

DISH



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Technomic®

New-to-Market Trends

New Citruses To Pucker Up To



Honeybell Tangelo

Juicy, sweet cross between the tangerine and pomelo

On the Menu:

Crudite, honeybell tangelo, sumac and chamoy (FnB in Scottsdale, Ariz.)



Buddha's-Hand

Citron variety with finger-like segments that contain no pulp

On the Menu:

Scallop crudo with lime caviar, sea ash and Buddha's-hand (Orfano in Boston)



Sweet Lime

Sweet, mild cross between citron and bitter orange

On the Menu:

Welcome Home with gin, Cocchi Americano, Atxa, maraschino and sweet lime (K'Far Cafe in Philadelphia)



Calamansi

Philippine hybrid between kumquat and mandarin

On the Menu:

Persimmons, burrata, yuzukosho, calamansi lime vinegar and ACG (Birdie G's Supper & Cocktails in Santa Monica, Calif.)

Growing Trends



Arbol Chile Sauces

With less than 1% of operators menuing this small and potent Mexican chile pepper, there is clearly a lot of room for opportunity. Operators are utilizing arbol chiles—with heat that is comparable to that of a serrano or cayenne pepper—in sauces to top both traditional Mexican dishes as well as classic items such as burgers.

On the Menu:

- **Rock Bottom Restaurant & Brewery** launched the **Fireman's Double Stack Burger** (pictured), featuring a double-patty burger topped with pepper jack cheese, guacamole, pickled jalapeños, pickled red onion, lettuce, chile de arbol sauce and chipotle mayonnaise, served with a choice of side.
- **Cantina Laredo** unveiled the **Enchiladas de Congrejo** with lump crabmeat, cilantro-lime rice and chile de arbol sauce, available as an entree option on its three-course Valentine's Day menu.



Appetizer-Infused Pizzas

Pizza operators have long been marketing appetizers to sell alongside pizzas as a way to boost average checks. Now, they're offering pizzas that have appetizers physically built in. Not only did Mazzio's return its Quesapizza, an LTO with toppings stuffed between a top and bottom crust, but two other major pizza operators rolled out cheesy app-infused pizzas.

On the Menu:

- **Little Caesars** is testing a **Slices-N-Stick Pizza**, a round pizza featuring four slices of pepperoni pizza on one half and eight Italian Cheese Stix on the other half, served with Crazy Sauce for dipping.
- **Pizza Hut** debuted the **Mozzarella Poppers Pizza** (pictured), featuring 16 mozzarella-stuffed squares baked with a mix of garlic, onion, Parmesan, Italian seasonings, parsley, basil, oregano and mozzarella cheese around the crust, served with two sides of marinara sauce for dipping.

Established Trends



Bojangles', Bruegger's Bagels, California Pizza Kitchen and Mountain Mike's were among the restaurants that launched heart-shaped fare, while special prix fixe menus were available at CPK, Cantina Laredo, Carrabba's Italian Grill, Cooper's Hawk, Fleming's, Glory Days Grill, Hard Rock Cafe and Sakura Steakhouse.



Operators have turned to cauliflower over the past couple of years to transform traditional dishes into veg-centric offerings. This month, cauliflower pizza crust popped up at Boston's (pictured), Donatos and Newk's Eatery, while Boston's also launched cauliflower chips and cauliflower rice.

Protein Bowls



Protein bowls from Applebee's (pictured), Arby's, Black Angus Steakhouse and Boston's featured chicken, steak or shrimp on a bed of vegetables and/or grains.

Valentine's Day Offerings

Instagrammable Cocktails



Social media-worthy cocktails launched this month included a color-changing cocktail made with butterfly pea flower tea at Cantina Laredo (pictured), a martini served with a glow-in-the-dark bracelet at Bonefish Grill, and a rum drink served in a collectible lighthouse glass at Red Lobster.

Cauliflower

Lent Prep



With Lent beginning on Feb. 26, operators rolled out a number of seafood-centered items at the end of the month.

LTO Standouts

Data is sourced from Technomic's Ignite menu concept development data, which provides consumer insights on the leading 200 chains' products, including purchase intent and draw.

TOP 5 Purchase Intent

Consumers who are likely or very likely to purchase each individual item

1. McDonald's **Deluxe Crispy Chicken Sandwich** (62%)
2. Ledo Pizza's **House Fries** (62%)
3. Olive Garden's **Lasagna Classico** (62%)
4. McDonald's **Crispy Chicken Sandwich** (61%)
5. Tim Hortons' **Canadian Bacon Breakfast Biscuit** (60%)



TOP 5 Most Unique

Consumers who perceive each individual item to be unique or very unique

1. Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar's **Black Walnut Old Fashioned** (79%)
2. LongHorn Steakhouse's **Lobster Loaded Mashed Potatoes** (76%)
3. Ted's Montana Grill's **Balsamic Blue Bison Salad** (75%)
4. Caribou Coffee's **Nitro Spicy Mocha** (75%)
5. Seasons 52's **Creamy Cheddar Polenta** (74%)



Other Menu Developments

Anthony's Restaurant is serving Alaskan halibut for a limited time. The chain was the only in the state of Washington to receive any halibut, as the fish is usually available in March. The fish was caught in Adak, Alaska, flown to the chain's wholesale seafood company in Seattle and shipped out to the restaurants on Feb. 3.

Arby's is testing new **Market Fresh Roast Chicken Bowls**. Available at participating locations in Kansas, the new bowl features sliced roast chicken, chicken-herbed rice, chopped lettuce, sliced grape tomatoes with a savory garlic seasoning and roasted yellow and red peppers, served with a choice of Creamy Avocado, Chili Lime Ranch, Garlic Parmesan or Honey Sriracha sauce.

B.Good introduced seasonal menu items, including **Roasted Squash Soup**, a creamy blend of winter squash including Blue Hubbard Squash; **Butternut Carbonara Bowl**, with butternut noodles, spinach, peas, egg, mushrooms, Parmesan, roasted coconut and creamy miso sauce; and **Bomba Chicken Sandwich**, with grilled chicken, caramelized onions, Parmesan, butternut squash and bomba sauce.

Bojangles' brought back its heart-shaped **Bo-Berry Biscuits** for Valentine's Day. They were baked with Bo-Berries and drizzled with vanilla icing.

Bruegger's Bagels is promoting seasonal menu items, including the **Skinny Bacon, Avocado & Tomato Egg White Sandwich**, featuring egg whites, peppered bacon, avocado, tomato and sun-dried tomato spread on a skinny-cut everything bagel; **Supernova Sandwich**, made with cold-smoked salmon, smashed avocado, tomato, cucumber, red onion, capers and onion-and-chive cream cheese on a sesame bagel; and **French Toast Coffee**, featuring buttered French toast, cinnamon and maple syrup flavors.

Buffalo Wild Wings brought back its **Blue Moon BBQ Sauce**. Available on boneless or traditional wings, the limited-time sauce is made with Blue Moon beer, citrus and a blend of spices including coriander.

BurgerFi debuted the **Frozen Hot Chocolate Shake**. The seasonal dessert features chocolate custard made with Ghirardelli

chocolate topped with large toasted marshmallows.

Capriotti's Sandwich Shop launched its **Impossible Cheese Steak** sandwich nationwide, featuring plant-based Impossible protein, melted white American cheese, fried onions and hot or sweet peppers. The Impossible Cheese Steak was first tested in Las Vegas in November 2019. Capriotti's also intends to launch an **Impossible Meatball Sandwich** later this spring.

Cousins Subs launched limited-time sandwiches, including the **Big Steak 'N Cheese**, made with steak, American cheese, lettuce, onions, pickles and Thousand Island dressing on Italian bread; **Big Chicken 'N Cheese**, featuring chicken, American cheese, lettuce, onions, pickles and Thousand Island dressing on Italian bread; and the **Reuben**, made with corned beef, Swiss cheese, sauerkraut and Thousand Island dressing on rye bread.



Bruegger's new sandwiches

Dunkin' rolled out **Frank's RedHot Jelly Donuts**. Available at two Miami-area locations on Feb. 3, the doughnut was filled with apple- and raspberry-flavored jelly, topped with white icing and drizzled with Frank's RedHot Original Cayenne Pepper Sauce.



Famous Dave's introduced the **Iris' Comeback Chicken Sandwich**, featuring a fried chicken fillet topped with spicy pickles and comeback sauce on a brioche bun.

Firehouse Subs rolled out a gluten-free, ciabatta-style sub roll from Schar. Any medium sub can be made with the new bread option for an additional \$1.50-\$2.00.

The Habit Burger Grill plans to test a plant-based burger. Available at more than 280 locations nationwide later this year, the limited-time menu item will feature a plant-based patty from Impossible Foods.

Hooters debuted **Roasted Wings**, available in a choice of wing sauce or dry rub.

McDonald's is testing menu items made with MSG. The additive is a part of the chicken sandwich recipe currently being tested in Knoxville, Tenn., and Houston, in addition to appearing in tests of

Portuguese sausage and soup bases in Hawaii and different crispy chicken fillets in Augusta, Ga., and Seattle.

Menchie's Frozen Yogurt rolled out **Frosted Animal Cookie Frozen Yogurt**.

Mooyah rolled out **The Vegan** burger. The new limited-time item features a Dr. Praeger's Black Bean burger topped with avocado, grilled onions, sauteed mushrooms, lettuce, tomato and barbecue sauce on a non-GMO potato bun.

Papa John's rolled out its **Papadias** nationwide. After a successful test last summer, the chain launched the Italian-style flatbread sandwich at all locations in the following four varieties: **Italian** with Alfredo sauce, spicy Italian sausage, salami, mozzarella cheese and banana peppers, served with a pizza sauce dipping cup; **Philly Cheesesteak** with Philly steak, onions, green peppers, mozzarella cheese and Philly sauce, served with a garlic sauce dipping cup; **Grilled BBQ Chicken & Bacon** with grilled chicken, bacon, onions and mozzarella drizzled with barbecue sauce and served with a barbecue sauce dipping cup; and **Meatball Pepperoni** with spicy meatballs, pepperoni, pizza sauce, mozzarella and Italian seasoning, served with a pizza sauce dipping cup.

Pieology Pizzeria debuted a **Protein Style Chicken Base**. The new limited-time pizza base is made with white-meat chicken, eggs and cheese. It is available with any choice of sauce and toppings.



Pizza Hut is testing a **Mac N' Cheese Personal Pan Pizza**. The limited-time item is topped with rotini pasta and mozzarella and American cheeses.

Quiznos debuted the **Cajun Lobster Sub**, featuring Cajun-seasoned lobster and seafood salad topped with shredded lettuce, tomatoes and housemade Cajun aioli made with Cholula hot sauce on butter-toasted bread, served with a lemon wedge on the side, and brought back its **Lobster & Seafood Sub**, made with a mix of lobster and seafood salad topped with shredded lettuce and served on warm butter-toasted bread, garnished with a lemon slice.

Red Robin Gourmet Burgers and Brews introduced the **Bacon Curry Burger**, made with a beef patty topped with jalapeno-curry ketchup, curry-flavored red onions, hardwood-smoked bacon, provolone cheese, crispy potato sticks, pickles, shredded romaine and mayonnaise on a sesame seed bun, and the **Zen Chicken Sandwich**, featuring a grilled chicken breast topped with Asian-inspired, honey-miso sauce, sweet-and-sour slaw, hardwood-smoked bacon, cheddar cheese, avocado, pickles and lettuce on a sesame seed bun.



Ruby Tuesday's Sweet Earth Foods Awesome Burger

Ruby Tuesday is testing a plant-based **Sweet Earth Foods Awesome Burger**, made from yellow pea protein, at its 450 restaurants nationwide. The patty will be available through mid-March, at which point the chain will decide whether to make it a permanent menu addition.

Sakura Steakhouse promoted a Valentine's Day menu. Priced at \$95.99, the menu included one bottle of Champagne; an appetizer such as **Edamame**, **Fried Gyoza** or **Fried Spring Roll**; the **Sweet Valentine Roll**, made with spicy tuna, avocado and soybean paper; a **Hibachi Entree** for two with onion soup, house salad, hibachi noodles and fried rice, hibachi vegetables, two pieces of grilled shrimp and a choice of chicken, filet mignon or shrimp and lobster; and **Chocolate Cake** for dessert.

Slim Chickens rolled out the limited-time **Bacon**

Ranch Chicken Sandwich, featuring a breaded chicken breast, bacon, lettuce, tomatoes and ranch sauce on a garlic-toasted bun.

Sonic Drive-In introduced **Totchos**. The limited-time item features the chain's potato tots layered with cheese sauce, bacon, diced onions, jalapenos and Baja sauce.

Starbucks plans to add plant-based meat to its breakfast menu. The chain intends to roll out a breakfast sandwich featuring a plant-based patty in both the U.S. and Canada later this year.

Taco Bell is testing **Steak Firecracker Fries** in Detroit, made with Nacho Fries topped with grilled marinated steak, nacho cheese sauce, red tortilla strips, cheddar cheese, reduced-fat sour cream, jalapenos and Firecracker sauce, featuring a blend of spicy peppers.

Vitality Bowls is promoting the **Love Bowl**. The seasonal menu item features a blend of pitaya, banana, mango, raspberries, organic maca, guava and coconut milk, topped with Nature's Path Organic Love Crunch Dark Chocolate and Red Berries Granola, organic coconut shavings, organic goji berries and organic cacao nibs.

Wendy's plans to launch its breakfast menu nationwide. Available March 2, the menu offers options such as the **Breakfast Baconator**, **Honey Butter Chicken Biscuit** and **Frosty-ccino**.

Yogurtland added new menu items. The chain introduced a vegan, plant-based chocolate flavor: **Salted Chocolate Souffle**. Yogurtland also rolled out **Bear Naked's White Chocolate Macadamia Nut Granola** as a limited-time topping option, featuring fair-trade chocolate and nut butter.

Fine Print

Technomic, Inc. prepares *Dish* monthly to keep foodservice executives informed on emerging menu trends by monitoring primary and secondary sources, including company content, trade publications and other news outlets. Annual subscriptions are available at Technomic.com. We welcome your comments. Please visit technomic.com for more information.

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We provide insights into consumer, industry and menu trends in the U.S. and 25 countries around the world.

Technomic has been ranking chain restaurants in the U.S. since 1974.