

Hot food trends for 2010

By Daniel Palmer

January 1, 2010

Spotting trends in food is essential to understanding what food consumers are doing now and more importantly may be doing in the future. And it appears that this year's trends - like "cocooning" - may stick around a little longer, according to research from *thefoodpeople*.

2009 has been a tough year, although food has held up well compared to other sectors. Looking forward to 2010 *thefoodpeople* expect to see all of the main macro factors including economic, political, technological and environmental to be equally influencing food trends over the next year. As such, the trends that are expected to grow or emerge in 2010 are an evolution compared to 2009.

The trends they expect to see in 2010 include food cocooning, global comfort food and "like our previous generations". Consumers will attempt to reestablish the heart of the home in the kitchen through more home cooking or at least greater interaction with food, Sunday lunches and informal dinner parties. Why? To make themselves feel good by providing for their families.

In a time when many consumers have changed their shopping status quo's we expect to see consumers demanding more opportunities to personalize their food products, we've seen examples of this in niche areas but expect to see more mainstream customization in 2010.

With in excess of 1.8 billion people now online the researchers expect to see more ifood with web based food products and services. This could include more food by mail, food personalization, more online ordering and reservation, digital people power and perhaps new players in food distribution.

In many countries consumers have spent less in restaurants (with the exception of quick service restaurants) and this might not change noticeably until 2011. As such restaurants will continue to evolve with initiatives such as no reservations, happy hours, main stream pricing and a move towards more local ingredients and recipes. On the subject of local, local food has been around for many years but *thefoodpeople* expect to see local in every area of food from the farmers market to the global mega brands.

On the back of value and an anti restaurant movement more street food is likely including pop up dining, food trucks and street vendors selling fresh tasty and authentic food without what some believe are the unnecessary overheads of the restaurant environment. Simplicity will have a greater voice in food over the coming year with brands and restaurants alike cutting waffle and selling fewer ingredients for a greater taste delivery.

Despite being hugely dependant in individual consumers' ethical values, a surge in planet conscious eating as well as an increase in the backlash against industrialised food is forecast.

The researchers also expect to see a trend towards frozen foods, with the category shaking the cheap and cheerful image of the past, evolving towards freshness locked in, extension of the pantry and total convenience. Another trend involving the re-positioning of a current channel is that of vending, so expect vending to go premium, go hot and go interactive in 2010.

Despite the many counter trends, *thefoodpeople* expect eating habits and meal times to evolve in the face the 24/7/365 lifestyle with a blurring of meal times, greater reliance on fast food not just for food but also for coffee as well, solo dining and breakfast on the move.

Health will continue to drive food trends in 2010, with a rise in the numbers of products, initiatives and services driving improved national health such as diabetes and heart disease through balance, calories and exercise, even moving towards enforceable limits in some countries. In addition, the UK-based monitors of global food trends expect to see the evolution of products targeted at the health self starters with condition and aliment foods, kid's health, positive nutrition, DIY doctoring and health mood foods.

As eating habits evolve, drinking habits should follow suit with products targeted at specific target groups with a rise in low / no alcohol beers and wines, micro beers and spirits, in home consumption, demystified wine and cocktails.

Each year certain cuisines have a lesser or greater influence on the food that we eat through TV, magazines, books, chefs, restaurants, products and services. The cuisines that we can expect to be inspired by in 2010 include the Americas (including US, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and Peru), French Bistro, Scandinavia, Vietnam, Korea and Japan.

"In summary we expect 2010 to be about - Simplicity; Comfort and feel good; Some scope for customisation; Degree's of planet conciseness; Food cocooning at home; Local across all sectors; Need for treats; A little trade up; Being squeaky clean to gain trust and ifood," *thefoodpeople* concluded.

From: <http://www.ausfoodnews.com.au/2010/01/01/hot-food-trends-for-2010.html>