was so glad I went there because it taught me to be very organized. When you do 250 for lunch and 300 for dinner and then 200 again for lunch the next day you get pretty good.”

It was a professional and personal journey of discovery. “At work I moved around the kitchen; from pastry to larder to meat and fish and as a second-year apprentice, aged 17, I thought that was a pretty good achievement. Outside work I was just getting my bearings looking after myself, doing my own washing and getting around,” he says.

Next, came the chance to join the kitchen in Est, a fine dining high achieving restaurant and he spent 18 months working in the kitchen. “By the time I was 19 years old I found myself

expediting food and leading service with a brigade that was twice my age. I was flattered and honored to be in that position but I felt I got there too quickly,” he reflects.

What he did pick up from the experience was a curiosity about fish. “I noticed how meticulous and rigorous the preparation and the service was; I enjoyed the idea of needing to have this really sharp acumen to be able to do that station,” he says. “So I told my chef at the time that I wanted to be more immersed in fish, just because I found it so difficult. He said: ‘You should go and work for Stephen Hodges.’”

Hodges was a maverick chef with a restaurant called Fish Face in Sydney. “He was your typical crazy chef, really aggressive,” recalls Niland. “He would drink a lot and always had a cigarette in his mouth.”

Hodges would give him a unique learning experience that was unlike anything he had experienced before. “If you poured nothing into your work Stephen would pour nothing into you,

but because I cared so much about what I did he gave me his career’s worth of knowledge in the space of 18 months. It was amazing that somebody would trust somebody with so much information; he was so generous with his teaching.”

Where Est aimed for consistency over creativity, Fish Face encouraged experimentation and failure. In addition to a set menu of Hodges’s greatest dishes there was a daily changing chalk board menu featuring whatever came in from the fishermen on the day.

Chefs were encouraged to be creative and put their own ideas on the board. “There were nights where people said, ‘this is rubbish’ but other nights they loved what we cooked,” says Niland. “There aren’t enough venues where you are allowed to fail and you learn so much about yourself; you get critical feedback from the chef and the guest. There was no editing screen before you put it on the board because Stephen wanted it to be an environment where you can fail.”

One specific conversation with Hodges shaped Niland more than either of them could have imagined at the time. “One night Steve said to me, ‘you need to start thinking of tuna like it’s a cut of beef and mahi mahi like a cut of lamb’,” he recalls. “He said: ‘With all the cookbooks you have read, I am sure you could come up with a beef recipe for me. Stop thinking fish is fish and start thinking about it more like that.’”



This page: thinking of fish like a cut of meat revolutionized Josh Niland's perception. Opposite page: Interior of Niland's Sydney restaurant St Peter

Real meaningful change

It was a casual conversation, buried for years after, but it always stuck with Niland and planted a seed that started to take shape years later in his career when Niland made it the essence of his book and started to pioneer the concept of fish butchery.

"Why can't we see fish as meat, why can't we take reference and inspiration from the meat world to affect change to the way we handle fish?" he asks. He is looking for meaningful systemic change. "Right now, when we think of fishmongering, we think of the dealing and trading in a commodity and if we continue to think of it like that then we'll continue to see the damage that has been done for a very long time."

He wants fishmongers to act more like butchers, demystifying what they are selling for consumers. "Customers who go to a fishmonger should ask the monger 'what is good today', they are the ones who have been up early to find the very best fish to put in the shop," he says. "Fishmongers need to accept they need to be butchers; they need to have that conversation."

The only way to affect real meaningful change, he says is to change our perception of fish – stop the fish getting caught as a commodity and start seeing it as a luxury item that fetches high prices.

"Ultimately we need to start paying for something that won't be there forever," he says. "

It is true to say that there is a growing awareness of the plight of the ocean and the need to be more sustainable. However, documentaries such as this year's Netflix release *Seaspiracy* have got it wrong, he says. "The solution is not to stop eating fish, the solution is to be more responsible for what you purchase and as a chef once something comes out of the ground or the water and when an animal gets killed it is your responsibility to use it all."

Besides, as he points out, over a billion people rely on fish as their main



source of protein and small fishing towns and communities around the world deal with their fish responsibly – they catch their own fish and consume every single part of it. "Whereas in Australia, the UK and the US we can decide what goes on our dinner table and we decide that we only want 40% of the fish, but by doing that you are putting so much pressure on stock," he says. "This is not saying everybody needs to eat eyeballs and sperm and livers, it is just about not having this privileged opinion that we only want to eat the center of the fish."

His follow-up book *Take One Fish*, published this summer, is an attempt to offer tangible solutions to the secondaries of fish "that aren't necessarily the icky bits or the offal of fish".

The idea is simple – take one fish because we don't need to take two. "If we can generate 90% from one fish, why do we need to take two times 45%?" he asks. "One single fish offers so much opportunity; if we only consider a one-dimensional way then we'll only achieve a one-dimensional outcome."

Ideas in the book include turning "the gnarly bits of" tuna into mince and using it in lasagne or mapu tofu or kofta. "There

is such a spectrum of work that can be achieved with the less celebrated parts of the fish," he says.

Creating an eco system

After he'd completed the first 18-month stint at Fish Face, he got married and went travelling on a working honeymoon with his wife, fellow chef Julie. Along the way he worked in the Fat Duck in the UK and visited France and Spain.

The natural next step for him was to open his own restaurant. "I felt I had gained the practical acumen on how to be a good chef and I had picked up some business knowledge, but until you throw your own money on the table it doesn't really mean much," he says. "We just thought, 'let's give it a crack'." Niland opened Saint Peter, a 34-seat fish restaurant with Julie in September 2016.

They found instant success, picked up awards along the way and when, 18 months later, they still found themselves with lines out the door it was time to expand. "You may then decide to open a second restaurant, but I thought it would be better to open a retail business that could give Saint Peter a greater storage facility and greater development and



production space,” he says. “Saint Peter is a tiny restaurant it needed an extra cool room and more hands to accelerate production time and facility to realize greater buying power. If you can purchase more, you bring your cost down and you can benefit from the whole fish.”

They opened Fish Butchery a few doors down from Saint Peter in 2018, creating a small eco system that allows Niland to take what he wants to cook in the restaurant and use the leftovers to prepare retail products for the local community to purchase. “It means that I can now generate 90-95% usable potential from one single fish. Not only is it economically sensible for a small business to operate like that but ethically it is embedded in the business and how we work now.”

He says the experience of writing menus at Saint Peter made him think more deeply about what he put on the menu. “I started to discover how much I could achieve with one single fish and that was when we dropped all the shellfish and we have a menu that is built around just a few fish. We don’t need to put crab or caviar on the menu. People might want that, but they can go

somewhere else,” he says. “There are so many restaurants around the world right now that are flipping lids of caviar when you could be using the roe from the fish and make your own. If we go to great lengths to find the very best product, why would I cut a square out of the middle of the fillet and then flick the rest of it because it isn’t aesthetically pleasing?”

The new book coincides with the opening of another restaurant Charcoal Fish, inspired by the rotisserie chicken shops, so ubiquitous in Australian towns and cities. The simple menu will offer grilled fish and a selection of salads and vegetables. “There are no bones, no offal and no icky bits, it is straight up protein grilled over fire,” he says. “All the creativity and techniques we apply in Saint Peter have been poured into a takeaway where the offering is available to everybody rather than the privileged few that get a seat at the counter”

Though, at time of writing, with Sydney locked down in another wave of Covid, Charcoal Fish has been delayed, Niland clearly has big plans for the model. “The idea is to create a blueprint for a new fish shop in 2021, to start the process here in Australia and then look further

CHANGED BY THE PANDEMIC

Niland and Saint Peter have been profoundly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which gave Niland an opportunity to reconsider the way he runs his team and the journey has been a revelation. “I am trying to seek out what gives me the most amount of joy in my own week but also what gives my team joy,” he says.

He asked them exactly why they cook and how they could enjoy it more. “I had two out of 15 burst into tears because nobody had ever asked them what makes them deeply happy and satisfied. The two boys I thought were happy and dominating their work were the two who cried. They were going to bed at night filling pages of notebooks with ideas, to scratch the itch that I wasn’t providing for them.”

The conversations meant that Niland could move them to a position where they would be challenged and “for the last six months those two are the happiest kids in the room,” he says.

“Everybody should be spoken to like that and it is the approach I have had since [the first] lockdown because I felt I wasn’t giving a strong enough education to my team,” Niland says. “When you open your own business, and everybody is watching, you put the blinkers on and get your head down, but then you look up and realize that you haven’t given enough to your team.”

beyond Australia’s shores,” he says.

In Niland’s approach there are clear parallels with Fergus Henderson, the British chef who revolutionized dining when he opened St John and put the less desired parts of the animal on the menu to show diners the possibilities beyond the premium cuts of meat. His impact has been profound, 25 years after launch. There’s a sense that Niland is on a similar trajectory – he is seeking major and radical systemic changes and he is only just getting started.

“Are we celebrating quantity over quality?” he asks. “As it stands that is what we are doing and maybe the handbrake does need to be pulled right now and we start paying a lot more for fish if we want to enjoy the luxury and privilege of it.” ■



WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

Stephen Arnold FCSI retains his drive in the pursuit of excellence, after nearly 50 years in foodservice consultancy. “This business is my life,” he tells Michael Jones

Today he is considered one of the most world-renowned foodservice consultants and designers, but had you asked a young Stephen Arnold FCSI what he wanted to be when he grew up you would have received a very different answer.

“In my teens, I wanted to become a professional racing cyclist. But I had to accept I was never going to be good enough,” he laughs. The Tour de France’s loss was, however, the foodservice sector’s gain. Since joining David Humble Associates in 1975 and eventually forging Humble Arnold Associates from that company with his long-time business partner, the late Andrew Humble FCSI, Arnold has built up an enviable reputation over the successive decades.

Humble’s untimely death in 2018 was a huge blow, but Arnold continues to set standards for the sector from his Hertfordshire, UK-based headquarters and his love for the foodservice and hospitality sector is undimmed. Humble Arnold Associates celebrated its 50-

year anniversary in 2016 and continues to thrive, winning projects around the world across a range of sectors.

Family values

An intellectual curiosity for design and imaging how spaces can be utilized creatively, was perhaps, inherited. His father was a partner in an architectural practice and Arnold describes him as “a huge influence” on his career options when dreams of cycling professionally became unfulfilled. “I would study his space planning sketches and read his site meeting notes. Subconsciously, I wanted to emulate his achievements,” he says.

While Arnold junior grew up enjoying “good family food” he had, at that stage however, no specific interest in the hospitality industry. Art and technical drawing were his preferred subjects at school though, and these led him to pursue a career as a design technician.

At that time, Arnold’s careers officer, who was a member of the cycling club he belonged to, told him about a vacancy at David Humble Associates, the respected

foodservice design consultancy practice formed in Radlett, Hertfordshire, in 1966 – based relatively close to Arnold’s home of Leverstock Green. “I was interviewed by David and Barbara Humble and offered a draughtsman position in June 1975. I joined the company on an initial salary of £18 per week,” he says.

The owner’s son, Andrew Humble, joined the family business one year after Arnold, having been employed by Laing Construction in London, where he gained experience in site construction processes. “Andrew and I developed a strong working relationship,” says Arnold. “His family bought me into the business and we were always seen as equal.”

As David Humble wound down his commitments, the two younger men eventually became shareholders in the early 1980s and took center stage in

“Our ambition was to build on a strong reputation. We were incredibly ambitious, but in a calm way”

further developing the business.

“Our ambition was to build on the firm’s strong reputation as kitchen and foodservice designers, particularly within the hotel, corporate dining and airport catering sectors,” says Arnold. “I did much of the hotel project work, while Andrew was more focused on the business and industry (B&I) projects. We were incredibly ambitious, but in a calm way.”

Reputation building

As project work racked up and with increased exposure to high-profile hotel group clients such as ITT Sheraton >

and InterContinental Hotels, Arnold developed a passion for travel in the early 1980s, particularly within the Europe, Africa and Middle East region, which continues to this day.

“There are many highlights, when you consider my 46 years in the business,” reflects Arnold. “I owe everything to sheer hard work and a willingness to travel extensively, but certainly, my travels to Egypt in the 1980s were inspirational.” He also cites visits to Tehran and Beirut as being hugely influential on his love for travel.

He also lists his pioneering work on the Pyramid Hotel in Dubai – now known as the Hotel Raffles Dubai – and other properties in 1990, which were Arnold’s first assignments in the UAE. Another career highlight was designing kitchen, foodservice and laundry facilities in a series of Starwood Hotels properties through the 1990s in Poland and Eastern Europe. Arnold’s 1990s project work on the Grand Hotel Stockholm main kitchen masterplan and detailed design was, he says, “one of the very best client/consultant collaborations” in his career, highlighting the extraordinary “attention to detail respected by all parties.”

Elsewhere, his work on the restaurant Zuma London – “superb interiors and excellent client direction,” says Arnold – for chef Rainer Becker, and his designs for approximately 25 food and beverage outlets at Atlantis The Palm, Dubai, managed over a two-year period before a \$1.5 billion construction, were other milestones in his career.

And yet, all that aside, Arnold’s proudest professional achievement is simply in “leaving education without a degree and becoming the head of a highly respected kitchen, foodservice, laundry and waste management design consultancy.” This has enabled him to develop a dedicated team of consultants and technicians that have “embraced technology and become highly proficient contributors to our project delivery,” he says. “Clients, end-users and design

teams we work with are the biggest influence on us and how we do business.”

Being able to listen to, and understand clients, is the most important business lesson Arnold has learned along the way, he says. “I endeavor at all times to get into the mindset of our clients.”

In the face of tragedy

Success, while hard-won, was well earned, but Andrew Humble’s death after a two-year battle with cancer

“I remain totally committed and will do all that I can to ensure the company continues to develop and prosper”

was extremely difficult for Arnold and his team. The company has, however, continued to honor Humble by building a lasting legacy in his name. “When you lead a business together for so long, there is a total understanding of each other’s strengths and weaknesses. We had huge respect for each other. I miss the trust we had in each other’s capabilities – and the pride we shared in the way in which a number of our colleagues joined us from senior school and have become highly competent and trusted foodservice design consultants, leading assignments,” says Arnold.

“When Andrew passed away, we knew we had the strongest and most skilled team in the history of the business. The values that he and I instilled into the business are respected. My co-director Ed Bircham FCSI and other senior team members share the company ethos and will ensure that the business continue to develop when I am ready to slow down.”

Now 64, slowing down, is not on

the cards for Arnold. “This business is my life. I remain totally committed and ambitious and will do all that I can to ensure the company continues to develop and prosper. Ed Bircham FCSI and I are incredibly proud of our teams based in the UK and Johannesburg,” he says. His immediate goals are, he says, “to ensure that our team is adequately resourced to deliver mega-projects,” including The Red Sea Development Company resort in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The simple pleasures

The cut and thrust of project work is something that still fires Arnold – particularly when those initial sketches begin to take shape. “I very much enjoy the brief definition period and like being on site to review progress,” he says. “My passion is developing hand sketches that define operational flow and functionality. It really works to bring that freshness and personality. BIM/Revit goes on to enable the design – it’s fundamental, it dictates your specifications and elevates the equipment – but there’s nothing better than the feel of a sketch. If I have a sketch pad and pen, working with a chef and the design teams, I am at my happiest.”

Away from the office, Arnold finds that having “a close family and good friends” is a vital part of life outside of the business. “I enjoy collecting second-hand vinyl, focused on rock, jazz and classical music.”

Having served as the chair of a car club, Arnold also has “a small collection of classic cars” including an Aston Martin DB MK III and a Gilbern GT that has been in his family since 1966. “Older cars need care and maintenance and I enjoy tackling maintenance work that is not highly technical. My idea of motoring heaven is walking through the paddock areas at the Goodwood Revival, admiring the best sports racing cars in the world,” he says.

Whether on two wheels, or four – or simply driving a successful business – Arnold continues to blaze a trail. ■



**STEPHEN ARNOLD:
WHAT FCSI MEANS TO ME**

"Andrew and I became members of the Society of Catering and Hotel Management Consultants (SCHMC), a UK-based organization, in 1982. We both served on the committee and, later, I became chairman. During the early 1990s, discussions took place with the FCSI and it was agreed that the SCHMC would merge with FCSI. I subsequently joined the FCSI UK committee, later becoming chairman, which included a short period on the European board.

To this day, Humble Arnold has supported FCSI and will continue to do so. In my opinion, we must do more to encourage the younger generation of design and management consultants to join FCSI and ensure they benefit from continuing professional growth. In my company alone, we have several more candidates that would benefit from FCSI membership.

I have attended FCSI conferences within Europe and the United States. All have been inspiring, educational and great fun."



Italian ingenuity informs design

Having championed innovation in cooking equipment since the 1960s, Italian company Giorik continues to blend tradition with a keen understanding of its clients' changing needs. CEO **Paolo Candiago** and managing director **Alessandro Tonelli** tell Jim Banks about the driving forces behind the company's success

Founded in the early 1960s by Giorgio Candiago, Italian oven manufacturer Giorik began as the logical next step for a family business that had already been making wood-burning cookers for almost 20 years. Since then, the company has grown rapidly to first become Europe's leading manufacturer of professional fryers and then to carve out a presence in the market for salamander ovens for grilling snacks, as well as convection and combi ovens.

At every step in its journey, innovation has been the key to its success.

"In our industry, there are just a few innovative factors," says Giorik CEO Paolo Candiago. "Most companies adopt new technologies only once they have already proven their value. Only a handful of companies really engage in innovation, and Giorik is at the forefront of that small group," he says.

"For instance, in 1963, we were the



Giorik sells its ovens according to the type of cooking the client wants to do

first Italian manufacturer to produce a deep fat fryer and, at the time, trust me, it was a real novelty,” he adds. “We were also the first Italian company to produce high-speed salamanders and, again, the first one to produce pasta cookers. We can proudly say we have brought into the market brand-new products and brand-new solutions.”

Over the years, the company has embraced new technologies, but it has also managed to stay true to the core values that it has had since it was formed nearly 50 years ago.

“When we have to produce something new, from something as large as a new product line to something as small as an oven handle, we always pose this question – will this change make the user’s life easier?,” says Candiago. “Imagine you are in a professional kitchen, you have orders piling up, you have waiters complaining, and you have to multitask. Your stress levels are – reasonably – off the charts. The last thing you need, is a complex oven, or a complex fryer, or a complex salamander.”

“You want your equipment to do exactly what you expect it to do,” he adds. “At the same time, you don’t want to have two machines when one could do both tasks just fine. You have so much complexity on your plate already, and we aim at taking as much of that as possible away.”

Simple, stylish and smart

The aim of Giorik is to allow its customers to focus on what they do best – creating excellent food – rather than dealing with complicated equipment. Ensuring the best possible user-experience has been at the core of its design journey since the start.

“We devote as much attention as possible to that, and every other value is functional to that,” explains Candiago. “There is no point in innovation if it does not add value.”

Since 2010, Candiago and managing director Alessandro Tonelli have been the sole owners of the company, and their tenure has been marked by a renewed enthusiasm for embracing new technology and pursuing creative design ideas.

The Unika 700 and the Unika 900, along with a range of hobs designed for optimal hygiene and able to be personalized and made to measure, and a range of ovens for small to medium-scale catering establishments – the Eco’ range for general use and the Honoré range for

“Regardless of how smart executives may be, we lack that creativity, that professional experience, and that vision that a chef has”

patisserie – followed by the Steambox line were key steps on a journey that continues to this day.

The Symbiotic System in Giorik’s combi ovens allows users to generate steam in two different ways by combining the quality of boiler-generated steam with the speed and economy of steam generated in instant mode. The innovative Meteo System allows users to constantly monitor the climatic status inside the cooking cavity and ensure the optimum conditions for each cooking phase. Another key patent is the Steamtuner, through which users can set both the quantity and the quality of the steam in the cooking cavity by simply adjusting the degree of the steam hydration from dry steam to wet steam.

“I would say the only way to make continuous innovation possible is by gathering daily feedback from our products’ users,” says Tonelli. “Our management has delegated that to Giorik’s chefs, who constantly interact with their peers in professional kitchens to understand their necessities. They then work alongside the R&D department to ensure that our customers’ needs are satisfied. Regardless of how smart executives may be, we lack that creativity, that professional experience, and that vision that a chef has.”

Giorik’s design process is not led by executives trying to steer the market, >



“Many suppliers tend to offer ovens only on the basis of their size, but very few focus on the most pressing customer’s needs – what type of menu will the customer prepare?”

but by chefs on the front line. That is why its current oven portfolio are suited to specific market segments. MoveAir is an entry-level option, Kore is more appropriate for mid-sized customers, and Evolution is designed to meet the more intense needs of the hospitality sector.

“Many suppliers tend to offer ovens only on the basis of their size, but very few focus on the most pressing customer’s needs – what type of menu will the customer prepare?” remarks Candiago. “How often and how long will the customer use the oven? What’s the oven’s expected performance? What about water and energy consumption? Many of our competitors neglect these questions and they try to offer a one-size-fits-all solution, which leads to considerable waste.”

“At Giorik, we came to the conclusion that a one-size-fits-all solution does not exist,” he adds. “Our wide range of products, which are classified on the basis of the needs of each market segment, reflects this philosophy and this diversity allows us to deliver the best customer experience possible.”

For Tonelli, the development of the smartphone from a niche tool to a prerequisite for life in the modern world is a lesson in responding to customers’ needs and constantly delivering an improved user experience. It is a story he wants Giorik to emulate.

“I have always been fascinated by it as a tool,” he remarks. “It is an extremely complex and powerful machine, yet it is so simple and intuitive that nobody has ever needed to read the user manual. When you have a problem, you can solve it online in minutes and, if you can’t, you can call or chat with customer support at any time. That’s the type of user experience that we wish to create.”

With the integration of its Touch Control feature 10 years ago, the company went a long way towards achieving that goal. Since then, Giorik has continued to refine the user interface and deliver the advantages of wireless connectivity through Cloud Connection, which enables the remote programming and monitoring of equipment for recipe optimization and predictive maintenance.

“That was a game-changing moment, because we moved closer to providing what our customers want: a powerful machine, capable of carrying out very diverse tasks, that can be controlled very easily,” Tonelli explains. “We have worked really hard to deliver software with a user-friendly user interface [UI] that is very intuitive, and that can assist and guide the user by simplifying complex cooking procedures.”

Our ovens will probably never be as simple to use as an iPhone, but that is our target, and I would say we are



“Our location means we can source an incredible amount of specific know-how about integrating technological solutions we do not excel at”

doing as much as possible to deliver an optimal user experience for our customers,” he adds.

Staying local, thinking global

Giorik has, over the years, remained loyal to its Italian roots, and it maintains its manufacturing base between Venice and Cortina d’Ampezzo, at the very center of an important industrial region.

“That is very important, but not out of some backward sense of attachment to our territory – or at least, not fully because of that,” says Candiago. “One of the key advantages is that we have ready access to an entire ecosystem of companies we can build synergies with. Our location means we can source an incredible amount of specific know-how about integrating technological solutions we do not excel at.”

Whether it is advanced software or hardware, partners are close by and much of the initial and day-to-day development of these technologies can be outsourced locally.

Nevertheless, Giorik has been selling its products across the world for decades, and it is increasingly establishing a base in key markets to further expand its reach. It has, for example, created Giorik US Corp in South Carolina to establish its brand in North America and to maintain a strict control over quality.

“We try to adapt our approach to the peculiarities of each market that we target,” says Tonelli. “We approach smaller markets by partnering with local dealers, but we try to provide them with as much information and training as possible, because they represent the Giorik brand abroad and

we want them to convey the high-quality of our products.”

Giorik’s close relationships with partners and end-users is key to its process of innovation and its pursuit of the highest standards of quality. Equally important, however, is its approach to relationships with foodservice consultants.

“We pride ourselves on our ability to provide the most appropriate solution to each customer,” says Tonelli. “Giorik has a very strong synergy with consultants, because our ovens are produced following the only philosophy that can maximize their return in terms of reputation, and reputation is the greatest asset consultants have.”

Having weathered one of the most challenging years in the history of foodservice, Giorik is now seeing soaring sales as the world steadily emerges from the pandemic. That is due to more than pent-up demand from customers. It is due to the company’s relentless pursuit of innovation and its desire to deeply understand the challenges its clients have been facing.

Whether for their style, their smart features, their high-quality design or the simplicity of use, Giorik ovens are the epitome of informed design. ■



The factory location (top left) allows synergies to be built and access to wider knowledge from companies in the area



PUTTING PEOPLE IN THE MIX

After the challenge of dealing with a global pandemic, the foodservice sector is facing up to different issues. Tina Nielsen explores the need to bring a human element into the sustainability conversation

The push for sustainability in foodservice has gathered momentum in the last decade. Chefs and operators have worked hard to reduce food waste, single use plastics have become unacceptable and there is an ongoing focus on reducing emissions. The recent report into the climate crisis, published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, has vindicated those working for change – and much more is required from a sector that has a considerable carbon footprint.

But can a restaurant call itself truly sustainable if it doesn't have the same laser focus on its people? There's a growing sentiment among restaurateurs that sustainability in 2021 should extend far beyond climate credentials.

"I think people are still uninformed about sustainability. You sometimes hear them talking about it as reducing plastic use and food waste, which is great, but it's much more than that," says Davide Caranchini,



Above: Diego Rossi from Trippia, a modern trattoria in Milan



DAVIDE CARANCHINI

Chef/owner, Materia, Lake Como, Italy

“In Trippia the team works eight hours a day... they have a life and this way they work better. If we spend 18 hours in the kitchen, we can't think about what we are doing”

chef owner of Materia restaurant by Lake Como, Italy. “To me it means not only thinking ‘green’ and acting in an ethical way with food. Almost everybody now knows about no waste, and I think it's normal to act in that way. Now, when we talk about sustainability we need to talk about economic sustainability and how to preserve a circular gastronomy.”

It is a philosophy shared by fellow Italian chef Diego Rossi who owns the modern trattoria Trippia in Milan. “When we talk about sustainability we must talk about human sustainability,” he says. “In Trippia the team works eight hours a day; I understand that they have a life and this way they work better. If we spend 18 hours in the kitchen, we can't think about what we are doing.”



Making people happy

Rossi's eight-hour day would have been unthinkable just 10 years ago, but recent events have brought the issue of people to the top of the agenda.

The Covid-19 pandemic has upended the foodservice sector the world over; restaurant closures in the thousands mean many lost their jobs – in the US alone it is estimated 2.5 million jobs were lost during the pandemic. Many employees used the time away from work to take stock and decided a career in hospitality was not what they wanted after all. Now the sector needs to respond.

“The way we deal with people in hospitality is going through big changes after the pandemic – people have had time

“I’ve always wanted to create a workplace that was disciplined but friendly... making people happy about working here”

to understand that it’s not only about working 18 hours a day for less than the minimum wage, being mistreated,” says Caranchini. “In my own restaurant, I’ve always wanted to create a workplace that was disciplined but friendly and making people happy about working here.”

Recognizing the need to improve his team’s work/life balance, he has added an extra day off and

increased the number of people employed in order to decrease the amount of work for every person.

Of course, the staffing challenge is not a result of the pandemic; it existed long before Covid-19 changed



Left: A branch of Shake Shack. Below: The Gramercy Tavern, New York. Both places were originally set up by restaurateur Danny Meyer, who predicts it will take many years to get staff back.

the world. A career in hospitality was not desirable – long hours, low pay and little attention paid to the wellbeing of team members meant that few would last long even if they wanted to.

Highly publicized cases of sexual harassment and discrimination in the sector that have come to light in recent years may not have made it more appealing, but it has at least forced change.

The staffing crisis is not unique to any one country or region; from France to Australia, foodservice and hospitality operators are struggling to recruit.

Danny Meyer, the New York City restaurateur behind dining landmarks including The Gramercy Tavern and the popular fast food chain Shake Shack, has predicted it will take many years to get staff back. He has described the ruthless



cuts he made to counter revenue loss as the pandemic took hold – going from 2,300 staff members to 150 in March 2020 – as the worst time of his professional life.

Although he has started to rebuild, he says finding talent now represents the biggest challenge in hospitality.

In the UK, the problems have been compounded by Brexit, which meant an estimated 92,000 hospitality workers left the country to go back to their home country, according to data collated by *The Caterer*.

Kate Nicholls, the chief executive of trade association UK Hospitality, says that across the hospitality industry, there are currently about 188,000 open positions.

It is affecting all levels of the industry, from fast casual chains to fine dining establishments – Le Gavroche, a renowned London restaurant and the holder of two Michelin stars, announced earlier this year that it would have to cease lunch service due to staff shortage.



DANNY MEYER
Restaurateur, New York, US





People who serve, products that solve.®



Induction

Any way you want it

Take induction cooking to the next level with best-in-class Induction Ranges and Warmers from Hatco®. Built for the durability and performance demands of commercial foodservice kitchens, Hatco induction delivers more power and speed than any other induction technology on the market. And with versatile good/better/best options, you're assured of a high-performing equipment solution at a price that works for you.

Discover the innovation that fuels our products and drives your success.



Model IRNG-PC1-36



Model IRNG-BXC1-18



Model IRNG-PC2F-36

Ranges · Warmers · Countertops · Built-ins

hatcocorp.com | 800.711.8978

© 2021 Hatco Corporation. All rights reserved.

THE QUALITY YOU KNOW AND TRUST. THE PERFORMANCE YOUR CLIENT NEEDS.

Introducing the **XLR8™** UPPER HEATED PLATEN POWERED BY ACCUHEAT TECHNOLOGY

NOW
AVAILABLE
IN
3-PAN!

- AccuHeat® technology provides even heat
- Near instant recovery – cook times 50% faster or better
- Provides maximum flexibility and control with two different platen built-in float modes
- Fits ANY AccuSteam griddle with 24" depth surface
- Maximum zone coverage – platen covers 11¾" wide x 23 ¾" long
- Single-hand lift mechanism ensures smooth operation and positive stops
- All stainless-steel construction
- Made to last even in the busiest kitchens
- Built-in automatic timing feature
- 3 temperature presets
- Easy to install
- Non-proprietary Teflon sheets with magnetic hold downs

Backed by AccuTemp's Lifetime Service and Support Guarantee



Local and systemic change

Add to this an escalating climate crisis that puts pressure on the entire food production system. Many chefs and operators have long understood that working with local producers was imperative to the future of the global community

Azurmendi, the three Michelin starred restaurant near Bilbao in Spain was built with sustainability at its heart and chef Eneko Atxa was awarded the prize for most sustainable restaurant by the World's 50 Best Restaurants in 2018. For Atxa, a vital element of responsible behavior is his relationships with local farmers.

"Without these producers we simply couldn't do what we do. These are people who bring the best of what they do to our restaurant, so it is easy for us to cook. They are the reason we can do what we do," he says. "Working closely with people near us doesn't make us radical. It is very normal for us to work with people who are close and who have become friends."

His relationships with suppliers meant he was able to direct other restaurants to farms when he couldn't buy their produce during the lockdown. "When we were closed, the team from Restaurant Frantzen in Stockholm got in touch to find out where they could source the peas we use, so I



ENEKO ATXA
Chef/owner at Azurmendi, Bilbao, Spain

connected them with my supplier and it meant he could keep working," he says. "We [restaurants] had a bad time in the pandemic, but these producers had an even worse time."

At Materia, Caranchini's decision to only work with small producers – cheesemakers, breeders, foragers, fishermen – works for both sides. He gets the best quality products, and the suppliers receive consistent support, especially needed after a tough year.

"If we – chefs and restaurateurs – don't act in a sustainable way with our suppliers, paying them the right amount for the job and within the given deadlines, they wouldn't be able to keep working in a sustainable and ethical way," explains Caranchini. "If I buy fish from a local fisherman, who is fishing only at the correct time, respecting the season and the reproductive cycle of the fish, and I don't pay him or I pay him too late, in order to survive he might start to fish in the wrong way, forgetting about sustainability."



AMANDA COHEN
Chef/owner, Dirt Candy, New York, US



TRACY CHANG
Chef/owner, Pagu, Boston, US

Much of the industry understands that major systemic change is needed and now is as good a time as ever to implement this. Acknowledging that menu prices have previously not reflected the true cost of the dish on the menu represents a first step for many – increasing prices to cover other costs such as decent staff wages is starting to be seen as acceptable, expected even.

Earlier this year Amanda Cohen, the chef owner of New York City restaurant Dirt Candy, addressed increasing prices by \$30 to \$85 for a five-course menu on re-opening after the pandemic in an Instagram post. "2020 forced the restaurant business to get real about how it treats its workers, and I've had to admit that in order to serve my customers, I failed my staff. To run the kind of restaurant I need to run, I have to serve both," she said.

"\$30 more, that's all it takes. But I need your support. If you don't come, this doesn't work. Everyone spent 2020 calling restaurant workers and delivery drivers heroes. We called them 'essential'. We said we had their backs. Now's the time to put those words into action."

Paying staff a salary they can live on has been at the core of Tracy Chang's philosophy at her restaurant Pagu in Boston, since launch and it was especially important during the pandemic. "We make sure we pay our employees enough that they don't need a second job, that they don't need to take public transit, they don't need to go to the grocery store. We provide all of that and I think that's the bare minimum you can do as a business owner."



NEW REPORT SUGGESTS THAT THE LABOR CRISIS IS PART OF THE NEW NORMAL

In August, US-based foodservice market research firm Technomic released a report, exploring the staffing challenges that operators are grappling with.

Crisis on the Front Lines Multi Client Study outlined the drivers behind the staffing crisis in foodservice and addressed some of the challenges faced by operators.

The report found that former restaurant employees who left the industry before the pandemic are now in more traditional jobs, including office jobs (30%) and teaching/education (17%). Meanwhile 85% of those surveyed cited work-life balance and professional management as the most important factors in the job, indicating that the sector needs to implement wide-ranging changes in its approach to people.

"The employment value proposition has changed as a result of the pandemic, and operators will need to adjust hiring and retention strategies to effectively compete for workers in this environment and going forward," said Melissa Wilson, advisor at Technomic.



JOSH NILAND
Chef/owner, St Peter, Sydney, Australia

Top: This year Madrid Fusión took circular gastronomy as it's theme



Movement in a different direction

Adding the human dimension to the sustainability equation may have been bubbling under the surface until now, but there is belief that for the foodservice sector to thrive, it needs to be part of the conversation. Earlier this year, at the Spanish gastronomy congress Madrid Fusión chefs appeared to share their take on circular gastronomy, the conference theme. It was striking that all took it as given that foodservice and hospitality today understand the importance of environmentally responsible practice; the next level is the imperative to support people.

In other words, without consideration for the human side, there can be no such

"We all have our heads down and our eye on something else, but I hope there is attention being shown to the people"

thing as sustainable behavior. "You have to be consistent. You can't say you are championing sustainability if you have people in tears or mentally exhausted and deprived of any personal time. So, before you pick up the phone and order any fish, you need to know everybody is happy," says chef Joshua Niland, the owner of Saint Peter and Fish Butchery in Sydney, Australia. "We all have our heads down and our eye on something else, but I hope there is attention being shown to the people because too many are leaving the industry or crying inside."

As the restaurant community continues to emerge from the pandemic and reflecting on the way forward, Caranchini measures his restaurant's successful recovery by the state of his team.

"We haven't fired a single staff member and it's paid off when we're open, with the full team happy to be back instead of searching for new staff members, which is now a very tough task," he says. "These should not be things to be remembered for, but it's a start. Many people in the industry are now acting like this and I think that this could be the real change for the hospitality." ■



Proud to protect your brands for another 95 years.

Demand genuine Kason products Made in the U.S.A.



It's Better with Kason.

1.800.935.2766 | kasonind.com





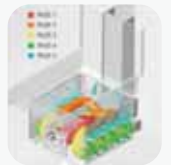
POWERFUL PERFORMANCE BY DESIGN



PowerFry5™ fryer (model 2VK45CF)

Increase profits and reduce operating costs for your clients by specifying Vulcan's ENERGY STAR® certified PowerFry3™ or PowerFry5™ fryers. The most efficient full-vat gas fryers on the market, PowerFry fryers are designed to produce high-quality food quickly and consistently.

FEATURING VULCAN'S PATENTED HEAT TRANSFER SYSTEMS



Patented ThreePass™ and FivePass™ Heat Transfer Systems harness energy more effectively than other fryers and distribute heat uniformly within the cooking oil for fast recovery — resulting in greater throughput, shorter cook times and improved food quality.

Health, and wealth, in a bowl



In three years fast-casual chain Poke House has grown from one store in Milan to more than 40 across Europe. Founder Matteo Pichi tells Elly Earls how a start-up approach and a focus on technology have helped expand, even during a global pandemic >

Matteo Pichi's background isn't what you might expect from the founder of one of the quickest-growing new fast casual chains in Europe. He started his career as an investment banker in London, before creating Foodinho, a food delivery platform based in Milan.

After becoming the market leader in 11 months, Foodinho merged with Europe-wide food delivery app Glovo, Pichi was appointed the country manager for Italy and, as he worked on driving the platform's growth, he noticed a trend he couldn't ignore. Poke bowls – customisable, healthy, tasty and colourful – were out-performing most other food categories.

In November 2018, less than three years after joining Glovo, Pichi and his business partner Vittoria Zanetti, had opened the first Poke House store in Milan. And less than three years after that – even with a global pandemic decimating much of the foodservice industry – it has grown to a 43-strong chain with restaurants in Italy, Portugal and Spain. “We took the typical super-ambitious start-up/scale-up approach,” Pichi says. “Hopefully by the next interview, we will have stores in many more countries.”

While many poke brands are either grab-and-go or, at the slightly more formal end, poke bars, Poke House offers a full sit-down experience, designed around its philosophy: Hawaiian taste, Californian soul. Diners can enjoy the traditional Hawaiian poke bowl, which is a colourful, and customisable, mix of proteins, fruits, vegetables and homemade sauces, prepared daily by chefs using high quality ingredients, in a similarly colourful setting. Think neon lights, natural materials and comfy white cushions. “It's a very California vibe – hospitality, but in a chilled way,” says Pichi. “We want to offer a happy place in various corners of Europe.”

In addition, his background in food delivery has instilled in him the importance



of two things: providing diners with a variety of different ordering channels – Poke House's ordering system is seamlessly integrated with third party delivery platforms including Deliveroo, Bolt and Uber Eats – and data.

In every store, every day, its proprietary customer relationship manager (CRM) delivers at least 100 pieces of data, telling managers, how much time each staff member took to prepare each poke, how customers rated each one, how many orders were missing items, and more. “We use data to understand our clients and improve their experience,” he says. “This gives you full control over your business. If you focus 10 minutes every morning on what happened the day before, you can understand what's going on and improve it.”

Pichi's focus on online food has also allowed the company to scale more easily than a traditional food business, even during the most challenging time the hospitality sector has experienced in recent memory.

“From one day to the next, we had to shut down everything and wait. But our ratings told us very fast where we needed to open and if an investment was safe or not, allowing us to open restaurants at a speed that probably wouldn't be safe in another way,” says Pichi. “Because of our data, we know what people want, we understand quickly if something is not going in the right

Above: Matteo Pichi and Vittoria Zanetti. Opposite page, clockwise from top: A Milan outlet; the first store in

Milan; an outlet in Lisbon; a poke bowl using autumn seasonal ingredients; another Milan store

direction and we can correct it. This also allows us to focus on the experience and the food.”

Continuing something magic

Poke House started its life in Italy, where it now has 27 stores. The brand then branched out into Portugal, where Pichi initially teamed up with a Portuguese chain of the same name, which was founded in 2017. “The country had all the vibes we wanted – it's like the California of Europe,” he says. “So, it was easy to match our vision in Portugal.” There are now seven Poke House stores in Lisbon.

Spain was next and following a 20 million EUR Series B funding round in April, the brand has now launched in France and is making its UK debut in partnership with six-strong Ahi Poke, which first opened its doors in 2016.

“We knew that the UK was a very important market and when we got this opportunity, it felt like a great fit as Ahi Poke in some sense wanted to join the Poke House movement,” Pichi says. “It wouldn't have been easy to go to the UK and start from scratch, but we now have big plans for the future and cannot wait to start from >





“We started without experience in the restaurant business but with experience in the digital, start-up space”



their locations and open many more.”

Pichi doesn't have a specific template he follows when launching Poke House in a new market. In Spain, where there are now nine Poke House locations, and France, which saw its first three restaurants open this summer, they started from scratch whereas in Portugal and the UK they teamed up with established players. However, he's happy to admit he prefers the latter. “If we can find a way to continue something magic that already happened in the country, that is our favourite way of launching,” he says.

“People love Ahi Poke, they trust them, they know the brand and if it has already been built, we can start from there. We are not only offering a service and food; we are offering a full experience. It's not easy in a country that is not yours. Sometimes it is better to be open minded and understand that there might be a local person who can help you to communicate your shared idea.”

“Nothing worse could happen”

Poke House is currently valued at 100m euros. “We went from a start-up to a scale-up and now we're in the consolidation phase,” Pichi explains. But while their growth is quite startling, given the circumstances, Pichi is keen to stress that doesn't mean it's been easy.

“People say to me: ‘Covid must have been amazing for you guys because you do very strong food delivery’, but this is not true,” he says. “We have 50% of our business coming from online delivery, but the other

Above: An outlet in Milan. Left: The ability to customize dishes is a key part of Poke House's popularity

50% is from people coming into our store and enjoying the experience. When you lose 50% in one second, you need to learn a lot of things very fast to put your company in a safe place.”

Just over a year on, he says Poke House has lost money – “all the potential revenue from people who would have come into our stores” – but at the same time the brand has grown stronger. “Online food obviously grew a lot and when Covid is over, we will have a much bigger online business,” Pichi says. “I hope and believe that we will have the same or even bigger out-of-home market because people are excited to come back to normality. It hasn't been good for my mind, but maybe in one year I can tell you if this has been in some sense good for the business. We certainly feel that nothing worse could happen.”

Impossible goals

Pichi strongly believes his next big competitors in the foodservice space will be ‘digital natives’, like Poke House. “We started without experience in the restaurant business but with experience in the digital, start-up space,” he says. “The next big companies will mix the art of welcoming clients with strength in offering different channels to order and eat. This has to be through technology.”

iCombi Pro. iVario Pro.

All of a sudden, so much more is possible.

iCombi Pro and iVario Pro cover 90 % of all conventional cooking applications. They plan intelligently, work together, and are flexible, helping you to save energy, water, raw materials and time. You can plan with less space and ultimate productivity.

Find all RATIONAL planning resources in the new designer toolbox or on all leading platforms.



Visit us at HOST Milan
Pavilion #7, booth A39 / B40 – A47 / B48

rational-online.com



TOTAL KITCHEN VENTILATION SYSTEMS

We create clarity from complexity.



KITCHEN HOODS



EXHAUST FANS



MAKE-UP AIR UNITS



DEDICATED OUTDOOR AIR SYSTEMS



CONTROLS & ENERGY MANAGEMENT



POLLUTION CONTROL UNITS



UTILITY DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS



FIRE-SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS



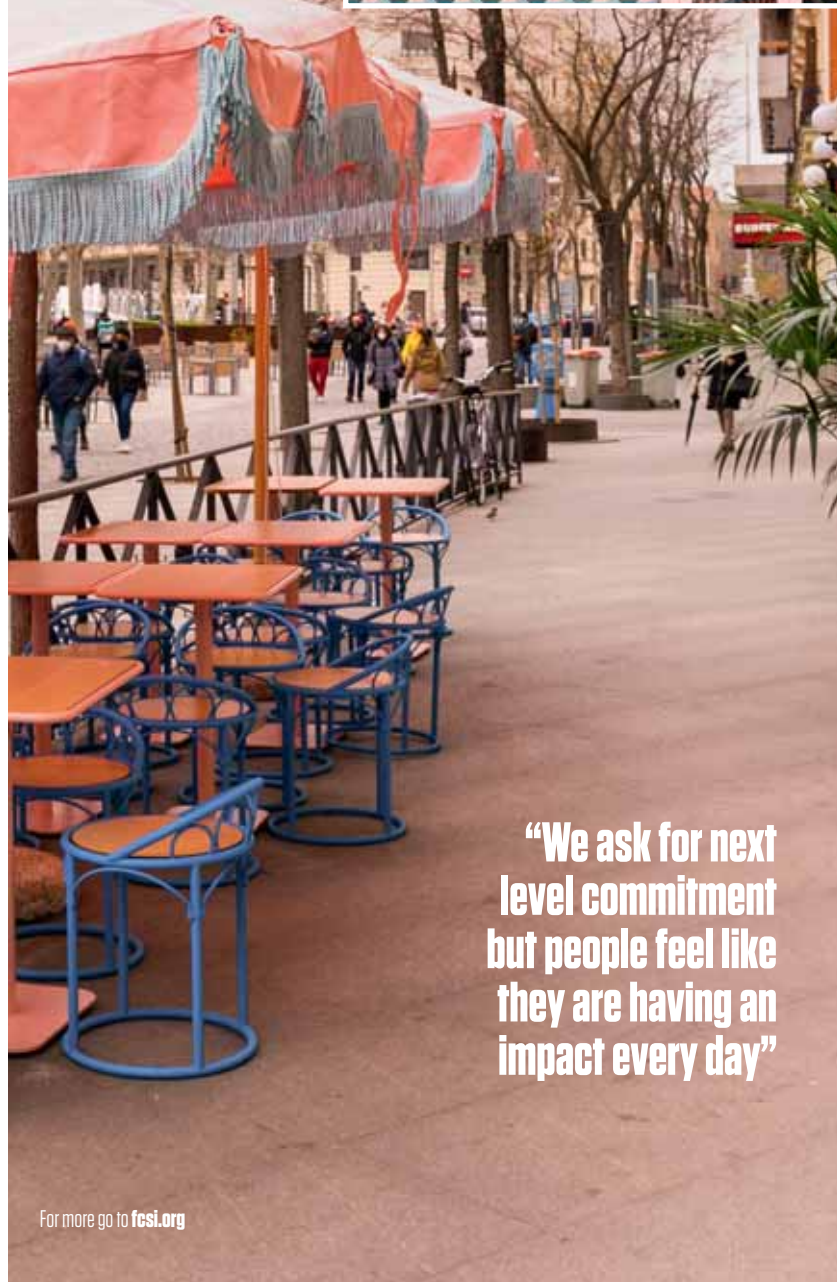
PRE-FABRICATED GREASE DUCT

ACCUREX®

Clean, quality airflow – it's one less thing you have to think about because Accurex® engineers and manufactures kitchen ventilation systems to clear away hassle and confusion. From engineering to aftermarket support and more – we work with you to provide effective, quality products and services that simplify the entire experience.

SIMPLY VISIT
ACCUREX.COM
TO GET STARTED





“We ask for next level commitment but people feel like they are having an impact every day”



Above and far left: Poké House in Madrid. Left: The popular white fish poke bowl

He believes the company’s approach has also given them an edge when it comes to attracting talent, although he acknowledges that working for a fast-growing start-up isn’t for everyone. “When you work at a start-up, you don’t have time to reach your goals because they are probably too high and the only way is to go to someone and say: ‘Tomorrow you need to make something impossible possible,’” he says. “We ask for next level commitment but people feel like they are having an impact every day.”

Poké House’s ‘impossible’ goal is to be the worldwide leader in the poké market by 2024. “We don’t have a lot of time to focus on the goal – we just have to try and execute as much as possible,” Pichi smiles. One thing he is sure about is that poké is not going away. “Sometimes people ask me if I think it’s a trend but I think eating healthy in a bowl is not a trend; it’s the biggest category of food we’ll see in the next few years. Right now, we are focusing on our current markets. We need to win there.” ■



Juggling four different foodservice concepts in one development forced **Russell Stilwell** FCSI to come up with unusual but effective solutions

Charlie & Joe's at Love Street in Jupiter, Florida, offers a multi-faceted hospitality experience in a setting that honors the area's ocean-centric lifestyle. Indeed, it is being marketed as The Heart of Jupiter.

The project offered some multi-faceted challenges and opportunities for innovation for Russell LeBow Stilwell FCSI (left), the founder and principal of Next Step Design, whose mission was to help meld four distinct foodservice operations in two buildings with precious little in the way of back-of-house space.

The \$30m facility officially debuted on February 18, 2021. After a decade of planning,



it created 250 local hospitality jobs and bears the name of founders Charlie Modica and former NFL great Joe Namath. It includes:

- The Lucky Shuck Oyster Bar & Taphouse, offering eclectic Gulf Coast cuisine. Along with locally caught fish and freshly shucked oysters comes a selection of Southern specialties. As a taphouse, it boasts more than 40 beers from local breweries, including its signature blonde ale, Love + Passion. It also features a New Orleans-inspired cocktail menu and a curated wine list.
- The Tacklebox, a boutique seafood market offering chef-inspired takeout sandwiches, salads, and poke bowls, and an array of accompaniments to pair with the selection of fish caught that day.
- BEACON, a contemporary American grille, whose coastal Mediterranean cuisine features live, wood-fired cooking, a plethora of local ingredients, imaginative cocktails



Clockwise from top left: The Tacklebox boutique seafood market; The Lucky Shuck raw bar; wood-fired

cooking in the kitchen of BEACON; Topside, a rooftop lounge offering signature drinks and small plates

and a selection of regional wines.

● Topside, a rooftop lounge, offers tropical tiki concoctions, signature drinks, local beers and regional wines. The menu is comprised of small plates, charcuterie and a selection of skewered offerings cooked over a charcoal-fired robata grill.

The cost of the foodservice portion of the project was \$825,000 for the east restaurants (Lucky Shuck Oyster Bar, Taphouse, The Tacklebox) and \$720,000 for the west units (BEACON and the rooftop Topside at the BEACON bar).

Focus on the solution

Jeffrey J Collins, president of Collins Development Company in Jupiter, started working on Love Street in March 2013 with feasibility studies and financial analyses, followed by a four-year entitlement process for a total six years of preconstruction efforts. “We went through multiple design/layout renditions as we balanced the requirements of the various jurisdictions, the residents’ wishes, and the market,” he says.

Managing four concepts in a single location is “a juggling act,” Collins explains. “We had multiple contractors and multiple deliveries every day, so the logistics of where to put everything was a challenge. I remember one day we moved everything from one restaurant to another so we could complete the floors.”

Establishing the necessary infrastructure to maximize economies of scale and operational efficiencies among the multiple concepts was crucial, according to Stephen Asprinio of New York City-based SA Hospitality Enterprises, who acted as the owner’s representative. “This can be achieved through the implementation of technological platforms with regard to streamlining purchasing/procurement, labor cross-utilization, COGS analytics, integrated POS, and perpetual inventory management.”

The primary challenge on the project was there are “so many concepts in such little space,” explains Stilwell. “You have a very small back-of-house and several concepts in two little buildings. It gets a bit tricky.” >

PROJECTS



Meeting that challenge meant “valuing every single inch of space and trying to utilize it the best way you can – vertically, horizontally, outdoors, and so forth,” Stilwell says. “It’s like a galley kitchen in an aircraft. We fit in as much equipment as we could and tried to do it in a way that was, at the same time, extremely functional and able to crank out a lot of volume.”

Volume was the key, as the operation has really taken off. “They have so much business they just don’t know what to do with it,” Stilwell says. “Of course, because of the pandemic the biggest problem is getting the labor to execute, but as far as the efficiency of these facilities goes, I think they’re very happy with it.”

Though every inch was needed, “you still have to follow the basics of smart flow of goods, service, and production and they all have to be done in an elegant and efficient manner,” Stilwell cautions. “Also, you have to keep trying to minimize wasted space.”

“In a situation like this, when you have a huge bar – but no place to put liquor storage and a beer cooler when somebody wants a rotating section of beer, wine, and craft cocktails on 24 taps – the question becomes, where do you put it?”

That vital question caused Stilwell to look up. “I thought, ‘That’s a really high ceiling. Why don’t we build a mezzanine over the top of the bar and put the kegerator and liquor up there? And we can put windows in the kegerator and make it look like it was always intentional, like some kind of industrial pre-existing condition. So many people focus on the problem, they don’t focus on the solution. You just have to do things like that: skyhook the beer keg, which is a bit of an unusual solution but did work out well.’”

In BEACON, the kitchen workhorses are the wood-fired grill and single-sided range suite from Montague. In Lucky Shuck, the workhorse “is definitely the bar because it is massive, and of course, it’s so popular because it’s on the waterside and offers beautiful views of a lighthouse and the Intracoastal Waterway,” says Stilwell. “That bar is jammed all the time.”

BEACON’s kitchen is designed to be



extremely efficient, he adds, with a double-sided range suite setup that allows for much more production than a traditional straight line. “It allows you to scale up and scale down your staffing in a much more efficient way as well. So, I would say those two are the things that really keep that engine going.”

Another takeaway, Stilwell suggests, is not to detach from a project too soon. “You have to stay with it. That is one thing Next Step Design always does well. We never go away. We don’t just design a project, put it out on the street and let people do whatever they want with it.

“With this project, I think there were four different plumbers and five different construction managers. This can, potentially, cause a lot of continuity to be lost, but if you are there the whole time at least you can protect the quality of your designs and control the final outcome.” ■

“It’s like a galley kitchen in an aircraft. We fit in as much equipment as we could and tried to do it in a way that was, at the same time, extremely functional and able to crank out a lot of volume”

Clockwise from above: The display kitchen in BEACON; Topside’s rooftop bar; The Lucky Shuck kitchen; the Lucky Shuck bar



BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

When Filipino chef restaurateur Charles Montanez wanted to set up in Singapore he couldn't be on site. He tells Maida Pineda how appointing local consultant and FCSI Associate **Ben Ho** gave him complete peace of mind and a successful new restaurant

Alegria in Spanish means happiness. But for Filipino chef/owner Charles Montanez, the recent opening of his restaurant Alegria Singapore is an unexpected joy. For the 30-year-old, it feels like a surreal dream to open his restaurant right at the heart of Singapore's Chinatown area, next to the Michelin-starred Burnt Ends. The hip restaurant district is home to iconic restaurants like Cure, Zen and Potato Head.

During the pandemic, the young chef witnessed restaurants close in Singapore. In less than a month, a new one would replace it. Montanez realized that perhaps it was a good time to open a new restaurant. With more rental spaces available, it was a renters market. He was able to negotiate a lower rent in the usually steep real estate prices in Singapore. In the middle of opening a second Alegria restaurant in Manila and awaiting a work permit from the Ministry of Manpower, Montanez was unable to return to Singapore during the build of this project. However, he entrusted his vision for Alegria Singapore to the expert hands of Eminent Foodservice Design consultants Ben Ho and Mildred Fameró.

Alegria is a home-grown Latin/Asian Fusion restaurant in Manila's hip BGC district. Taking the

concept from Manila to Singapore means the concept is tweaked to a Latin/Filipino restaurant.

Montanez had a vision for Alegria Singapore. "I like everything dark. That's why the walls are dark and kitchen counters are all black." Another thing that he wouldn't compromise on is the original mural, which he brought from the flagship store in Manila. He envisioned a more refined and elegant look for the Singapore outlet, while carrying the design elements of the flagship restaurant: the bricks, the wood panels, the seats, and the design of the furniture.

Apart from the aesthetics of the restaurant, the open kitchen was non-negotiable. Montanez recognizes how dining out is more of an experience these days, "Having an open kitchen allows people to see how their food is being made and it allows the chefs and staff to express themselves."

The third non-negotiable for this project is the Argentine Parrilla grill. The chef beams with pride while showing off his prized kitchen equipment, "If you notice the portion where there are bricks, that's a Parrilla grill. It has an open fire, a wood fire on the right side and an adjustable griller on the left side. This is the mini version because they're usually big. They roast whole pigs. But we're not going to do that >

“That’s a Parrilla grill. It has an open fire, a wood fire on the right side and an adjustable griller on the left side. This is the mini version because they’re usually big. They roast whole pigs. But we’re not going to do that because we’re running a 44-seater restaurant”





“Working with these guys gives me the luxury of diverting my time and my attention to other aspects of the business, because I know this part of the project is already settled”

house, with strict conservation regulations. As Ho explains, “there are certain limitations to what the constructors cannot touch such as exterior design and the façade.”

Not being an F&B location, there was a lack of plumbing. There was only one floor trap right by the bar in front, so plumbing lines had to be laid from scratch. Electrical loading had to be increased. Exhaust tapping had to be reconstructed. A massive amount of work had to be executed for a small restaurant. But in the end, they successfully delivered.

Ho enjoyed the challenge of converting a small shop space into an operational F&B outlet. Reflecting on this project he says: “I think as consultants we’re too privileged sometimes by designing hotels, commissary kitchens, and projects with massive amounts of space. By coming back to basics, where people interact intimately, we have to work with very tight spaces. It’s like returning to where we began. This is a different animal. This is not big. It’s not a school kitchen. It’s not a massive central kitchen where we have space –more than we can use. In this restaurant, we maximized every inch of space.”

Montanez and Ho complement each other. The ideas come from Montanez, with Ho’s experience and knowledge providing viable options to execute his vision. It is a solid collaboration where they lean on each other’s strengths to succeed. Despite being away from Singapore during the build, Montanez is very happy with the results. “It’s beyond my expectations actually,” he says. “It was not just fast, but it was more efficient. Working with these guys gives me the luxury of diverting my time and my attention to other aspects of the business, because I know this part of the project is already settled.”

Expansion is underway with two more Alegria outlets opening in the Philippines and plans for an outlet in Dubai. Montanez has already brought Eminent on board to make it happen. That is clear proof of one happy client. ■

because we’re running a 44-seater restaurant.”

Having a Parrilla grill is just one of the challenges the foodservice consultants faced in executing this project. The 1,850 sq ft (172 sq m) space was previously a showroom for a Japanese lighting firm. Coming on board after the site was secured, FCSI Associate Ho had to work with the existing conditions of the space. “First, the kitchen was not gas lined. We had to slot in an induction cooker,” he explains. “This kitchen basically runs with an open wood-fired grill and an electric induction, combi oven and fryer.” Ho weighed the pros and cons for installing a gas supply, the level of investment and level of works to be done. It meant asking Montanez if he could achieve what he wants by running most of the things on electricity and the open grill as the main source of open heat.

The second problem; there was no existing exhaust provision. “To compound the problem, we have an open-fire grill,” says Ho. “That alarms our fire safety department. It’s not a simple extraction system. It has to be a complex system that meets local fire regulations. That causes stress to the client because of the investment involved. Due to the nature of the stove, an intricate exhaust system had to be created.”

Third, the restaurant is located in an old shop

Above: Charles Montanez vision for the restaurant included restful dark walls and furnishings. Clockwise from far left: The mural was brought from the flagship restaurant in Manila; Chef/owner Charles Montanez; Ben Ho of Eminent Foodservice Design

PROJECTS



The art,
and design, of
hospitality



A design-conscious hotel brand opening its first premises in Germany called on the best of German art and design, including Flatow & Drews Consulting. Michael Flatow FCSI talks to Jacquetta Picton about the project



“You might have a business meeting next day and you don’t know the city, but you love food and cooking, you can sit right there and watch what the team are doing”

Each and every hotel of the luxury-lifestyle Andaz hotel brand embraces the local culture and spirit of its surroundings. The name, Andaz, is a Hindi word meaning personal style and the hotel chain is under the umbrella of the Hyatt corporation. Andaz Munich Schwabinger Tor opened in February 2019, it is the only one of the 21 Andaz hotels worldwide located in Germany.

The hotels provide an attentive and fuss-free service that allows guests to fully immerse themselves in their surroundings. At the same time, they create a natural atmosphere where guests can relax in comfort and style. As the hotel’s general manager Frank Heckelmann says about his guests: “We greet them as strangers when they arrive, we hope to salute them as friends when they leave.”

Artistic hub

Schwabing, the area of Munich chosen as the site of the first Andaz hotel in Germany, was historically a bohemian area where artists, intellectuals, actors and free spirits felt welcome. In this spirit, art plays a leading role at Andaz Munich Schwabinger Tor. Local artists and influential cultural figures added their own special touch to bring character to the hotel. The result is a hub for cultural activities and a meeting place for creative minds that reflect Munich’s role as a melting pot both for new technologies and age-old traditions.

There is artwork designed by Munich artist Mirko Borsche. In the hotel’s foyer, the Andaz Lounge, there are video installations by the Munich artistic collective Studio TISH, depicting the sky above Munich, captured on camera over 365 days. There is also a contribution from community art project, BROKE.TODAY, which offers

young offenders the opportunity to explore new horizons and fulfil their creative potential. Andaz Munich Schwabinger Tor gave three young street artists the opportunity to collaborate on the decoration of the walls in four of its suites.

Unique foodservice concepts

This creative inspiration extends to the foodservice offering. Michael Flatow FCSI of Flatow & Drews Consulting was brought in to design the foodservice areas. He had previously worked for Hyatt, including the Grand Hyatt Berlin, where Heckelmann was hotel manager before moving to Munich. Flatow acknowledges that the design ethos of the hotel and the expected clientele dictated the foodservice concepts.

In pride of place is the hotel’s restaurant, The Lonely Broccoli, Munich’s first modern meat house, seating up to 120 people. Featuring not one, but two, show kitchens. With the Jospoer wood-fired ovens and charcoal grills they provide a unique sense of theater and drama for diners. The open kitchen concept presented the foodservice consultant with challenges. “The wood-burning oven and grill in the open kitchen was a major obstacle in terms of the exhaust system,” Flatow says. “This challenge could be met by coordinating smoothly with the mechanical, electrical and plumbing [MEP] consultant.”

However, not all scents from The Lonely Broccoli have to be eliminated. Heckelmann is very proud of the restaurant’s unique atmosphere. “The chefs prepare salmon roasted on a plank of cedar wood,” he says. “The >

Clockwise from top left: The hotel’s lobby lounge; The Lonely Broccoli kitchen and dishes from the grill



aroma of the wood floating through the air is amazing. The restaurant is like a performance with the head chef directing operations.”

The counter seats overlooking the open kitchen are the ideal perch for business travelers who are eating alone. “You might have a business meeting the next day and you don’t know the city, but you love food and cooking, you can sit right there and watch what the kitchen team is doing,” says Heckelmann. “Maybe the chef comes by and gives you something to try and that is what the concept is all about. The chef is opening oysters, chopping steak tartare. You can see the meat go straight from the grill and onto your plate.” Guests are made to feel part of the performance, there is no need to bring a book to the table if eating alone.

Space in the sky

Up on the 12th floor of the hotel is M’Uniqo Rooftop Bar. As well as offering a new perspective – a 360-degree vista of the Munich skyline – there is international Italian cuisine on offer. General manger Heckelmann enthuses that when the bar is buzzing with guests and the DJ is playing, “it could be Singapore, it has a real international, cosmopolitan feeling.”

As well as an awesome outward view M’Uniqo’s mirrored ceiling offers a stunning inward view as it makes the already large space look even more inspiring. Amsterdam-based interior design company Concrete, who created the hotel’s unique look, using many local Bavarian elements, were a joy to collaborate with according to Flatow.

One of the most important outlets during the pandemic, Heckelmann admits, was the coffee bar and ‘grab-and-go’ offering, Bicielletta. This space, just by the

entrance to the hotel, is decorated with another quirky touch from Concrete – a row of bicycles hanging from the ceiling.

Part of the community

Another offering unique to Hyatt and Andaz is self-service, deli style outlet Café M. This is a staff canteen, however it is not just for the staff

at the hotel, it is designed to be the staff canteen for all the workers and residents of Schwabinger Tor. Sadly, due to the pandemic this lovely concept could not open initially. “Due to space and distance restrictions, it wasn’t feasible to open it,” explains Heckelmann. “And now, many people from the surrounding office buildings are working from home.” Let us hope that, as life gradually returns to normal, Café M will fulfil its function within the community.

Flatow’s focus when selecting equipment for all the hotel’s F&B outlets was energy saving and sustainability. “Focusing on energy costs and energy saving measures are most important for projects in Germany,” he says. “Thus, the equipment chosen has components to save energy by heat recovery systems for example.”

However, when it comes to open kitchens energy saving also has to look sensational. Flatow’s favorite part of the hotel is the show kitchen with the wood burning stoves despite all the challenges they presented. “I really hope the guests, from the hotel – and the city of Munich – enjoy the show,” he says. ■



“Focusing on energy costs and energy saving measures are most important for projects in Germany. Thus, the equipment chosen has components to save energy by heat recovery systems for example”

Clockwise from bottom left: The welcome at Bicielletta; kitchen choppers and knives makes an eye-catching display for a meat house



ANDAZ MUNICH SCHWABINGER TOR





®

METALTECNICA

Italian catering equipment

-  **arredamenti**
furniture
-  **pasticceria**
pastry
-  **self service**
self service
-  **refrigerati**
refrigeration
-  **cappe**
exhaust hoods
-  **carrelli**
trolleys



Metaltecnica is the leading company that provide, through its 5 production lines, a complete range of products and equipment that cover the entire meal lifecycle from static to dynamic preparation, for catering, hospitality and healthcare sectors.

With the latest MTD Docking Station line, designed and built with the highest standards on the market, Metaltecnica is now able to offer customers a single solid and reliable point of reference for the foodservice needs.

Metaltecnica Produzioni Srl | Via Rossini snc, 47814 Bellaria (RN) Italy | info@metaltecnica.com | Ph: +39 0541 347852



Equipment, Coffee and Food
42nd International
Hospitality Exhibition
October 22 - 26, 2021
fieramilano

HALL 1
BOOTH E19-F30

CITY FOCUS MADRID



Once a hub of regional gastronomy, Spain's capital has evolved at speed in recent years. Tina Nielsen explores the drivers behind Madrid's ascent to the top of European culinary culture

The last decade has been transformational for Madrid, as the city has enjoyed a boom in its dining scene to sit at the summit alongside other major global gastronomic destinations.

The culinary landscape is dynamic – in 2020 there were 30.882 bars and restaurants, 20 of them holding Michelin stars, in the city, serving its population of 6.8 million people – and ever changing. From classic tapas bars to modern restaurants, new openings abound; quality and longevity are the watch words.

Among all the innovation there's still room for tradition. Tourists passing through head for one of the many outdoor cafes lining the stunning Plaza Mayor and the world's oldest restaurant, Botín, famous for serving suckling pig and allegedly a favourite haunt of Ernest Hemingway.

As well as the political and economic focus of Spain, Madrid is the geographical center of the country; a plaque in the square of the central Puerta del Sol marks the spot from where every distance to other cities is measured.

Its central position – and it's among Europe's highest capital cities – meant Madrid was always a hub for regional cuisines from the different parts of Spain. Like other capital cities, Madrid has long been the center of migration in the country, but until the early 2000s there was little international influx.

According to Patricia



Top: Chef Iván Domínguez has brought Galician cuisine to Madrid. Above: Patricia Mateo of Vocento Gastronomía

Mateo, managing director of Spain's Vocento Gastronomía, the city has undergone substantial changes in the past decade as a result of the shifting demographics. "In the last 10 years we have seen international influences coming from migration and many international openings," she says. Investment in hospitality has seen luxury hotels Mandarin Oriental and the Four Seasons recently opening and there is a Rosewood on the way.

The resurgent culinary sector has attracted chefs from other parts of Spain who have opened in the capital. Chef Iván Domínguez already had a successful restaurant in the Galician city of A Coruña – just two and a half years after





“People here are open minded and they want to see restaurants with its own strong identity, and they will always give you a chance to show what you offer”

launch in his own region, he decided to bring the concept to the capital city. “We were doing well and we wanted to bring Galician cuisine to Madrid diners,” he says.

His seafood restaurant Nado has been received very well by the local dining population. “I think people here are open minded and they want to see restaurants with their own strong identity, and they will always give you a chance to show what you offer,” he says.

All roads lead to Madrid

A map of Spain shows the important logistical position of the city – motorways emerge from the city to every region of the country. “Madrid was traditionally a market city, all the fish and produce arrived

from every region to be distributed,” explains Mateo. “We say you’ll find the best produce in Madrid because everything passes through here.”

Madrid was the first city in Spain to boast a three-star restaurant in the *Michelin* guide. Zalacaín achieved the status in 1987 – it subsequently lost the stars and closed its doors definitively last year but carried the culinary mantle for Madrid for years.

However, the city has not always been the focus of international attention. Other regions boast more robust culinary heritages and cultures. The Basque Country in the north, a prime destination for foodies, and Catalonia, etched on the map by Albert and Ferrán Adrià who captured the attention of the world with their pioneering restaurant, the now closed El Bulli. Madrid was largely overlooked in serious gastronomic circles.

Today, while the Basque Country remains a major gastronomic destination, it lacks the diversity of Madrid and Catalonia has been affected by events in recent years.

In 2017 Barcelona, for so many years the focus of attention in Spain and beyond for its gastronomy scene, suffered a jihadist terrorist attack and experienced violent protests in the wake of a campaign for independence. Both events hit the city – so reliant on tourism – hard. Since 2020, Covid-19 has hampered any effort to bounce back.

Strict closures followed by curfews and restrictions on occupancy have had huge impact on hospitality and >

ACCEPTING ARTISANAL

Alberto Miragoli who founded the artisan bakery Ciento Treinta Grados with his brother Guido in 2017, is part of the vanguard bringing different flavors to the Madrid market.

After years gaining experience and honing his craft in bakeries in Europe and the US, Alberto returned to his hometown and opened his own bakery with his brother Guido who has taken charge of the coffee roastery, also on site.

Last year they received the prize for the best bread in Madrid. “Unlike other parts of the Europe and the US, Spain does not have a strong movement in baking,” says Alberto. “It is not considered a craft and while there are many family bakeries, until recently people didn’t consider buying sourdough bread.”

As artisanal baking becomes more professional and investments grow, the sector is making steady progress in the city. And the locals are starting to embrace the new products. At the start customers would enter the shop and question the higher price or ask for “normal bread”.

“I do think that it is harder for people here to get used to new things and to change than in it is in a city like London. The market is more complicated here, we are generally more conservative but there is an international trend of trying new flavors, our palate is adapting to new flavors,” says Miragoli. “We have made real efforts in communicating to customers what we sell; people are openminded, but they still need to be educated.”



forced many to close for good. Albert Adriá, one of the city's most well-known chefs, has closed his entire group of restaurants. "The city has suffered such heavy losses it could take it a decade to get back on its feet," says Mateo.

In Madrid, meanwhile, restrictions were less punishing for hospitality and bars and restaurants remained open for much of the pandemic.

Boom time

In the 1980s Madrid was still considered a center for regional restaurants with the main foreign influence being French. Things started to slowly change in the 1990s although the age of the celebrity chef was a long way off in the future; people were more likely to know the restaurateurs behind the operation than the chef.

It was the late 1990s and the 2000s that would bring major change to the city.

The years before the 2008 financial crash were a time of economic prosperity in the city's culinary landscape as Madrid started to take on a more international profile.

"In the 1990s you would never have found a papaya or coriander in Madrid," says Mateo. International immigration changed that as new arrivals began importing different ingredients.

"Obviously, this mix of people brings gastronomic wealth and today you can find any foods you want in Madrid, from Latin America and from Asia," she adds. "The second largest community in Madrid is the Chinese."

The mid-to late 2000s also

"This mix of people brings gastronomic wealth and today you can find any foods you want in Madrid, from Latin America and from Asia"



saw a new type of restaurant opening in Madrid. Chef Ricardo Sanz was an early precursor to what would later characterize the city's restaurant scene when he opened Kabuki in 2000. His was the first genuine fusion restaurant of any recognition, serving Japanese food with a Spanish twist, and would later become the first restaurant in the city serving foreign food to receive a Michelin star.

Later, in 2007 a young chef, David Muñoz, returned home after a stint cooking in London; he went on to open DiverXO in the capital; introducing his singular take on fusion cooking to great acclaim. Muñoz was awarded three stars by the Michelin guide in 2013 and remains the only restaurant in

Madrid to hold the status.

"So, we started to see ingredients from all over the world and we started to see fusion cooking," says Mateo. "It was the beginning of this time of cooking without rules."

Other pioneers of the Madrid restaurant scene are Alberto Chicote who opened NoDo restaurant, rejecting any kind of label or rule, and Sergi Arola who had waiters wearing skirts and Doc Martin boots at La Broche. Dario Barrio, another young chef of the time, created a hip hangout for the young and beautiful in Dassa Bassa. Meanwhile in Barcelona around the same time El Bulli was going through its prime moment and Ferrán Adriá sought out many influences from overseas.





Clockwise from top left: A vendor at a traditional Madrid market; David Muñoz's DiverXO, Madrid's only three Michelin star restaurant; Chef Angel León, from Aponiente opened this year's Madrid Fusión.

Left, far left and above: Miguel Carretero chef at Santerra in Madrid's affluent Salamanca district has a reputation for quality produce

Madrid Fusión shaping gastronomy

In 2003 Madrid hosted the first edition of Madrid Fusión, today among the most influential gastronomy congresses in the world. "It was the first of its kind in Europe, a gastronomy congress with such an international scope," explains Mateo.

Every big-name chef, from René Redzepi and Ferrán Adriá to David Chang and David Muñoz has appeared at the congress. The event has superb instinct in spotting new talent. "If you consider the 20 most interesting chefs in Spain at the moment, look back and you'll see that at one point each of them was named breakthrough chef at Madrid Fusión."

The annual event has been successful in forging a community spirit among chefs, says Mateo. "It is unique as an event where chefs really get together to network and it has given them a genuine sense of identity and pride in their profession."

Mateo says what characterizes Madrid more than anything today is dominated by international trends. "We are truly global now and share trends with other cities – the focus on high quality produce, less formal fine dining and a clientele that is concerned about provenance and want to know where what they eat comes from – those are all global trends," says Mateo.

"Madrid is the only city in Spain right now with this level of gastronomic activity. It sits alongside New York, Berlin and Copenhagen, they are all very connected. Young chefs will go and work in the

THE MARKETS OF MADRID

Local markets have long been a feature of Madrid. Traditionally the place where people would go and buy their produce, recent years have seen many undergoing a makeover and the trend for gourmet markets has long been a feature of the city, which counts a total of 47 markets, 34% of them described as gastronomic.

While some have completely changed and now exclusively feature food stalls and counters, eschewing the more traditional fruit and veg, meat and fish vendors, others, including Mercado de Vallehermoso, have aimed for a balance that preserves the traditional vendors while also introducing high-quality restaurants.

best restaurants and they return to open their own places here; bringing a new level of informality and fun."

The confidence is echoed by those operating in the sector. Miguel Carretero, executive chef of Santerra restaurant group, arrived in the city five years ago. The recipient of several awards, including the coveted prize for the world's best croquette at Madrid Fusión, his neighborhood restaurant in the affluent Salamanca area of Madrid has become a destination restaurant with a reputation for quality produce.

"Right now in Madrid, there are new openings that are more focused on the client," he says. "I see people considering the long term when they open new projects whereas before it was more about fashions or financial motives. Today people are betting on quality." ■



Chinatown's accidental advocate

For some restaurateurs the impact of the pandemic has been compounded by hostility towards Chinatowns across the US. Maida Pineda speaks to Grace Young about sharing the challenges of Chinese operators through her Coronavirus: Chinatown Stories video series

Some superheroes wear capes, others write cookbooks and use a wok. Grace Young is a cookbook author, a preservationist of Cantonese recipes and a self-proclaimed 'Wok Therapist'. But in March 2020, she took on what is probably her most important role – as a vocal advocate for Chinatown restaurants and businesses in Manhattan.

"It's still very new for me being introduced as an advocate for Chinatown," says Young. "I'm a cookbook author. I spent my whole career working in test kitchens, writing cookbooks, and contributing to food magazines. I've never been identified as an advocate for any cause."

It started in March 2020, when she documented the changes in Chinatown in *Coronavirus: Chinatown Stories*. The Poster House Museum in New York had just opened an exhibition on Chinese posters and Young had been asked to deliver lectures in line with the exhibit. On March 13, 2020, Julia Knight, the museum director called her saying: "All



“I was hoping New Yorkers, on seeing these posts, would rally their support and realize that Chinatown needed our help”

museums are shut in New York City. We know that Chinatown is hurting. Do you have any ideas of what we could do to help.”

Young was touched by the request. No other museum had reached out to ask: ‘What can we do to help Chinatown?’

Young told her: “I’ve been monitoring what’s been going on since January and there’s been an immediate shunning of Chinatown business. I thought I should go to Chinatown and interview some restaurant owners and shop owners. I was going to post these interviews on my social media. I was hoping New Yorkers, on seeing these posts, would rally their support and realize that Chinatown needed our help.”

Knight immediately got on board, offering to post these interviews on the museum’s website. Two days later, Young along with Dan Ahn, a videographer who volunteered his services for this project, interviewed four restaurants and one store. She expected the stories to be heartbreaking but she didn’t expect to witness restaurants on their very last day open.

As Young interviewed Peter Lee of Hop Kee, tears welled in his eyes as he explained, “We’re closing. I don’t want to and I don’t know what’s going to happen next.” Walking into Hop Kee’s 52-year old kitchen that day was a shock for Young. “I’ve been in many restaurant kitchens. Chinese restaurant kitchens are always loud, full of activity, and full of life,” she says. “That kitchen was quiet. They were not cooking. Normally, there was a line out the door. There were

only two customers. The looks on the faces of the cooks, the dishwashers, the waiters – everybody knew Chinatown was in trouble. And no one knew what the end of the story would be.”

That night, Mayor de Blasio shut all restaurants and New York went into lockdown. That was Sunday. He announced all restaurants must close by the Tuesday. “You’re only allowed to open for takeout, no more indoor or outdoor dining.”

Even before the lockdown, from January to February 2020, restaurants in Chinatown saw their businesses go down by 40-80%. Young recalls the series of events unfolding. There was an immediate shunning. People stopped going to Chinatown. There was a ban on tourists coming from China, followed by a ban on European tourists and American tourists. Between March and June, Chinatown was shut down. Out of 291 or 293 restaurants, only 29 remained open for takeout. Young says: “They were struggling. No one was making a lot of money from takeout, because most people go to Chinatown to eat, not to buy take out and bring their food back to their Greenwich Village or Upper East Side apartments.”

On June 8, Chinatown reopened with outdoor dining and 25% indoor capacity. But, the crowded streets and sidewalks of Chinatown are so narrow, when they had outdoor dining they could not even put out 20 tables. “The lack of indoor dining and the lack of space for outdoor dining put a limit on the amount of money they could make. So I would say from June 2020 to March-April 2021, people were operating from 20-40% of pre-covid.”

Young can list each legacy restaurant and >

Above left: Grace Young, cookbook author, preservationist of Cantonese recipes and advocate for Chinatowns. Top: The type of dishes that may be lost



business that closed: 42-year-old Hoy Wong, 40-year-old Mee Li Fruits and Vegetable, over-50-year-old Hop Shing, and 65-year-old WK. A bakery called Lung Moon closed in August, soon after they produced their last mooncakes. Those that remained open need to pay insurance, electricity, gas, water bill on time, or else risk being shut down and taking a year to reopen again. One restaurateur told her their water, gas, and electricity bills amounted to \$8,000/month.

These mom-and-pop businesses closing could mean the end of New York's Chinatown, a historic immigrant community. "If we don't show up, these businesses are going to go out of business," Young says. "And when the landlord can't pay the mortgage or property tax, the landlord is going to lose his building and a developer could just walk in."

She began connecting with the different publications she wrote for in the past to get the word out about Chinatown hurting. In the Spring of 2020, Young received the James





Clockwise from top left: Chinatown streets were deserted; Wo Hop, one of the restaurants facing closure; workers in Chinatown have feared for their safety since the pandemic

Beard award for her book *Wok Therapist*. She reached out to the James Beard Foundation in September 2020 to suggest the #SaveChinatownRestaurants campaign on Instagram. They immediately got on board, building momentum for this campaign.

In January 2021, Young started the Support Chinatown Fund. “Initially, the idea was to raise funds for people dealing with food insecurity mostly seniors, but so many people had lost work. A huge percentage of people in Chinatown live below the poverty line. The idea was to provide meals and to support four of the legacy restaurants. I was so worried seeing so many of the old restaurants go I wanted the money to go to four really old restaurants: Wo Hop (downstairs) from 1938, Hop Kee from 1967, Hop Lee and Wo Hop (upstairs) both almost 50 years old.” The goal was to raise \$20,000. They have now raised over \$40,000, allowing them to give the money to other Chinatown restaurants needing assistance.

“These really old restaurants are our last connection to immigrant cooking from a certain era,” Young says. “When we lose these chefs, it’s irreplaceable. When they disappear into the light, we can’t find them again.”

Things look different at time of writing, during the summer months, with more people vaccinated, 75-100% dining permitted, courts and jury duty back open. “Now, when you go to Chinatown during the daytime on a sunny day, there is a vibrancy that we did not have during the winter,” says Young. “There are a lot more people and there’s a feeling

“These old restaurants are our last connection to immigrant cooking from a certain era... it’s irreplaceable”

like, wow, Chinatown is coming back. I was there last Monday, it’s wonderful seeing the streets busy. But two hours later, a woman was punched in the face. That was a real gut punch to many people in Chinatown.”

The rise in anti-Asian hate crime in the past few months has led many to fear for their safety in going to Chinatown. Many stores now close by 5:30pm, so shop owners can let their employees go home earlier. Some restaurant owners have seen no customers in the evenings. Young has partnered with Asian Americans for Equality to raise funds for the personal safety devices for the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

In 2019 pre-Covid, Manhattan had 66.5 million tourists. In 2020 there was nowhere near that number. “Chinatowns in Manhattan, San Francisco and Boston are extremely dependent on tourism,” Young explains. “That’s a huge customer base to suddenly lose. We lost 300,000 lower Manhattan workers last year. They were working from home. Chinatown has lost tourist, jury duty, court workers, lower Manhattan workers, and of course, university students.”

Being an advocate for Chinatown feels like a culmination of Young’s lifework. “Apparently, America had 50 Chinatowns. Philadelphia’s Chinatown is a shadow of what it was. We had one in Washington, DC, it has gone. The LA Chinatown is struggling. The Pullman Chinatown in Oregon is no longer there,” she says. “This country once had so many Chinatowns. Now, we are down to just a handful. I guess it’s the same quality that makes me want to preserve family recipes and the wok that makes me realize somebody has to speak up for Chinatown.” ■

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large bunch of fresh green beans. The person is wearing a red and white plaid shirt. The background is a blurred blue sky. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

Sowing the seeds of sustainability

From grassroots movements crowd-funding carbon farming to the rise of high-tech urban farms, innovative organizations across the Asia-Pacific region are plowing a greener furrow writes Amy Snelling



There's no denying the food industry needs to take a leading role in the fight against climate change. According to a recent UN-backed study, food systems are responsible for producing over a third of human-caused global greenhouse gas emissions. But when it comes to playing their part in reducing the industry's growing carbon footprint, the big question many operators face is how?

Across Asia, which accounts for roughly half of those global emissions, the food industry faces multiple challenges over the coming years: from land degradation and severe effects of climate change to food insecurity exacerbated by growing urban populations and a reliance on inefficient, long-distance supply chains. But innovative players are leading the charge for change.

Tackling the carbon crisis

"There's a way for us to solve the [climate] crisis if we pull enough energy around mobilizing people from the bottom up to get things done rather than wait for the system to change," says Hong Kong-based chef-restaurateur and founder of Grassroots Initiatives Consultancy, Peggy Chan. Working with operators across the city to reduce their carbon footprint and implement circular practices, Chan explains: "How we reduce our carbon has been a huge conversation this past year."

By the end of 2020, three of Asia's largest economies had pledged to go carbon neutral, with Japan and South Korea

committing to transition by 2050 and China by 2060. "But for restaurants to reduce carbon emissions we need to know how to get there, and I would say most [operators] don't," says Chan.

"What restaurateurs do know is how to reduce our carbon footprint by applying best practices, such as shifting to more plant-based menus, using LED lights, or removing single-use plastics – these are all good, but they're not at a scale to solve the crisis." A strong advocate for grassroots activism, Chan recently launched the Asia arm of Zero Foodprint – a California-founded nonprofit that connects stakeholders along the food industry chain to support regenerative agricultural solutions that draw down carbon. One of the main objectives is educating around soil carbon sequestration as a large-scale "nature-based solution to capture carbon from the atmosphere."

Zero Foodprint Asia (ZFPA) is kicking off with a tried-and-tested ZFP initiative: the "1% pledge to restore the planet", a crowd-funding program that collaborates with restaurants to donate a 1% surcharge from customers' bills to fund restorative farming practices locally and regionally. "Our goal is to create a renewable food system where we're no longer subsidizing [damaging] industrial agriculture, but directly funding regenerative farming instead," says Chan. We want to give food sovereignty and power back to the farmers to do what they do best: take care of our land and soil, and grow good food." >

"Our goal is to create a renewable food system where we're no longer subsidizing industrial agriculture, but directly funding regenerative farming instead"

Peggy Chan (above) has set up the Asian arm of Zero Foodprint to encourage a "nature-based solution to capture carbon"



“Positive steps for the environment do not drive any increased customer support, which makes the extra cost harder for most to assume”



Matt Reid (top) and Malcolm Wood (above) were early supporters of ZFPA through their restaurant business Maximal Concepts

ZFPA is starting the program with two pilot projects in Hong Kong, a city that relies heavily on eating out with the highest number of restaurants per capita in the world. The program is starting with two pilot projects in Hong Kong, and they’re already eyeing up places like Singapore and Taiwan as well as mainland China – where Chan envisages they’ll really be able to scale up. “With regenerative farming, whether through managed grazing or silvopasture, there’s more impact if the acreage is higher – more land gives a higher surface area for carbon sequestration.”

Going full circle

Chan also champions education to redefine our relationship with food and how everything we source and eat links to biodiversity and sustainability. “In cities such as Hong Kong where 90% of food is imported and we rely heavily on convenience, we’ve lost connection to where our food comes from. Hence why we also have a massive food waste problem – we’re one of the most wasteful cities in the world,” Chan continues. Only 60 years ago, two-thirds of the vegetables consumed in Hong Kong were grown locally. “Arable land has been wiped out for property developments, so the population of farmers has decreased. We need to bring that knowledge back.”

In the future, ZFPA will launch the Carbon Neutrality program, working with chefs to carry out life cycle assessments (LCA) to measure, reduce and offset their

carbon emissions. “An LCA examines a restaurant’s past 12 months of inventory, as well as energy, water and waste to ascertain the amount of CO2 its operations emit on average.” Alongside calculating a restaurant’s carbon offset the data can inform and change sourcing habits, for example, swapping out more carbon-intensive ingredients. “If a restaurant is using prawns for a dish, the tool may suggest using mussels instead as they cause 30% less carbon emissions,” says Chan.

An early supporter of ZFPA, Matt Reid and Malcolm Wood’s restaurant group Maximal Concepts has championed sustainability since its founding, prioritizing it with what Reid calls “increasing fervor” over the years, “challenging every aspect of our supply chain and making hard choices.”

Two of the main barriers Reid sees for restaurants to achieve carbon neutrality in Hong Kong are “cost and consumer disinterest”.

“The reality is that positive steps for the environment do not drive any increased customer support, which makes the extra cost harder for most to assume,” he says.

To address the issue the duo is launching a new venture, “targeting zero waste and full circularity by 2025 to incubate learnings and new technologies in this space.” While they’re keeping details under wraps, they explain it will price carbon mitigation costs into their cost of goods sold (COGS). “This is a systemic change to look at our ingredients from a more natural capital cost viewpoint.”



From far left: Serving sustainable food; growing more locally; sourcing cage-free eggs

As for the additional challenges of sustainable sourcing operating somewhere as densely populated as Hong Kong? Reid emphasizes, “It’s hard but let’s not forget Hong Kong used to produce 60% of its consumed produce. The whole system needs to be re-built, re-invested in and supported. New food tech is also making this reality easier to achieve. We now buy all our salad greens from Genius Greens an aeroponic farm in Kowloon. The quality is better than any imported product too.”

The rise of agri-tech

High-tech agricultural initiatives such as urban indoor farms are making waves across the region as a solution to procurement issues. Matt Kovac, the Singapore-based executive director of Food Industry Asia explains: “The main challenge to sustainable sourcing for foodservice operators is the availability of ingredients where they operate. Take the example of French fries in Singapore – potatoes are not available in Singapore, and perhaps not even in [neighboring] Malaysia. It’s the same issue with meats and seafood.”

This is where controlled-environment farming steps in. “It makes it possible to grow [certain ingredients locally] on a scale to meet commercial needs, regardless of the climate, floods, droughts and other disruptions to the supply chain,” Kovac says. “And being within the same country of consumption means it shortens the supply chain and could reduce transportation

and thereby food waste through damage.”

Considering food security concerns and the rate of urbanization, perhaps it’s unsurprising vertical farms are on the up in cities across the region (it’s already home to over 500 plant factories according to The Asia Food Challenge report), however, they’re not a silver bullet. In Singapore, Kovac continues: “Urban farms can cater to a percentage of our demand for vegetables, but not for other staples such as meats, rice, sugar, etc. To enhance food security, we might have to return to our farming roots and set aside land (perhaps offshore islands) as dedicated farming areas to fulfil our protein needs.”

Challenges aside, these innovative solutions are part of a bigger and smarter push for sustainability: “We’re seeing companies consider how they can minimize and reduce waste and resource use, how they can grow more with less land and water, protecting biodiversity, increasing the use of clean and renewable energy at production, storage and distribution, and making commitments towards helping climate mitigation...” Ultimately, investors, regulators and consumers will increasingly demand sustainability and reduced carbon footprint. “There are opportunities for companies who are first-movers and who recognize this and act fast. Climate adaptation is as important as climate mitigation, and forward-thinking companies are already reaping the benefits of moving fast.” ■



“Future-proofing supply chains”: Responsible sourcing and animal welfare

Alongside initiatives to draw down carbon, in recent years and intensified by Covid-19 there’s a growing demand for more responsible livestock management. “Consumers are increasingly choosing food that is produced sustainably and ethically,” says Elissa Lane, co-founder and CEO of Singapore-based multinational consultancy Global Food Partners (pictured above).

Working with businesses to implement cage-free egg procurement and production in Asia, Lane believes transitioning to higher animal welfare practices presents opportunities globally. “Not only are food businesses making commitments to sustainable and responsible sourcing, they’re also increasingly publicly communicating progress on their commitments to give credible and transparent information to investors, animal advocacy groups, suppliers and consumers.

“On the other side of the supply chain, improving livestock management is also key to the long-term sustainability of farmers in Asia. Major food businesses in the region have pledged to only source eggs from cage-free farms and are only doing business with farmers who meet this requirement.

By transitioning to higher welfare cage-free housing systems, farmers can take advantage of this growing market opportunity, future proof and remain competitive.”

Hospital food getting better

An independent review of National Health Service catering in England before the pandemic highlighted the need to bring together catering, dietetics and nursing to help improve nutritional outcomes for patients. More than a year on, Elly Earls find out how the report's recommendations are being implemented

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, it was clear that hospital catering in England wasn't meeting the needs of patients, visitors and staff. Stereotypes of bland, reheated slop hadn't come out of thin air, even if things had improved significantly, particularly on the patient feeding front, with 58% of those surveyed in 2019 rating the food they received as good or very good.

The same survey revealed that 39% of National Health Service (NHS) staff felt the food and catering facilities offered in their workplaces were poor, with complaints including lack of access to healthy food choices and options that meet their dietary requirements as well as closed restaurants on weekends and Bank Holidays.

It was against this backdrop that Philip Shelley, formerly of Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, and celebrity chef Prue Leith decided to lead a sprawling

independent review into the challenges of catering within the NHS including recommendations on how they could be better addressed. The report was released in March 2020.

And while the pandemic that followed immediately afterwards could have resulted in hospital food being dropped even further down the list of priorities than in previous years – arguably the NHS had more important concerns – the hope of the report authors is that the opposite will happen.

If anything, they stressed, Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of good nutrition to the health outcomes, recovery and rehabilitation of patients, as well as the wellbeing of staff who have had to work in even more stressful and difficult circumstances than usual.

They also argued that with a median spend of £4.56 per patient meal, including labor costs and overheads, exceeding the budget of meals offered by other English





public services, there is no excuse for the NHS not to up its game and offer staff, visitors and patients nutritious, quality food, no matter the time of the day or night.

A whole-hospital approach

While the report is careful to stress that there is no one-size-fits-all solution in terms of food delivery model or equipment, the authors believe there is a handful of key things that all successful hospitals have in common, including adopting a ‘whole-hospital approach’.

This approach means integrating food into the life of the hospital – treating the restaurant as the hub of the hospital, where staff and visitors eat together; ensuring the chef and catering team are given the same respect and care as other staff members; and including food as part of a patient’s care and treatment.

“We want mealtimes to be the focus of the day for patients; they don’t have much else to look forward to when they’re lying in bed,” says Shelley. “Similarly for staff, we want their break times and mealtimes to be enjoyable; we want them to look forward to that 15 to 20 minutes they get and perhaps be able to go to a wellbeing area where the sun is shining and where there is good healthy food available. Often it’s a 15-minute walk to get to a retail outlet or a staff restaurant, which is no good if your break is only that long.”

Since the review was released, there has been an increased focus across the NHS on implementing fresh-food vending machines. “It’s about stepping up the quality of choice around the clock to ensure that whether you’re an afternoon or a night worker, you still have a suitable choice,” says Shelley, who, since the review was released has been working closely with the government and hospital trusts on a three-year plan to implement its recommendations.

For Duncan Hepburn FCSI, senior design and management consultant with Hepburn Associates, the challenge around fresh food vending machines is ensuring capacity meets demand. “While you may be able to load that machine at 5pm when the >

day shift catering team are knocking off, if the uptake is huge, there might not be anything left at 2am,” he explains. “It’s important to manage and understand the usage of it.”

The power of three – or four

The review also urges hospitals to use the ‘power of three’, in other words, bring together catering, dietetics and nursing to help improve nutritional outcomes for patients. Some Trusts, like Nottingham, have gone one step further, stressing the importance of the ‘power of four’.

“Our key partner in all of this is the patient,” says Chris Neale, assistant head of facilities (City Campus and Catering) at Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust. “When we were developing our new menu, we went out to the public and said, ‘If you were in hospital, what would you like to see on your menu?’ We had a big media push through local radio and social media, and we were inundated with requests from the public of Nottingham. It’s not about a catering manager sitting around a desk and saying here’s your menu.”

The Trust’s new vegan menu was also developed in collaboration with its patient partnership group, and since it was introduced, uptake has increased 100%.

In addition, to ensure continuous improvement, Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust undertakes regular meal observations with catering, dietetics and nursing representatives present.

“When there’s an audit with just one individual, scores tend to be high – 98% or even 100%. It’s almost like marking your own homework,” Neale says. “When other services are there to challenge – clinical to catering or catering to dietetic – we can better identify things we need to improve on.”

This could be as simple as ensuring condiments are being offered to the patient, rather than sitting in storage slowly edging past their sell by dates, or that main courses and desserts are served separately.

“We openly admit that our biggest challenge is the final nine yards,” Neale acknowledges. “It doesn’t matter what else



we do – whether it’s sustainable purchasing or high-quality food – if it’s just slopped on a plate and given to someone at the end, you may as well forget about the rest.”

Hepburn has seen this challenge across many trusts. “Food can be cooked in a variety of different ways within the hospital environment, whether it’s off-site, whether it’s cooked locally, whether it’s hot-produced,” he says. “But if it sits around for an hour before it’s served, that’s when it deteriorates. It’s that final bit of service and delivery and the presentation of the food that really helps with the enjoyment of the food.”

Quality over cost

One of the big changes Shelley is trying to encourage hospital trusts to make is prioritising quality over cost, as you would, he says, if you were shopping for your own home. “Most hospital teams have a decent budget so I’m saying to anybody involved

with catering procurement, buy as if it’s your own money and buy quality rather than just buying something you think is a cheaper option,” he says. “If you buy quality, whether for staff or patients, they will enjoy the food a lot more, more will be eaten and it will help towards recovery and minimize waste. The public sector is also a great link for local producers that are working really hard, particularly in the current climate, to get back on their feet.”

Minimizing waste can also be achieved through the implementation of digital ordering systems. It is an investment, but one that Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust has seen pay off. “Patients can choose their meal as near to mealtimes as possible to ensure there’s no waste, as well as selecting exactly what they would like, down to which vegetables they want on their plate,” Neale says.

“When we moved to our digital ordering system, one supplier contacted me to



“It doesn’t matter what else we do if it’s just slopped on a plate and given to someone...you may as well forget about the rest”

servicing sustainable local products. The turnover of The Foundry has exceeded goals even with the limits and restrictions implemented due to the pandemic.

Wilson’s advice to other trusts is to review the busy operational times of their outlets and the high footfall areas and work out how they can make best of that. “When there’s downtime, they might want to look at the numbers of staff they’re employing to provide the service and think differently about how they could make use of their facilities,” she suggests.

Creating a buzz

One of the most important aspects of Shelley’s role in bringing the independent review’s recommendations into reality across the NHS is to create a buzz around hospital food.

He says that having Prue Leith on board has been a great help. “The issue we’ve had bringing celebrity chefs on board before has been that there wasn’t any follow-up or management plan to see things through and monitor progress,” he explains.

“But when Prue and I met with the Secretary of State, it was made very clear that this would have a three-year plan attached to it and we both put our hats in the ring and said we’re not just here to do the review and launch the report; we’re in it for the long haul. We’ve got real drive here and real credibility. The world is changing and the NHS needs to get on board and not lag behind.” ■

ask whether we had a new supplier for vegetables because our order had dropped significantly. That’s because we’re asking what patients want and only delivering that. We saw a saving of £140,000 by investing in this system.”

Strong brand identity

Shelley also wants to help hospitals re-energize the retail side of their foodservice offer to increase footfall. Creating a strong brand identity is one way to do so, as Emma Wilson, head of catering for Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has discovered. She and her team were tasked with reducing their reliance on subsidies and as a big part of that decided to work on how they promoted their outlets.

It included the development of an eye-catching spoon-and-fork concept for marketing materials across the Trust and cooperating with a local coffee company Roastology to open a grab-and-go outlet

EUROPEAN EFFORTS

Hospitals across Europe are exploring how to reduce their waste. For example, the Modèle d’Économie Circulaire Alimentaire pour les Hôpitaux Français (MECAHF) project was developed by Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) Europe in collaboration with the Centre Hospitalier de Niort (CH Niort) in France.

It started in 2018, a response partly to the lack of available information on food procurement and food waste within the European healthcare sector, which accounts for approximately 8% of the workforce and 10% of the GDP in Europe.

The project assessed food waste throughout the supply chain of CH Niort for a three-year period and aimed to reduce food wasted by 20% and increase the proportion of healthy and sustainable food by 10%.

There were five key action points:

- Developing a preliminary patient survey about hospital food services
- Measuring the quantity of food wasted post-consumption in both the kitchen and cafeteria
- Analyzing hospital purchases and assessing which products can be substituted, to gradually move towards more fresh, local, and organic food
- Identifying and engaging with a network of local and organic farmers
- Evaluating progress and identifying opportunities to scale-up initiatives to other institutions across France and Europe

Progress was made on all fronts, including the adoption of a sustainable purchasing policy and the development of a food measurement tool and carbon footprint calculator.

A comparison of waste generated in 2018 and 2020 showed a reduction in some waste categories, particularly recycled (from 29% to 23%) and bio-waste (from 35% to 27%), in the central food production unit. This reduction, in part, was thanks to increased training and awareness, as well as better portion controls.

The project also demonstrated that involving a wide range of stakeholders, including patients and local organic farmers, is essential in developing and implementing sustainable food strategies within hospitals that help to prevent and reduce food waste.

Hospitals in Denmark, France, Iceland, Norway, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Spain are working with HCWH to develop similar initiatives.

Operations flow with **KITCHENS TO GO**[®]

A challenge for many food service operators is accommodating the dining needs of guests during a facility renovation. As the industry continues to evolve, streamlining kitchens with automation and robotics and right-sizing footprints will be a vital piece of the puzzle to create smarter, more efficient operations.

A superior alternative to phasing construction, **Kitchens To Go**[®] (KTG) provides innovative temporary and permanent foodservice facility solutions that include state-of-the-art equipment, functionality, and design allowing food service providers the ability to continue or expand operations.

From planned renovations to unplanned situations, KTG's mobile, modular, and containerized **Solutions To Go**[™] will keep you cooking.

RENOVATION | NEW CONSTRUCTION | EXPANDED CAPACITY | DISASTER RECOVERY | PERMANENT MODULAR CONSTRUCTION



When planned from the start,
projects that utilize Kitchens To Go[®]
never experience a lapse in service.

Our experts equip your team with flexible foodservice facilities that keep foodservice operations uninterrupted. See us in action online, or contact us at **(888) 212-8011**.



Learn More Online!
Scan the code or visit:
www.KitchensToGo.com/fcsi-q321

KITCHENS TO GO[®]
by mobile modular

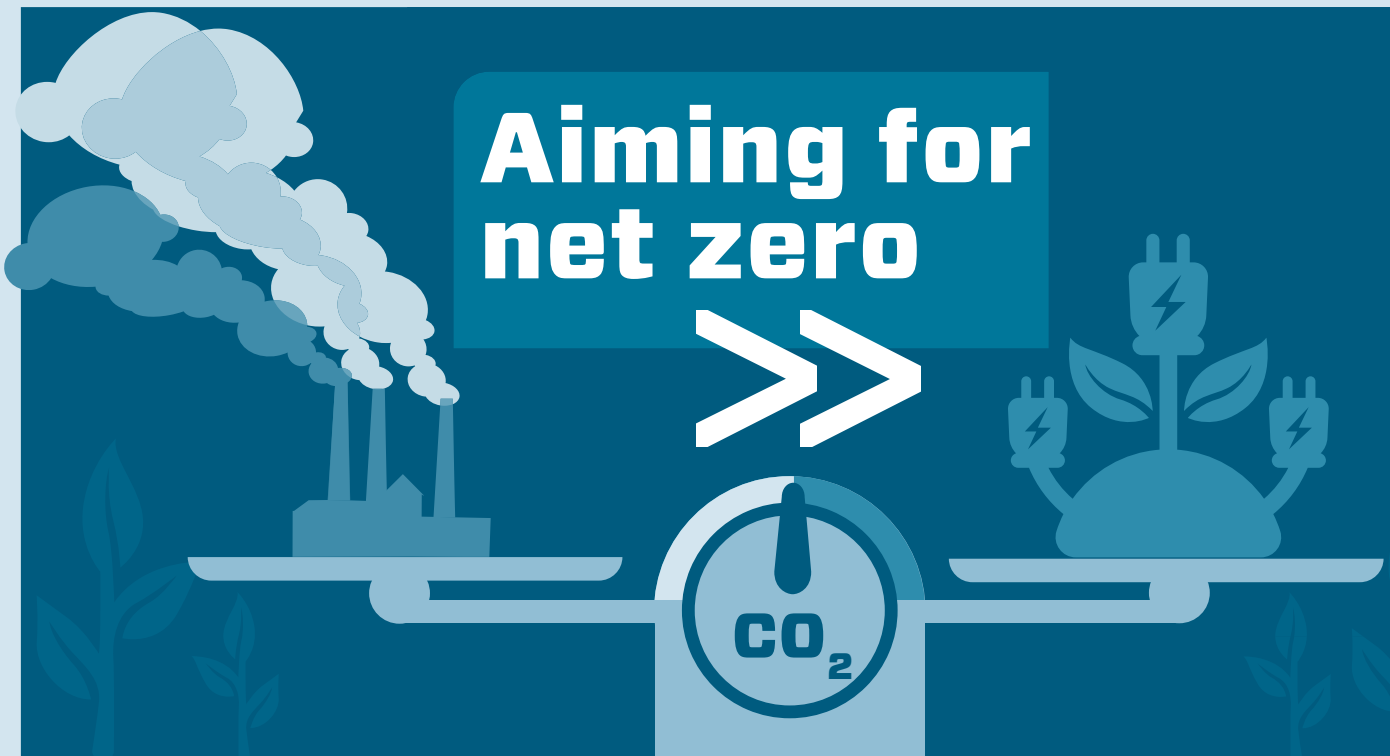
We Keep You Cooking![™]



SUSTAINABILITY IN FOODSERVICE

HELPING THE SECTOR BECOME GREENER: JIM BANKS TAKES A
LOOK AT NET ZERO TARGETS, INNOVATIONS IN SUSTAINABLE
PACKAGING AND THE POTENTIAL OF THE INTERNET OF THINGS





Net zero is a familiar phrase in every industry, as governments push to cut carbon emissions from their economies. However, does everyone understand what it means, beyond simply reducing carbon emissions?

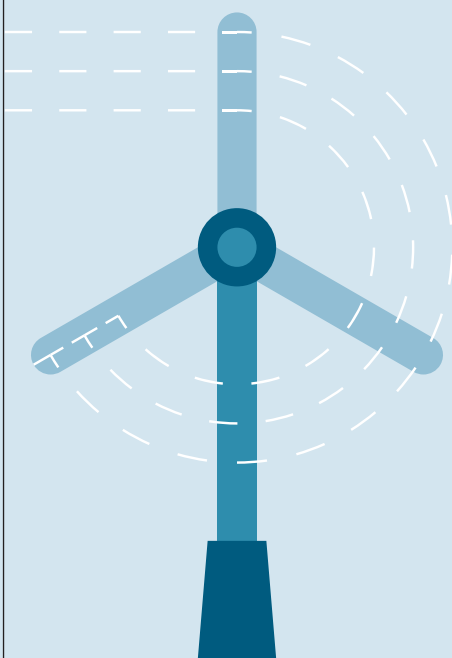
In its purest form, net zero means that energy generated by on-site renewable sources accounts for all a building's energy use. That is a rare occurrence, so some businesses offset their carbon emissions by buying carbon credits – essentially licences to pollute.

“In order to be truly net zero, you also have to offset the generation and line losses for any power that is imported to the site during times when your on-site generation is deficient,” says Richard Young at Frontier Energy, who is the director of the Food Service Technology Center (FSTC). “So, you actually need more on-site power generation than you think. You have to export about 3 kWh for every 1 kWh you import to make up for all the generation and line losses.”

That is a tall order and although net zero has, for a long time, been a design parameter for buildings in remote, off-grid locations, it is relatively new to mainland urban areas. Furthermore, the official definition wasn't agreed until around 2016 and is still in a state of flux. Even in some net-zero buildings, the definition has not included the kitchen, so it is a new concept in the foodservice world.

That said, Young believes the first net-zero restaurant has recently been created by McDonald's (see box p107).

“Net-zero targets are a reaction to climate change and led by government targets, legislation and CSR to ensure that an organization's impact on greenhouse gas emissions is neutral at worst case,” says **Ed Bircham** FCSI, director of UK consultancy Humble Arnold Associates. “The UK, for example, has committed to net zero by 2050. Some organizations are trying to achieve this in 2030, but those decisions need to be made now. It will be a big ask to deliver it on those timescales.”



The concept of net zero now pervades government policy and corporate social responsibility strategies as the world tries to mitigate the effects on the environment of carbon emissions. The foodservice sector is making efforts to be part of the solution; Jim Banks examines the benefits and challenges of cutting carbon

“ELECTRIC KITCHENS HAVE BECOME MORE PREVALENT IN THE LAST 20 YEARS OR SO, AND THIS ADOPTION CONTINUES TO ACCELERATE”

Electrification of the kitchen

Fundamental to any net-zero efforts in foodservice is the use of electric-powered cooking equipment, as this alone has the potential to be fully powered by renewable sources.

“Two years ago, no one cared about sustainability, and you had to do the hard sell with induction cooking,” says David Kaneda, managing principal at Integral Group, an interactive global network of design professionals working on deep green engineering. “Now legislation is forcing the issue. The restaurant industry, too, is realizing that climate change is a big thing, so we are in the middle of a sea change.”

Leading the way are key industries, notably the technology sector, that have made sustainability promises part of their business strategy.

They are divesting their interests in fossil fuel companies, reducing energy

consumption and working with BREEAM and LEED sustainability standards in their buildings. For them, the kitchen is a key area to target for energy use.

“Electric kitchens have become more prevalent in last 20 years or so, and this adoption continues to accelerate,” says Bircham. “This is due to improvement in induction cooking technology and most technological advances in electrically powered equipment, such as pressurized multi-pan cookers, but we have seen more clients asking for all-electric kitchens as they seek to divest themselves of using gas, oil or coal.”

All-electric cooking means lower ventilation rates, as well as a reduced risk of fire and poor air quality in the kitchen. In fact, it could soon become a legal requirement in some places.

“California is going all-electric,” says Kaneda. “Cities have passed new building standards stipulating all new buildings must be all-electric with no gas. This could be extended to existing buildings.”

In the US, this could mean kitchens becoming more European.

“In Europe, there’s less waste,” says **Nahum Goldberg** FCSI of NGAssociates Foodservice Consultants. “The US has had all the space and all the resources,

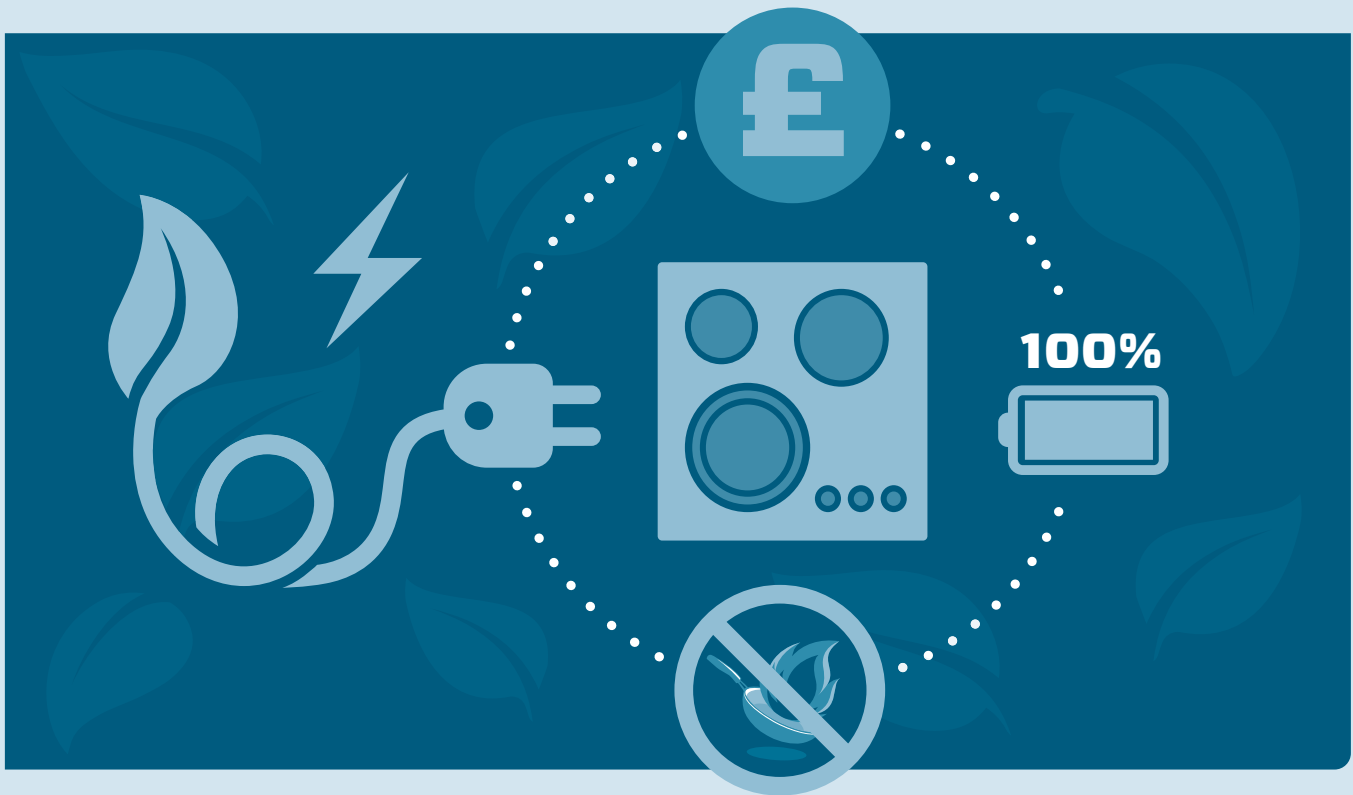
but now energy is expensive, and labor is scarce. Induction is more expensive upfront than a gas hob. However, smart management of electric kitchen equipment can help to increase energy efficiency.”

That cost-efficiency could be key in moving the foodservice sector towards all-electric cooking, but for some it is out of reach, and it means little without on-site renewable generation capacity.

“It can mean keeping energy costs as low as possible,” says **Kip Serfozo** FCSI, director at Cini•Little International.

“Net zero seems hard and large corporations are doing it by buying carbon credits, or by using green energy >





for lighting and power. Companies with deep pockets can get ahead in moving towards net zero because they can afford the technology. For others, it is hard to achieve and stay profitable.”

“The big guys can look at sustainability, but in the US fracking has brought down the cost of natural gas a lot,” adds Kaneda. “Electric is not always the cheaper option for a commercial kitchen.”

No change without sacrifice

Electric cooking technology continues to advance, but it comes at a price. First, there is the financial cost, but second comes a stylistic cost.

“Reducing fossil fuels and using 100% renewable power for electricity makes it difficult to create engaging front-of-house situations, though it can be done,” says Bircham. “Electric cooking does not have the same element of performance, but we may see it used more.”

“The idea of net zero is beginning to factor in the corporate and industrial

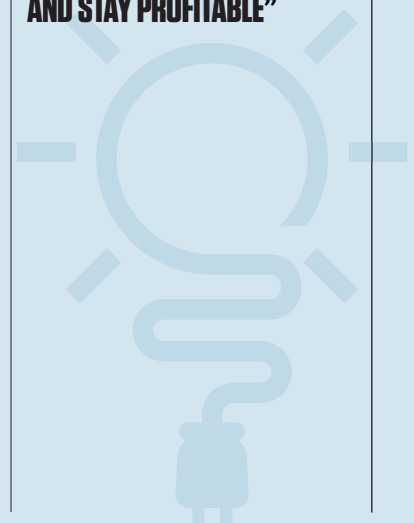
sectors but not in hotels and restaurants,” he adds. “In hospitality, divesting yourself of fossil fuels means no gas or solid fuel cooking, which is a difficult one. It goes against the idea of authenticity.”

At stake is the theatre of flame, a key ingredient in show kitchens. Electric wok burners, such as those Kaneda owns, can potentially produce more food compared to a gas wok in a commercial setting, and can match the quality, though few are available in the US.

“You’re not going to get flames from an electric wok, but you can get the same quality of food and flavor,” says Goldberg. “An electric deck oven won’t give you the flames you see in a pizza oven, but an electric hearth can still look great. The challenge is to get chefs and architects to come round to that point of view. It is a challenge to educate owners, policymakers, operating teams and engineers to understand that electric kitchens can meet their culinary needs.”

Induction cooking also requires different practical considerations, not >

“COMPANIES WITH DEEP POCKETS CAN GET AHEAD IN MOVING TOWARDS NET ZERO BECAUSE THEY CAN AFFORD THE TECHNOLOGY. FOR OTHERS, IT IS HARD TO ACHIEVE AND STAY PROFITABLE”



Sleek, modern styling

Industry-leading technology

Incredibly fast response

Master-Class service

AND THAT'S JUST THE
DISHWASHER



Unsplash: Maria Orlova



Discover MEIKO's 5-Star Clean

Your restaurant is at the top of its class. Keep it there with MEIKO's new M-iClean U with ComfortAir™ technology. It reduces steam by up to 80% for incredibly fast drying time. Moisture on dishes is reduced by as much 98%, and up to 75% on glassware – to virtually eliminate spotting and hand-polishing.

Recognized around the world, our dishwashers save you money by sustainably minimizing the amount of water, energy and chemicals used. All while delivering clean like you've never seen. **MEIKO's M-iClean Series:** The world's best (and most beautiful) undercounter dishwashers.



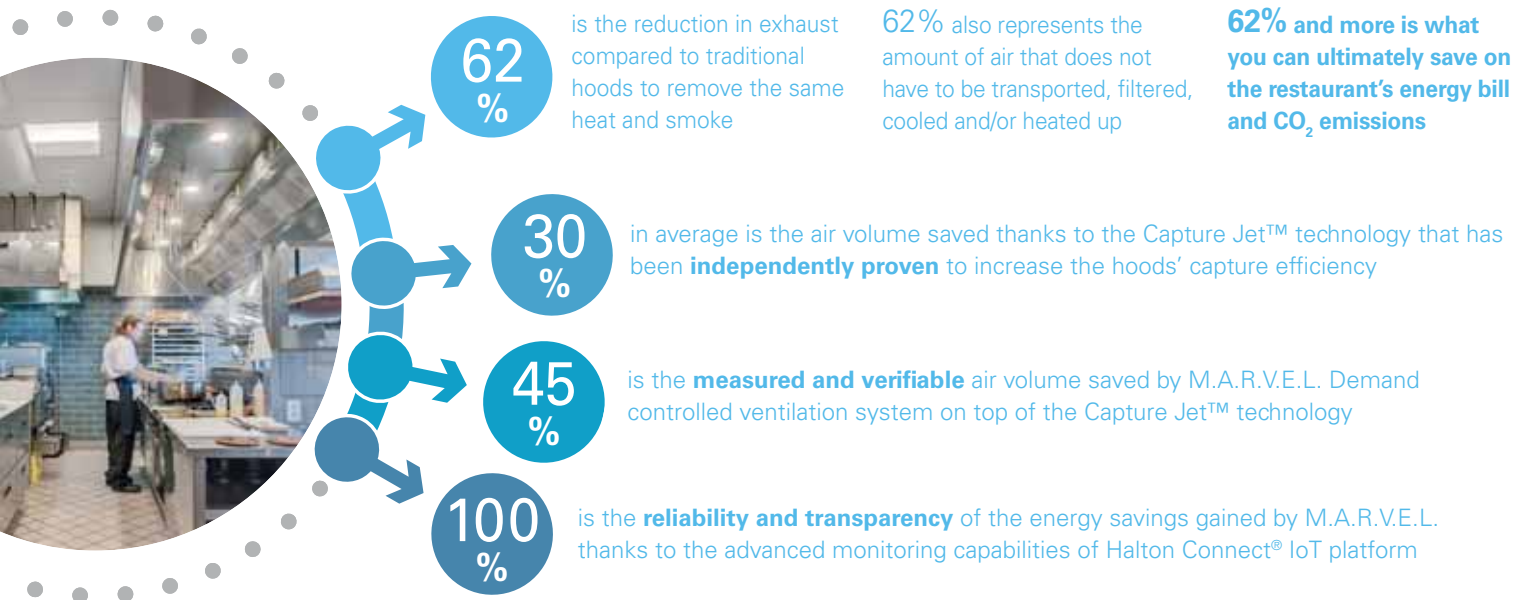
Scan or [CLICK](#) to see how ComfortAir™ technology outperforms the others.
Or visit: <http://bit.ly/LessSteam>

800.55.MEIKO | sales@meiko.us | www.meiko.us | [in](#) [f](#) [t](#) [v](#)





We save 184 million m³ of air⁽¹⁾ each month
and 194 tons on CO₂ emissions⁽²⁾
on 263 exhaust hoods monitored with Halton Connect[®]



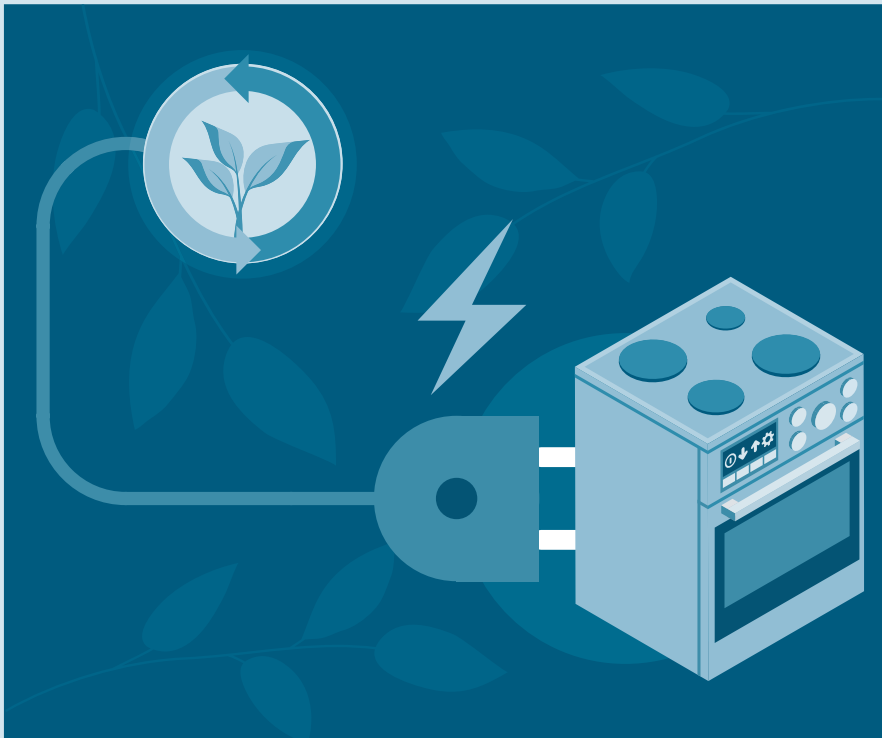
(1) Equivalent to 6480 million of air.

(2) Based on an average CO₂ emission factor of 0.264 kg/kWh for the 10 countries corresponding to the 263 hoods monitored.

Enabling Wellbeing

Halton

Learn more on www.halton.com



least in terms of ventilation. “With induction, there is heat rejection into the electronics, so you need to guarantee some airflow. However, there is less radiant heat out into the kitchen,” says Young. “Electric and gas fryers have similar radiant heat, but switching to induction cooking means there are no products from combustion that need to be ventilated.”

Inevitably, larger enterprises will take the lead, but it remains to be seen whether smaller foodservice chains can follow in their wake. “For big tech companies or hospitals, it is possible to go all-electric, but for small businesses the pricing of the equipment and the energy costs could be challenging,” says Young. “It could wipe out part of the restaurant industry unless you have social equity.”

Onus on operators

Whether net zero is attainable or not, the foodservice sector can take steps towards it, which will bring the benefits of efficiency and waste reduction.

“You can also engineer a menu to improve sustainability,” says Goldberg. “Some icemakers can be programmed to make ice at off-peak times, using a timer. Water heaters can heat water off-peak, and it is possible to cook at off-peak times then warm up the food to serve it.”

“People are doing their best to achieve net zero,” he adds. “Clients are making an effort to make things better for employees, customers, society and the planet. Things are moving in the right direction.”

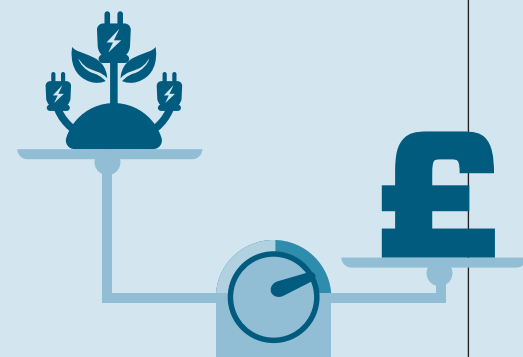
However, due to the pandemic, net zero targets and sustainability have fallen down the list of priorities so it is up to consultants to ensure they rise to the top again. “The priority is to get the industry back on its feet,” says Serfozo. “Sustainability is still on the list, but the focus will be on those measures that pay back the quickest. We need to begin with baby steps and build momentum. Consultants, equipment manufacturers, owners and the communities in which they operate all need to influence the sustainability journey.” ■

The net-zero Big Mac

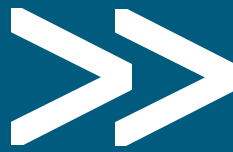
The first carbon neutral McDonald's restaurant recently opened at Florida's Walt Disney World, as part of the chain's strategy to reduce its carbon emissions across its portfolio.

The key features of the restaurant are:

- A commitment to eliminating carbon dioxide emissions through mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineering concepts in the design wherever possible
- A commitment to using 100% electrical energy and eliminating gas-powered cooking and water heating equipment
- Reducing overall energy consumption using, for example, an induced natural ventilation strategy, variable refrigerant flow HVAC systems, high efficiency kitchen equipment, and an air source heat pump water heating scheme
- On-site photovoltaic (PV) solar panels to generate power locally
- Natural cooling and shading for the interior
- Green walls covered with vegetation to lower the incident solar radiation onto the restaurant walls
- A large canopy over the restaurant that both supports the PV array and shades the building and the outdoor dining patio
- A 35% reduction in overall energy use compared to an average McDonald's restaurant



Rethinking packaging for the age of delivery



The rise in delivery and takeout food during the Covid-19 pandemic has pressed operators to look at innovation in packaging to both preserve the quality of the food and minimize environmental impact. Jim Banks considers some of the new ideas being put into practice and where they might lead in the future

Sustainability is about meeting present needs without compromising the ability to meet future needs. As data on the impact of packaging materials, not least plastic, on the environment shows there was already a need to rethink packaging in the foodservice sector. Then came the pandemic.

With lockdowns and social distancing, Covid-19 forced the foodservice sector into a model based largely on delivery and takeout, which creates a dilemma in terms of sustainable packaging.

“Covid has put greater focus on packaging,” says **Rudy Miick** FCSI, founder of The Miick Companies in Boulder, Colorado. “Carryout, delivery and remote ordering will reach new heights, therefore, the overall need for packaging will increase.”

Bans on plastic straws have spread in the US, and the European Union’s ban on

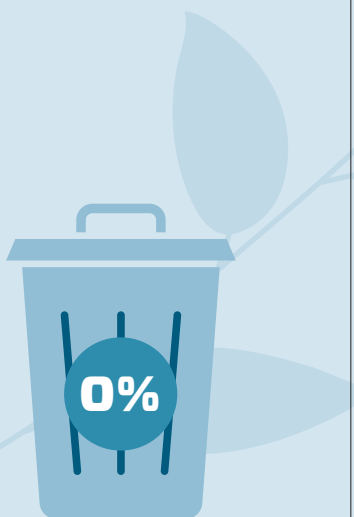
single-use-plastics (SUPs) finally arrived in 2021. But the Center for International Environmental Law indicates that packaging still accounts for 40% of global plastics demand. So, as the industry relies more on deliveries, there is an urgent need to cut back on non-recyclable and non-compostable materials such as clingfilm and polystyrene.




Adversity breeds innovation

Great strides have been made to improve sustainability in packaging, but more needs to be done. According to Tetra Pak, fossil-based plastic production is growing, and only 9% of all plastic is recycled. Furthermore, 32% of all plastic packaging is not collected.

There are, however, innovators out there. Miick knows of a fish market in Toronto that uses packaging that dissolves in hot water within 30 seconds. “It reacts to water with zero impact,”





says Miick. “It costs an additional 25 cents per package, but it is part of the values of the business. It wants to be an active partner in the neighborhood. It costs more, but it’s a selling point.”

Global reusable packaging platform Loop, which promotes durable packaging that customers can return to producers, is growing fast, and quick-service restaurants including Burger King and McDonald’s are taking part. While big chains with strong financial backing might be able to choose more expensive sustainable options, the temptation for smaller businesses is to go cheap. There are, however, exceptions.

Good for brand image

The UMBEL restaurant group, formed by chef Simon Rogan, introduced new packaging solutions during the pandemic to embody both quality and social responsibility. Managing director Sam Ward, who oversees the eight-strong restaurant portfolio in The Lake District, London and Hong Kong, accepts sustainable packaging costs more, but is key to the brand’s identity.

“There are challenges in terms of logistics and cost,” he says. “1,000 plastic straws cost £3.50, but 1,000 paper straws cost more than £10. We wanted to reduce packaging as much as possible, and for it to be recyclable and compostable.”

“It is driven by individuals, not organizations and not the government,” Ward adds. “There’s a tax coming in the UK of £300 per tonne of materials that are less than 30% recyclable. It’s nothing. Those materials should be banned. Why is plastic packaging still available?”

Making the right choices

More eco-friendly packaging solutions come to market all the time. For example, Spanish designer Ana Roquero, who launched Cookplay in 2014, recently designed delivery packaging made of 100% sugar cane.

“The material is totally compostable and biodegradable,” she says. “I think we will see a moment when every restaurant and everybody in hospitality will have their own delivery business and they have to work out what they cook and how it reaches the final client.”

“The pandemic has accelerated that transformation,” she adds. “It helps that there are big name chefs out there who spread the word.”

Operators of all sizes can make a difference and research suggests that customers increasingly care about sustainability. A recent McKinsey survey of US customers suggests they would be willing to pay more for sustainably packaged products if more were available.

“Any foodservice business always has the opportunity to make the right choice,” says Miick. “It is about values integration – considering profitability, the environment and people. Start with what you can afford. People want clean food and responsible packaging.”

A long road ahead

There is much work to do, and regulation will only go so far. “Sustainability means overcoming challenges – doing something now for the future,” says Ward. “It feels like a luxury to buy something sustainable, as it costs more, but we should actually be paying more for the less sustainable options.”

Some organizations, including The Flexible Packaging Association and Product Stewardship Association, are calling for extended producer responsibility at the end of life for packaging and paper. But there is still resistance to the additional cost sustainability brings.

“Things are moving in the right direction and if you want to engage with sustainability, there are real choices,” says Miick. “The opportunity for us, as consultants, is to not back away from the resistance. Be tenacious, keep bringing it up. It is at the root of our ethics.” ■



DELIVERING CERTAINTY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

In print, digital and via events, FCSI's portfolio helps your brand reach every Professional member consultant, worldwide



FOODSERVICE CONSULTANT IN PRINT ● ONLINE ● IN YOUR INBOX

To advertise across these channels contact: sales@foodserviceconsultant.org

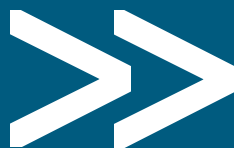


fcsi.org

sales@foodserviceconsultant.org

editorial@foodserviceconsultant.org

IoT for greener kitchens



The Internet of Things will play a part in reducing labor costs, tracking equipment performance and maintenance, and tracking food safety. As kitchens are poised to become much more high-tech. Jim Banks asks consultants and manufacturers how connected devices will help the foodservice sector achieve sustainability goals

The Internet of Things (IoT) has been a buzzword across every industry in recent years, not least foodservice, and the concept of connected devices gathering data to help businesses optimize their operation has increasingly become a reality. Restaurants are using IoT devices to monitor kitchen appliances as the concept of the smart kitchen gains traction, but does it offer more than just efficiency?

Refrigerators, fryers, grills and ovens are increasingly connected to the internet, allowing them to be monitored remotely and for performance data to be aggregated across many different sites. That data is potentially valuable and could underpin better operational practices, energy efficiency programs and process

standardization across multiple sites. How this feeds into sustainability, however, is only now becoming clear.

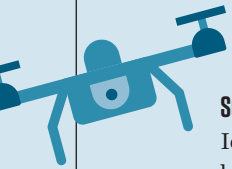
“IoT is an information gathering tool,” says **Vinoo André Mehera** FCSI at Promafox in Switzerland. “It can verify the supply chain, monitor the performance of equipment, keep track of cooking temperatures and many more things. The technology is about information and using it to optimize the business.”

“We’ll see it in bigger chains for process standardization and efficiency,” he adds. “Smaller operators, might use IoT to get a leg up over their competitors by aggregating data and making sense of it.”

For now, IoT devices are mainly used by large operators with multiple sites, such as those in the travel sector, though retailers and smaller foodservice outlets are also likely to embrace the technology in the future. Exponential growth in uptake is likely, but it is still early days.

“IoT is still in its infancy within the catering industry, but interest in its potential application is on the rise,” says Hans Hammer, head of global pre-sales and OnE Connected Solutions at Electrolux Professional. “There are many different connectivity solutions currently being developed by companies, and a wide variety of users.” >





Sustainable future buried in data

IoT systems started out by providing basic statistical data that allowed owners to see the usage of the appliances. Now, the latest technology, such as Electrolux Professional’s OnE platform, facilitates the cloud-sharing of recipes within an entire fleet of appliances, making it easy to manage changing recipes and food quality within the chain.

“Larger chain organizations have benefited from having some basic fleet management options,” says Hammer. “Effective use of all assets has traditionally been a challenge for these types of operators, and IoT platforms have made this a lot easier. Furthermore, being able to manage food safety through a HACCP monitoring functionality has proven to be of great value.”

Food safety and supply chain security are key applications, as **Brandon Kua**, South East Asia Trustee of FCSI APD and an FCSI member in Malaysia, discovered. “I went to Thailand to visit farmers because of the logistics problems caused by the pandemic,” he says. “I found that Alibaba had collaborated with a farm to implement IoT devices to collect data on soil conditions, temperature and humidity. IoT will be used more widely in the food supply chain once cost issues are resolved.”

Beyond applications in agriculture, IoT devices have many uses in the kitchen. Cameras and monitors can be used to track and modify employee behavior, control cooking temperatures, reinforce hygiene protocols and much more. In hoods and HVAC systems they can also start to have an impact on energy use. For instance, interactive hood controls that respond automatically to needs rather than continuously running – throttling up and down in response to environmental changes – could lead to energy savings.

“A sensor on a condensing exhaust hood could reduce energy consumption



by double digits because the hoods would be used only when needed,” says **Joseph Schumaker** FCSI, president and CEO of US consultancy FoodSpace. “The sensors exist, and they are not too expensive.”

“By giving even basic insights into how an appliance is being used, operators can change the way they work,” agrees Hammer. “A dishwasher may be turned on early in the morning to process a few racks, then remains idle until lunch, all the while maintaining the temperature of the water inside the tanks. This is a waste of energy. Creating awareness of this through access to data is of significant use.”

Similarly, connected devices communicating with each other can improve energy efficiency. For instance, >

“A SENSOR ON A CONDENSING EXHAUST HOOD COULD REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION BY DOUBLE DIGITS BECAUSE THE HOODS WOULD BE USED ONLY WHEN NEEDED”





Introducing the *NEW FilterQuick Intuition™*

SUPERIOR BY DESIGN

RELIABILITY

Mechanical improvements to sensors, fans, controls, and other components to enhance performance and minimize downtime.



SERVICEABILITY

Serviceable components accessible from front of fryer for easier and quicker removal making service calls more efficient and minimizing downtime.



INTUITIVE CONTROLS

New next generation, capacitive touch controller with modern user interactions found on a smart device that takes the guesswork out of fryer operations.



AUTOMATIC, DIRECT INTERNET CONNECTION

No need to connect to Wi-Fi or an edge server for accessing Cloud capabilities such as remote configuration, data analysis, and diagnostics.



FRYMASTER®

A Welbilt Brand

a combi oven could speak to a blast chiller, telling it when to spring into action when the food is cooked. The same concept could be applied to other devices, optimizing water consumption and detergents, or reducing food waste.

Turning information into answers

Mehera at Promafox is working on a feasibility study for a sustainable kitchen in a university that uses artificial intelligence (AI), IoT and other technologies, including modular, reusable equipment that can be reconfigured without major changes to water, air and power inlets.

“In a smart kitchen, assets, people and products must work together,” he says. “Using multi-function equipment that talks to each other, keeping customers happy, using supplies well, maintaining optimal inventory – all that needs data so people can make the right decisions.”

Mehera hints at the next challenge in getting IoT to optimize performance and, ultimately, improve sustainability. While generating vast amounts of data is easy using IoT, analyzing that data to generate valuable insight is more complicated.

“AI is screaming at us,” says Rudy Miick, Founder of US-based consultancy The Miick Companies. “We have copious amounts of data, but that data is often in silos. There is, however, an appetite to use data better, and what we need is the next layer to integrate and analyze that data using AI. We are satiated with data, but it is not giving us the right information.”

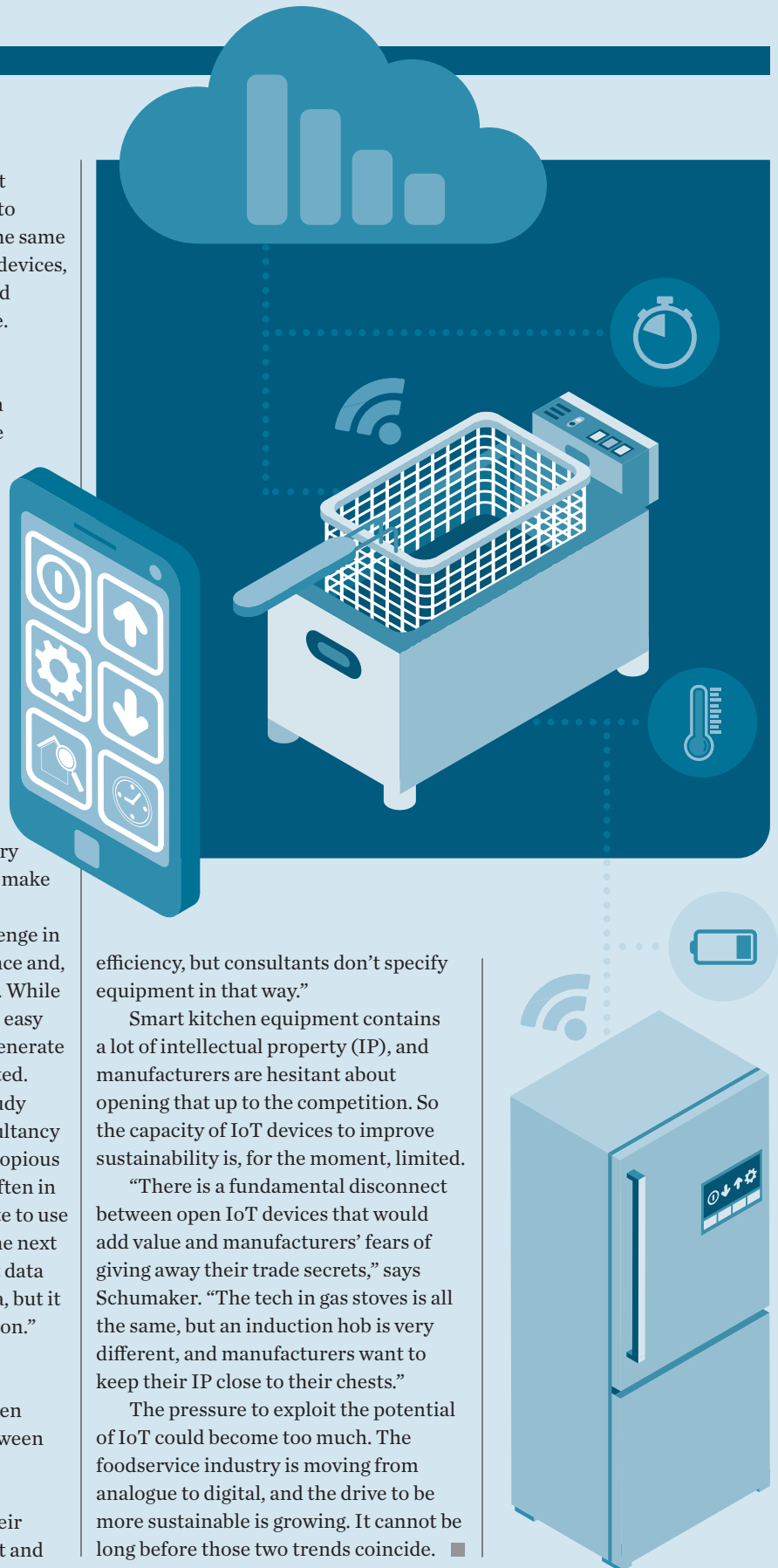
“IoT is not in use much, and part of the problem is that for a connected kitchen you need an open architecture and data-sharing between manufacturers,” adds Schumaker. “If your equipment is all from one manufacturer then you can use their platform and get some data insight and

efficiency, but consultants don’t specify equipment in that way.”

Smart kitchen equipment contains a lot of intellectual property (IP), and manufacturers are hesitant about opening that up to the competition. So the capacity of IoT devices to improve sustainability is, for the moment, limited.

“There is a fundamental disconnect between open IoT devices that would add value and manufacturers’ fears of giving away their trade secrets,” says Schumaker. “The tech in gas stoves is all the same, but an induction hob is very different, and manufacturers want to keep their IP close to their chests.”

The pressure to exploit the potential of IoT could become too much. The foodservice industry is moving from analogue to digital, and the drive to be more sustainable is growing. It cannot be long before those two trends coincide. ■





Success with coffee needs passion. **We are your partner.**

Welcome to Melitta Professional

Not being satisfied with the first available solution. But constantly improving. Always making things better. Regardless of whether it's about the perfect roast, the most innovative brewing unit, technical service or digital solutions. That's Melitta Professional. Curious? professional@melitta.de



Scan code and
find out more



BRIEFING

Trends and events shaping foodservice around the globe

THIS ISSUE

116

Revoking some of the tariffs imposed on food and drink products to help foodservice

119

Will the increased cost of food and labor faced by foodservice businesses in the post-pandemic-reality make hikes in menu pricing an inevitability?



122

Juliet Martin takes a look at some of the foreign foodservice brands thriving in the Chinese mainland market

127

With new healthy eating legislation proposed in the UK Julian Edwards FCSI weighs up what it means for consultants

130

My kitchen: Rafa Panatieri takes Tina Nielsen into the kitchen of his Barcelona pizzeria Sartoria Panatieri. As well as great ingredients and top equipment, he says the kitchen is also about the culture



DUTIES SUSPENDED

Global tariff suspensions offer support to restaurants, food buyers and consumers



New agreements between the US and the European Union (EU) and between the US and the UK will suspend tariffs that have been levied on imported food and beverage products for the next five years. The new agreements are poised to give restaurants a break, as they rely on these products, which include cheese, olives, wine, seafood and others, to expand menus at better prices.

The National Restaurant Association in the US has argued that while the tariffs were in place, they created volatility and uncertainty for an industry that operates on thin profit margins and deals in real time with fluctuations in supply prices. “For two years, the Association pressed for the removal of these tariffs, which were punishing American restaurants and consumers, not the governments or industries involved in the dispute,” Sean Kennedy, executive vice president of public affairs for the National Restaurant Association, said in a statement. “Following the challenges of the pandemic, these tariffs would only have served to cause deeper harm and threaten industry recovery.”

Restaurants had been challenged in a quest to find new suppliers who could meet their needs without significant time delays or cost differences, and many have struggled to afford the changes because of altered supply chains, Kennedy added.

In 2019, former President Donald Trump imposed a \$7.5bn tariff on 19 categories of European goods, including 25% tariffs on luxury food products. In response, the European Commission instituted 25% tariffs on 130 US products collectively valued at \$4bn, according to published reports. Records from the EU show that during the dispute, the US paid \$2.2bn in duties, while European imports paid around \$1.1bn. ■

LEAD(ER) BY DESIGN



TYPE 1 FINISH 3CM TOP W/ PARTIAL WATERFALL EDGE, PL-1 COUNTER FRONT BELOW WATERFALL. SEE ELEVATIONS



ITEM #15 CUSTOM SERVING COUNTER - SHIPPED IN 9 SECTIONS, A-J



PRELIMINARY DRAWING NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION
SUBMITTAL DRAWING FOR APPROVAL
RESUBMITTAL DRAWING FOR APPROVAL
AS-BUILT DRAWING



MULTITERIA



630-585-1369 - www.multiteriausa.com - 4900 West Electric Ave - West Milwaukee, WI 53210



MAKING SENSE AT THE MARGINS

Hospitality businesses have been having a torrid time of late. Forced to close due to the pandemic and then pivot to keep an income stream coming in, operators are now facing a hike in costs of both food and labor. Howard Riell explains how the next obstacle is convincing the public that the price of a meal is worth paying >

The pandemic has forced changes in nearly every facet of restaurant operations, including menu and pricing. Modulating those changes – by raising prices or altering menu offerings – is proving to be a tricky balance of art and science.

“Operators have a new task: rebuild their business’s pricing strategy and rethink operations and processes,” says Marco Amatti FCSI, CEO of São Paulo, Brazil-based MAPA Assessoria. “There is no time to raise prices as a simple reaction. If you are losing money, the ‘first instinct’ is to raise prices, but [it is] probably the worst solution if you lose the public. It’s time to stay in the market. Datasheet, KPIs (key performance indicators) and market research can support any decisions you make.”

Juan Martinez FCSI, principal of Profitability in Miami, Florida, notes that it was “some time” before a price



“The one saving grace is that landlords have become more reasonable, and are charging fairer rents since the pandemic. They’d much rather have an occupied space paying less than an empty space paying nothing”

increase from a major brand appeared in the press, a period that was broken when Chipotle and others announced increases. Operators can tell the proper time to raise prices by analyzing their cost structure and bottom-line profitability.

“As food, labor and other costs go up there is no option but to raise prices,” Martinez says. “Coming out of the



pandemic there is no choice, since both of these costs have gone up.” One is related to shortages due to factory stoppages and changes in demand, he explains, while the other is the increase in hourly pay needed just to get employees to work for the restaurant.

Slowly and discreetly

Restaurants have “slowly and discreetly” raised prices over the last few years to compensate for the lower margins created by third-party delivery fees, according to Arlene Spiegel FCSI, president of Arlene Spiegel & Associates in New York City.

“Now, with a much higher percentage of their business going to delivery fees than before the pandemic, they raised their prices dramatically without fear of customer pushback.”

Operators know it is time for a raise

when the cost of goods and labor grow markedly higher. “The one saving grace is that landlords have become more reasonable, and are charging fairer rents since the pandemic,” Spiegel adds. “They’d rather have an occupied space paying less than an empty space paying nothing.”

Restaurants regularly spend time researching their competitors and the economic conditions of the markets they serve. “They usually get it right,” says Spiegel. “However, there is always room to add ‘value-oriented’ menu items to appeal to the price-sensitive guest.”

Whether or not price increases have been too long in coming “cannot be answered with singular yes or no,” says Karen Malody FCSI, founder and president of Culinary Options, LLC in Portland, Oregon.





While food, utilities, rent and labor costs have risen, many consumers' incomes have not. "This creates a schism: high consumer sensitivity to menu price-value ratios and a need to grow margins for operators."

Raising prices "is both art and science," Malody suggests. Thus, it is important to:

- Study the menu mix first to understand what is selling and in what volume.
- Go back to every recipe, repost according to current food prices, and determine food cost per menu item.
- Go back to the menu mix and discover if the top-selling items are also the highest food cost items. "If so, adjust the selling prices accordingly based on your concept type and knowledge of your loyal client demographic."
- Adjust key item prices as much as your clientele will bear. For those items that are within a good price range but also

convey a high value perception – such as specialty pasta dishes – "raise those prices minimally also to help improve your weighted menu cost average."

Menu pricing deserves to be a systemized process, says **Rudy Miick** FCSI, founder of The Miick Companies in Boulder, Colorado. "Not paying attention, then getting caught in a 'must-raise' as a last resort is a sad, bad habit, and an unnecessary place to perform."

Price alterations can be systemized quarterly, and at least semi-annually. Doing it annually, he feels, is "too slow and too noticeable."

"You can start by moving .05's to .09's," suggests Dennis Byrd, the President of Island Famous Inc., a multi-concept operator in Galveston Island, Texas. "Over the course of a year that .04% increase adds up." If costs are increasing more rapidly "you might need to consider percentage-based increases on the items that are moving upward in cost. Our average increase on July 1 was 4%."

Shifting offerings

Post-pandemic shifts in menu offerings have taken many forms, including launching quick-serve concepts based on a ghost-kitchen model to optimize output and revenue. Some establishments reworked offerings – for example, moving from tasting menu only to à la carte, or making menus more accessible by adding more affordable dishes and leaving options for smaller meals or plates.

"A hallmark of a fantastic leader is to stay on top of trends and identify those that will spill into long-term behaviors," says Joseph Szala, managing director of Vigor, a restaurant branding firm based in Atlanta, Georgia. "The biggest question to answer is, how does one maximize check average, repeat visitations, and loyalty growth simultaneously?"

"I'm assuming cutting portions for an average restaurant would be the first option," suggests Alexandra

"A hallmark of a fantastic leader is to stay on top of trends and identify those that will spill into long-term behaviors. But, how does one maximize check average, repeat visitations, and loyalty growth simultaneously?"

Emtsova, the owner/operator of Burnt Offerings, which serves "new Yiddish cuisine" in Las Vegas, Nevada. "High-end restaurants with tasting menus will always have their following, and price increases in those might go unnoticed."

Smaller portions with lower prices are "absolutely common, as well as smaller menus in general," Malody adds.

Like labor, higher food costs are always associated with larger menus, "so reducing the number of items on a menu is key to profitability."

During the pandemic, restaurants removed items that were driving complexity, primarily to simplify operations while labor was lacking. Martinez predicts this practice will continue but wonders what will happen long term. "Will they go back to adding menu items to stay relevant?"

Another way operators have altered their menus is by offering more smaller plates and sharing plate options. Guests today, Spiegel says, are not limited to the traditional breakfast, lunch, dinner timeframes since many are now working from home. "By offering a variety of options throughout the day, they can customize the meal experience that works for them."

Many operations are opting for more plant-based items, legumes, grains and pasta. Malody points out that some have gone to the extreme of offering "veggie-forward" center-of-the-plate formats, with proteins in varying sizes that can be ordered as sides. ■





Where the QSRs grow

While major QSRs face outlet closures in Western markets amid the impact of Covid-19, growth in China is up as much as 91%. **Sumit Chopra** of GlobalData APAC outlines this promising market to **Juliet Martin**

Covid-19 lockdowns and safety measures have seen major quick service restaurant (QSR) chains such as McDonald's and KFC announcing major outlet closures in Europe and America, but the story in China is very different. In April, American chain Five Guys opened its first mainland store in China, its first new outlet since the start of the pandemic. In Q1 2021, Yum China, which owns the likes of KFC and Taco Bell, opened 315 new stores and Starbucks reported 91% year-on-year sales growth in China compared to 9% in the US.

While established Western markets find themselves in hot water at a time of global economic uncertainty, the Chinese QSR



Left: The first Five Guys outlet in mainland China. Above: The delivery market has outpaced previous trends

market is expanding. GlobalData APAC research analysis director Sumit Chopra helps us dig deeper into what is happening in this market and what it means on a larger scale.

An exceptional market

The pandemic has had a profound impact on every market in the world, but China's has been one of the fastest economies to begin to emerge from it. "China started lockdowns and initiatives earlier than other economies even realized the problem," says Chopra. "While other markets in Europe, America and Asia are still grappling with the issue, China is well prepared."

As a result, the China foodservice market has managed to bounce back

significantly over the last 12 months, with growth seeming to be back on track. Yum China reported that revenue was up 46% in the first three months of 2021 compared to 2020, while net profit had surpassed pre-Covid figures. Meanwhile, many established markets are expected to take at least another year to recover.

This means that Western chains such as KFC, McDonald's and Starbucks are subject to huge challenges in their local markets, in which they hold a dominant position but face suppressed demand. "As growth is stagnating and the pandemic is not ending, they are

"As the pandemic is not ending they are looking at ways to keep growth up in the next few years. China provides them a huge opportunity"

looking at ways to keep growth up in the next few years," Chopra points out. "China provides them a huge opportunity."

On top of this, one of the Chinese market's great advantages is its size. "In emerging markets like China and India, the sheer size of the population and the fact that the penetration of foodservice consumption is still relatively low gives you a much greater opportunity," says Chopra. Aside from the effects of the pandemic, competition and saturation in the foodservice markets of Europe and North America are inhibiting healthy growth, while there is major room to grow in China's market.

Seizing the moment

Many QSRs in China have identified the opportunity to benefit from the effects of the pandemic. As lockdowns, space restrictions and working from home encouraged people to order in rather than eating out, foodservice establishments such as fine dining restaurants were ill-prepared to pivot to delivery services. Meanwhile, models that already offered delivery were able to seize the moment: Yum China reports that 29% of KFC and Pizza Hut sales were delivery orders in Q1 2021, compared to 19% in 2019.

"In emerging markets, delivery market growth has outpaced previous trends, especially in the last six or seven months," says Chopra, adding that consumers who previously wouldn't have ordered in >

are now more likely to do so, increasing the market by as much as 20%. According to Chopra, this population is here to stay.

At the same time, smaller establishments, which previously dominated the market in emerging economies like China and India, have also been among those that suffered the most. “They have not been able to handle the pandemic because they do not have the capacity to

“The China market is poised for significant growth. In the next year and a half, once the market settles, there will be a lot happening”

close shop for six or seven months,” says Chopra. “Big chains have the capacity and the revenue to get through this phase and come out stronger.”

Meet the market

It isn’t just the impact of the pandemic that has made China such an attractive prospect – many large QSR chains already had their eyes on the country.

“The rise of technology in foodservice is something that is helping the growth of the industry,” says Chopra. Over the last few years, major brands including Yum have been investing in digitalization, with KFC having made a near-complete switch to contactless payments and

Below: Big brands, such as KFC, are already familiar and trusted to maintain hygiene standards

beginning to apply IoT and robotics to its operations. “China has always been a nation that favors the use of technology,” Chopra adds. These advances have been essential during the pandemic and will drive the industry into the future.

“Health, trust and transparency are big factors, especially for the young population,” Chopra adds. Consumers in China increasingly seek fresh, organic, plant-based products. Successful chains like Starbucks and Burger King have incorporated this priority into their strategies, with Burger King launching its first plant-based burger in China this year.

Where a brand can build trust by educating and empowering its customers, it stands to benefit. Many international brands such as KFC and McDonald’s have the upper hand here, as they are already familiar and inherently trusted.

This was especially important during the pandemic, when people turned to establishments they trusted to follow hygiene and regulatory protocols, and will be key to their success in the foreseeable future, according to Chopra.

The QSR market in emerging markets is here to stay, with a highly promising ongoing growth trajectory. “The China market is poised for significant growth,” says Chopra. “In the next year and a half, once the market settles, there will be a lot happening.”

The impact of the pandemic will play a part in this, with health concerns, technological innovation and trust remaining centre stage. Add to this the reopening of the travel industry, which will bring an influx of new consumers, and the market is set to flourish. ■



EVERY CUSTOM PROJECT IS DIFFERENT



Eagle's Commitment Stays The Same

Eagle knows commitment.

For over 70 years, Eagle has been committed... to building quality well designed products, to investing in the latest design and manufacturing technology, to constantly developing design innovations and, most of all, committed to our customers.

You need the best of both worlds for your build: custom millwork and fabrication for front- and back-of-house and a supplier who can build to spec on time and on budget. That takes a combination of design/build know-how and operational excellence that only Eagle Group can deliver.

For more details, visit www.eaglegrpnews.com/specfab



100 Industrial Boulevard, Clayton, DE 19938
Phone: (800) 441-8440 • Fax: (302) 653-2065
www.eaglegrp.com

Contact Your Eagle Account Specialist
1-800-441-8440
quotes@eaglegrp.com

polarking.com
(877) 959-5674



POLAR KING
INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Fiberglass Outdoor Walk-In Coolers & Freezers

Pictured Through-Wall Outdoor Walk-in 8' x 30' Cooler / Freezer Combination Unit at a Pizza Hut in Garrett, IN



Interior Unit View

OUTDOOR WALK-IN COOLERS & FREEZERS

NOA No. 18-0516.05
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

APPROVED

Exp. July 2022

NSF

AVAILABLE IN ANY SIZE
FROM 6'X6' TO 16'X65'

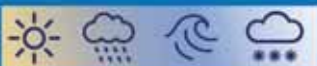
ENGINEERED FOR ALL ENVIRONMENTS

Polar King outdoor walk-in coolers and walk-in freezers are designed specifically for outdoor applications requiring refrigerated storage. Available for through-wall applications or freestanding, each Polar King unit is built with our patented fiberglass construction.

Fiberglass THE ADVANTAGE

Polar King's 100% seamless fiberglass design provides a continuous surface which keeps the insulated structure completely intact; free of moisture damage and bacteria formation.

Worried about heat, rain, salt or snow?
Enjoy worry-free operation, as each unit is built to withstand the elements and to maintain its efficiency as outdoor coolers or storage.



Plus, the NSF approved flooring system provides a non-slip durable finish, which greatly reduces the risk of slips and falls. Units can be easily cleaned with a hose, without damaging the insulation.



PURCHASE PROTECTION

With our 12-year structural warranty, enjoy confidence in your inventory's safety.



MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY

Polar King offers the highest energy efficiency of any outdoor walk-in.



SEAMLESS FIBERGLASS

Seamless fiberglass interior & exterior keeps your products safe from the elements.



FIT YOUR BRANDING

Integrate your unit perfectly with a custom color available at no additional charge.



ARRIVES READY TO OPERATE

Arrives pre-wired, fully constructed, factory tested & ready to operate.

NEED TEMPORARY OR MOBILE STORAGE?

Try Polar King's Freezer and Refrigerated Trailers!

Both on the road and on-site, our freezer trailers and refrigerated trailers are built to last, free from rust, scratches, dents, and corrosion. Plus, all Polar King trailers are built from the ground up, allowing you to add many custom options. From gas and diesel generators to galvanized frames, we have the capabilities to design the perfect trailer for your application.



Weighing up healthy eating policy

As the nation looks to tackle its growing obesity crisis, policymakers are ramping up the healthy eating agenda. Amy Snelling speaks to **Julian Edwards** FCSI about what it means for foodservice operators

From mandatory calorie labeling on menus for large operators, to marketing restrictions on foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS), to a proposal for sugar and salt tax, public health policymakers and advisors are increasingly calling on the food industry to help tackle the growing obesity crisis.

One of the heaviest nations in Western Europe, the UK's obesity levels have been creeping up over the past 30 years. Today two-thirds of adults in England are overweight or obese – as are a third of children by the time they reach primary school leaving age – linked to an increase in chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure and, now,

more severe illness from Covid-19.

“I hate using extreme references like this, but we hear it all the time: statistically obesity is one of Britain's biggest killers,” says independent catering consultant and chair of FCSI UK & Ireland **Julian Edwards**. Working towards creating a healthier nation since he founded his consultancy company GY5 25 years ago, Edwards says while the issue has been on the radar for many forward-thinking operators for years, he's relieved to see the wave of interest pushing it up the national agenda. “It's probably the first time in decades all parts of the food chain have the healthy eating agenda and reduction in obesity as a broad approach.”

Looking back to when he first

started working with institutional caterers in spaces such as schools and staff restaurants he reflects: “It was all Turkey Twizzlers and chips!”

On the flipside, today he sees these operators taking the “moral stance” and making great strides in offering healthy choices. “They tend to have a passionate and intimate relationship with the provenance of food, how it's prepared, cooked and served and an interest in balancing good and bad nutrients.”

Even in quick-service restaurants where, he continues: “The emphasis is to attract people with foods that are extremely tasty to engage footfall.” This often leads to menus laden with HFSS foods and he sees many



Tackling obesity in the EU

The UK is not alone in its obesity crisis, nor in renewed efforts to tackle it. Today, over half of adults in the EU are overweight or obese according to Eurostat, and Euractiv reports obesity levels across the continent have nearly tripled since the 1980s. While some EU initiatives addressing the issue are already in play – like the Farm to Fork strategy that includes an objective to reverse obesity rates by 2030 by encouraging the food industry to offer more affordable healthy food options – experts argue more needs to be done on the policy front. As substitute member of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee João Ferreira writes in *The Parliament Magazine*: “The prevention and treatment of obesity requires political choices. Choices that influence the availability, production and dissemination of food products. Public interest must prevail over profit maximization on food commodities, as well as over the food industry lobby’s influence on decision-making.”



operators “doing their bit” to make their offerings healthier, such as low-FSS meal deal options. “It’s all part of the effort to attain a better balance of good health... It’s a long journey and we have come a long way, but it’s still not perfect.”

Shock tactics and new policy

To drive forward the healthy eating movement on a national scale, Edwards understands tough policy changes will be needed to incentivize businesses and the public. Changes like next year’s incoming laws tackling “unhealthy eating habits” by regulating the marketing of HFSS foods via restricting promotions and the introduction of a pre-9pm

“It’s all part of the effort to attain a better balance of good health... It’s a long journey and we have come a long way, but it’s still not perfect”

advertising ban on junk food to address childhood obesity. He also hopes policymakers will back shock tactics such as the Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax in processed foods, restaurants and catering businesses as proposed in Leon founder Henry Dimbleby’s government-commissioned National Food Strategy report, though not at the expense of conscientious

operators and consumers, he notes.

“Implementing such changes into policy could galvanize all types of caterers and manufacturers to think in the right direction.”

However, he’s wary some new legislation won’t entirely hit the mark, while adding pressure on operators already dealing with unforeseen challenges in the aftermath of Covid-19. For example, the proposed introduction in April 2022 of mandatory calorie counts on menus at foodservice businesses with over 250 employees.

“While many operators within the contract catering sector and some larger chain restaurants have already been doing this or will be

set-up for such a change, there's a risk we're putting a big burden on operators that aren't. For those that don't have the resources it will be a huge amount of work," he says while also acknowledging how it presents challenges around keeping menus refreshed and innovative.

On the plus-side, Edwards agrees it could help inform consumer choices. "A lot of dishes we eat out are heavily laden with fat, salt and sugar that we don't know about – some of the taste experiences we love the most come from foods that are high in those three ingredients, so it will be educational from that point of view," he says.

But while calorie counting is a manageable entry point for many people, it doesn't offer a holistic nutritional picture. He advocates for a better understanding of nutrients over calories to devise healthy menus. "It's about the individual body's nutrition [and eating] the correct amounts of fruits and vegetables, roughage, high-fat

foods, protein, etc. We should look more at nutrients that are good for boosting certain parts of your body's function – we don't see enough of that," Edwards explains.

Innovating healthy options

As public awareness campaigns build momentum around healthy eating, Edwards is confident there will be increasing opportunities for operators to innovate and capitalize on nutritious menus.

Working with chefs to offer healthy eating and special diets training, he sees it as a chance for them to show off their skills by presenting signature dishes as low-FSS options. "Lots of the flavors we love are based on adding that knob of butter or lots of salt, but chefs with the know-how can cook in a way so that meals offer fewer calories, but with all the taste and enjoyment," Edwards says. "We can experiment with healthy and nutrient-rich produce to reformulate a traditional menu and present a dish

“Lots of the flavors we love are based on adding that knob of butter or lots of salt, but chefs with the know-how can cook in a way so that meals offer fewer calories, but with all the taste and enjoyment”

that once had 3,000 calories as a 1,000-calorie option.”

In landscapes where the term 'healthy option' often doesn't draw mass appeal, such as schools, the challenge comes down to marketing – for which operators will need to think outside the box and learn lessons from one another. Taking one of his recent projects as an example, Edwards explains: "We've been involved with a caterer with great brand concepts in a high-school, serving up high-quality, scratch-cooked mains using fresh produce, but the presentation was bland."

To add market appeal, they drew inspiration from street food markets to rebrand the dishes as a fresh and exciting option. "Street food markets are based on rustic, unusual, enticing foods packaged in a novel way. So, what we've done is taken what appears to be a 'boring healthy option' and presented it as something exciting from a taste, texture and style point of view – as the premium product."

Edwards is confident that foodservice can help create a healthier nation. "This could be a tipping point in UK food attitudes by bringing everybody together. Before you'd have a big emphasis on health in school or hospital food, the next stage is to do it as a nation – and I think we're closer to that now. We're more knowledgeable than we've ever been." ■



MY KITCHEN

Rafa Panatieri

The Brazilian chef tells Tina Nielsen about Sartoria Panatieri, the Barcelona pizzeria he founded with friend and colleague Jorge Sastre

We opened Sartoria in 2018; I come from a fine-dining background, but I always wanted to open something more accessible. A place that everybody could afford to visit but retaining the same search for the best produce that you find in fine dining.

I loved the idea of opening a pizzeria and that was the moment to do it. My co-founder Jorge was my sous chef in my last job, and I asked him if he wanted to join me in this venture.

The pizza is the central focus of the restaurant; we don't really define it, but it is Neapolitan style. We like to have a slightly charred crust and the dough is nice and light.

Around 90% of the food in the restaurant is cooked in the wood-fired oven, almost everything else is served cold. We make all our own charcuterie and mascarpone in the kitchen.

The oven is obviously crucial; it is a big piece of equipment. We like it to be central to the room but integrated. Our walls are all white and the oven is white too; you see it, but you don't; it is very minimalist. We also rely on the blast chiller and the Robot Coupe processor – there are several vital elements of equipment to make sure the kitchen works.

We have an international team with staff from everywhere from Brazil and Venezuela to Italy and Spain. There is no

distinction between the kitchen and the dining room, it is completely integrated.

Guests don't even know who is kitchen staff and who is waiting staff; we all wear the same uniform and we all do everything. Waiters might finish a dish or desserts on the pass and chefs come out to serve food and clear tables. We are all responsible for ensuring the oven maintains a constant temperature.

We have very strict methods and discipline when we talk about cooking processes, but I'd say the culture in our kitchen is very different. Regardless of your role – chef or waiter – when you come through our doors you are part of the Sartoria family. ■



Charcuterie and mascarpone is made in-house in the Sartoria Panatieri kitchen

The restaurant is proud of its international team, with staff from all around the world including Spain, Italy, Brazil and Venezuela

90% of the restaurant's food is cooked in the wood-fired oven

STEAMING, FROZEN, SWEET, OR SMOOTH...
**OUR EQUIPMENT SERVES
MILLIONS DAILY!**



For more information, email sales@middleby.com
or chat with us at middleby.com



TOUCH ARROWS →

FOLD HERE

← TOUCH ARROWS

COOK. COOL.
 GAS. ELECTRIC.
 THE FUTURE
 CONTINUES TO
 UNFOLD FOR
 ONE INNOVATIVE
 FOODSERVICE
 MANUFACTURER.



montaguecompany.com

TOUCH ARROWS →

FOLD HERE

← TOUCH ARROWS