

# the dish

SPRING / SUMMER 2026

## *Peak Season Playbook*

How top operators are running multiple channels without breaking the kitchen

## Sip Happens

Why beverages are the hottest profit driver in foodservice

Just Opened & Already

## Making Noise

## A Better Crust Starts Here

See how DiMarco's pinsa is elevating menus with tradition and innovation



# SARATOGA<sup>®</sup>

SPRING WATER

A Choice  
That  
*Stands Out.*



Photo: Duggan  
© 2010 Saratoga Water

*Please reach out to your Jordano's Representative to place an order*

SARATOGAWATER.COM

# What's Growing Now



Spring has always been a season of change but in foodservice, it's also a moment of clarity.

As menus refresh and operators look ahead, the question isn't simply what's new. It's what's working. What's gaining traction in real kitchens, with real customers, under real operating conditions.

That's the focus of this issue.

"What's Growing Now" is about more than trends. It's about momentum, the ingredients showing up across menus, the formats proving their value in day-to-day service, and the strategies helping operators move forward with confidence. From emerging flavor profiles to evolving operational playbooks, the ideas taking root this season are grounded in performance, not just novelty.

Throughout this issue, you'll see that idea come to life in different ways. We introduce DiMarco and pinsa, a product rooted in tradition but aligned with today's need for flexibility and efficiency. We explore the "Peak Season Playbook," looking at how operators are structuring for spring volume across patios, catering, and event-driven demand. And we take a closer look at beverages - an area quickly becoming a stronger focus for growth, margin, and menu differentiation.

We also step back to look ahead, highlighting the trends shaping 2026 and the shifts already influencing how operators think about menus, purchasing, and performance.

You'll notice another focus woven throughout these pages as well: our commitment to supporting new customers. As more operators come into the fold, this issue is designed to not only inform, but to serve as a practical resource; one that reflects where the industry is now and where it's headed next.

Because growth in today's environment isn't defined by how much change, it's defined by how well those changes hold up.

As always, our goal is to bring you ideas that are not only relevant, but usable - the kind you can take back to your operation, test, and build on.

Here's what's growing now and where it might take you next.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Day'.

Patrick Day  
Vice President/General Manager

Follow me @chefdaymed or us @jordanosfoodservice

---

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Eileen Jackson  
Jordano's Foodservice  
ejackson@jordanos.com

## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Eileen Jackson  
Jordano's Foodservice  
Christy Roan  
Jordano's Foodservice

## ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Eileen Jackson  
Jordano's Foodservice

## ADVERTISING DESIGN

Christy Roan  
Jordano's Foodservice

## DIGITAL PRODUCTION & DESIGN

Spindustry  
www.spindustry.com

*Keep it* **Classic**  
*with* **Monin**



**MONIN®**

# table of CONTENTS

ISSUE NINETEEN | SPRING/SUMMER 2026

10

## DiMarco: A Fresh Take on Tradition

Discover how DiMarco's Roman-style pinsa is bringing a lighter, crispier, and more versatile option to modern menus - blending family heritage with foodservice innovation.

13

## What's New This Season: Must-Have Products

A selection of emerging food and beverage innovations helping operators evolve menus, capture demand, and stay aligned with seasonal momentum.

14

## Flavor Forecast 2026: Beverages Take Center Stage

Drinks are no longer just an add-on - they're driving profit, creativity, and customer engagement like never before. Discover how innovative beverages are reshaping foodservice and why operators are making them the centerpiece of their strategy.

20

## Big Buzz: New Restaurants Making an Early Impact

New doors are opening. Meet our operators stepping into the industry with fresh ideas, new concepts, and a clear vision for what today's restaurant can be.

22

## What's Cooking in 2026

A look at the key forces shaping foodservice in 2026 from shifting customer expectations and value-driven menus to smarter tools, leaner operations, and the quiet changes redefining how restaurants run and grow.

10



13



14



22



---

*Peak Season  
Playbook:*


---

*Winning*

# SPRING

*Across Every Channel*

Spring has always marked a shift in foodservice volume, but in recent years it has become something more nuanced than a simple uptick in traffic. For many operators, it represents a period of operational layering where indoor service, outdoor dining, catering, and event-driven formats converge at once.

The operators who perform best in this window are not simply capturing demand. They are structuring for it.

Rather than treating outdoor and off-premise channels as extensions of the business, they are increasingly built into the operating model itself - each with its own rhythm, constraints, and opportunities.

## Patios:

### *The Great Outdoor Shift*

Outdoor dining has evolved beyond seasonal seating into a fully functioning second service environment. When executed effectively, it operates less as overflow capacity and more as a parallel dining room with its own operational logic.

The most consistent performers in this space share a common approach: they simplify without diminishing. Menus are tightened to emphasize stability under variable conditions, while service flow is intentionally structured to prevent patio volume from disrupting indoor performance.



In practice, patios succeed when they are treated with the same discipline as any core service area—staffing clarity, defined workflows, and menu alignment that accounts for time, distance, and durability.

## Pop-Ups:

### *Small Setups, Big Impact*

The continued growth of pop-ups and seasonal activations reflects a broader shift toward operational restraint as a strength. These formats work not because they expand complexity, but because they reduce it.

Operators are increasingly using pop-ups as controlled environments for execution - limited menus, streamlined prep, and highly repeatable builds that prioritize speed and consistency over breadth.

When properly designed, these concepts allow teams to operate with precision in less predictable environments, while still maintaining brand integrity and service standards.

## Catering:

### *The Quiet Volume Driver*

Catering has moved firmly into the category of structured production rather than opportunistic revenue. The operators seeing the strongest returns are those who separate it from in-house service both operationally and rhythmically.

# Common Spring Execution Pitfalls



## *Treating patios as overflow instead of a designed service zone*

Patios perform best when they are staffed and structured as a separate environment, not an extension of indoor service. Without clear workflow separation, both areas tend to suffer during peak periods.



## *Expanding menus instead of tightening them*

Spring demand often tempts operators to add complexity. The stronger approach is typically the opposite: refining menus for speed, consistency, and durability across multiple service environments.



## *Underestimating off-premise production timing*

Catering and event work require a different production rhythm. Failure to isolate prep windows or standardize production flow can quickly disrupt in-house service stability.

This typically involves dedicated prep planning, standardized menu formats, and tightly controlled production windows that protect the core kitchen from disruption. The emphasis is on repeatability at scale - menus that can be executed consistently regardless of order size or timing.

In this context, success is defined less by creativity and more by reliability under volume.

## **Event Service:**

### *On The Move*

Off-site events continue to expand as a meaningful channel, but they require a distinct operational approach. Unlike traditional service, these environments reward constraint.

The most effective operators design event menus around minimalism: a small number of high-performance items that can be executed quickly, transported reliably, and served consistently under pressure.

Just as important is the infrastructure behind it - logistics, setup, and service flow that are standardized well before the first order is taken.

When approached with discipline, event service becomes less of an extension of the restaurant and more of a self-contained, repeatable operation.



## **The Spring Advantage:**

### *Structure Over Spontaneity*

Across all formats, the defining characteristic of successful spring operations is not flexibility alone, but structure. The ability to absorb multiple channels of demand without degrading speed or consistency has become a key differentiator.

What separates strong operators in this season is not simply their willingness to do more, but their ability to ensure that more can happen simultaneously without strain, disruption, or loss of control.

# MASTER OF THE MENU



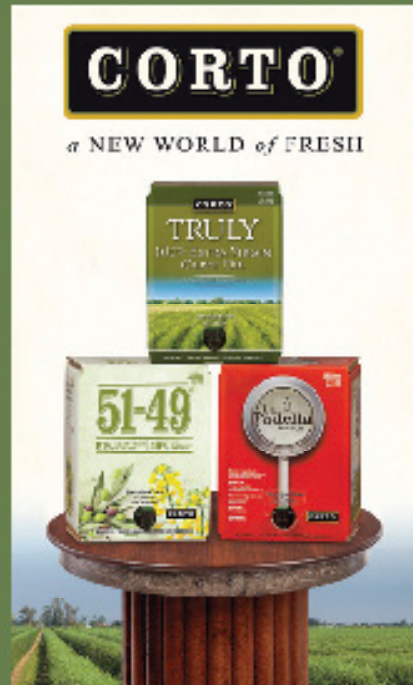
Now's the time to add these powerhouse brands to your lineup.  
[flowersfoodservice.com](http://flowersfoodservice.com)



## PRODUCTS YOU CAN TRUST, FROM A FAMILY COMPANY YOU CAN TRUST.



Modesto, CA | 800-327-7281  
[www.stanislaus.com](http://www.stanislaus.com)



Lodi, CA | 888-932-9051  
[www.corto-olive.com](http://www.corto-olive.com)

**nowpak Inc.**  
tomorrow's packaging today

NowPak containers are optimal for takeout, curbside pick-up, or delivery for all of your hot and cold foods. With so many options that are environmentally friendly, recyclable, and microwavable, NowPak has the perfect high-quality, low-cost packaging solution for your operation.

**nature now**

Fiber Plates

Item Code	Size
24922	10"
24955	7"
24963	9"
24964	10"
24965	10"

MFPP Lunch Tray

Item Code	Size
24966	6-Comp

Round Fiber Bowls

Item Code	Size
24923	12 oz.
27954	32 oz.
27959	48 oz.

Hinged Containers

Item Code	Size
24928	6"
24929	8"
24938	8" 3-Comp
24947	9" x 6"
24936	9"

**micro now**

Round Combo with Lid

Item Code	Size
26200	24 oz.
26223	32 oz.
26201	48 oz.

Rectangular Combo with Lid

Item Code	Size
26222	12 oz.
26224	24 oz.
26225	28 oz.
26227	38 oz.
26209	58 oz.

**valu now**

1-Compartment Hinged Containers

Item Code	Size
26218	6"
26217	8"
26219	9" x 6"
25225	9"

3-Compartment Hinged Containers

Item Code	Size
25224	9"

**deli now**

Clear Round Containers with Lids Combo

Item Code	Size
25220	8 oz.
25221	12 oz.
25222	16 oz.
25225	24 oz.
25224	32 oz.

**take-out now**

1-Compartment Hinged Containers

Item Code	Size
26205	6"
26206	9" x 6"
26207	9"





# Crust With a Story:

## DiMarco's Pinsa Brings a Fresh Take to the Menu

### A Family Tradition of Baking

Behind pinza is the DiMarco family, whose baking tradition spans three generations in Rome. As they often describe it, Di Marco is “first a Roman family, then a company” - a mindset that shows up in both their products and their approach to the craft. Over the years, that passion for doing things well has been paired with ongoing research and experimentation, helping shape new ideas in breadmaking while staying grounded in tradition.

Founder Corrado Di Marco built on that legacy when he developed Pinsa Romana in 2001, combining his deep knowledge of baking with a forward-looking approach to nutrition and digestibility. Working alongside his wife, Benilde, a nutritionist, the goal was to create a dough that balanced authentic flavor with a lighter, more modern profile.

That collaboration led to pinza's distinctive formulation: a proprietary blend of wheat, rice, and soy flours, fermented

naturally with sourdough over 72 hours. The result is a crust that's crisp on the outside, soft and airy inside, and easier to enjoy across a variety of occasions. Today, the next generation - sons Alberto, Enrico, and Francesco - continue to carry the family's focus on quality and innovation forward.





## THE ORIGINAL PINS A ROMANA



MADE IN ITALY

JFS#: 40025

## Designed for Foodservice Flexibility

For foodservice operations, pinza is designed with practicality in mind. Each crust is par-baked and frozen, allowing operators to go from freezer to finished dish in minutes using standard kitchen equipment. The format supports consistency across service periods while helping reduce prep time and labor in the back of house.

Menu flexibility is another key advantage. Pinza works seamlessly across dayparts and concepts from classic Italian builds to globally inspired toppings, shareable apps, or handheld formats. Its structure holds up well under a variety of ingredients, making it an easy platform for both signature items and seasonal LTOs.

Alongside pinza, DiMarco offers a range of complementary crusts and flatbreads that follow the same philosophy: simplify execution while maintaining quality and versatility. These formats give operators additional tools to expand menus without adding complexity.

With its combination of family heritage, thoughtful formulation, and operational ease, pinza is a natural fit for today's kitchens where consistency, speed, and standout flavor all matter.

## A New Partnership with Shared Roots



DiMarco is now available through Jordan's Foodservice, bringing together two family-owned companies that share a similar approach to quality and partnership. Jordan's is starting with a core pinza item, giving operators an easy way to get familiar with the product and see how it fits on their menu. From there, the plan is to grow together expanding the lineup over time and giving operators access to even more of what DiMarco has to offer.



# GOLDEN TIGER



## READY TO EAT!

### KIMCHI CHICKEN POTSTICKERS

**NEW**



A fusion potsticker filled with chicken, cabbage, kimchi and green onion, infused with savory Korean gochujang sauce and wrapped in a red chile wrapper.

JFS #43334  
120/1 oz.

### GOURMET VEGETABLE POTSTICKERS



A crescent-shaped dumpling with a fresh vegetable filling, including cabbage, celery, carrots, bamboo shoots and water chestnuts.

JFS #43346  
120/1 oz.

### CHICKEN POTSTICKERS



A crescent-shaped dumpling filled with savory chicken and fresh vegetables.

JFS #43340  
120/1 oz.

### PORK POTSTICKERS



A crescent-shaped dumpling filled with savory pork and fresh vegetables.

JFS# 43342  
120/1 oz.

### CHICKEN WONTONS



An egg noodle dumpling filled with a seasoned chicken and vegetable mixture.

JFS #43333  
200/5 oz.

### VEGETABLE SPRING ROLLS



A spring roll filled with fresh vegetables, long grain rice & vermicelli with umami spices.

JFS #43328  
144/1 oz.

### VEGETABLE EGG ROLLS



An egg roll filled with finely chopped vegetables, including cabbage, carrots, celery, onion and broccoli.

JFS #43329  
144/1.5 oz.

## WHAT MAKES US WHO WE ARE

#### QUALITY INGREDIENTS

Premium Vegetables  
Traditional Asian Spices  
Quality Meals

#### CLASSIC PRODUCTS

Potstickers  
Fried Rice  
Spring Rolls  
Wontons  
Egg Rolls  
Wrappers

#### SUPPORT TOOLS

Merchandising Tools  
Customizable POS  
Customizable Table Tents  
Customizable Coupons  
Online Recipes

#### INNOVATION LEADER

Fusion-Style Products  
Authentic Asian Recipes

For additional information contact your Ajinomoto Foods Sales or Broker Representative or visit us at:  
[www.ajinomotofoodservice.com](http://www.ajinomotofoodservice.com). Follow us on Instagram @ajinomotofoodsnorthamerica.



# What's New This Season: Beverage Edition

This season's beverage lineup brings together a mix of emerging trends and everyday staples, with products that add variety without overcomplicating the menu. New offerings from our partners include a passion fruit yerba mate, coconut milk barista blend, sparkling waters, and beverages made with apple cider vinegar - each bringing something a little different to today's beverage programs. Together, these additions reflect continued interest in functional ingredients, alternative dairy options, and refreshing flavors that appeal to a wide range of customer preferences.



## The Perfect Negroni

### Ingredients

- 1 oz Gin (preferably dry)
- 1 oz Campari
- 1 oz Sweet Vermouth
- Ice
- Orange peel (for garnish)

### Inst

1. Combine: Add the gin, Campari, and sweet vermouth to a mixing glass.
2. Chill: Fill the mixing glass with ice and stir well until chilled, about 20–30 seconds.
3. Strain: Strain into a rocks glass over a single large ice cube (JFS#: 46200).
4. Garnish: Express the oil from the orange peel over the drink and drop it in.

### Tips for Success

- Don't Shake:** Always stir a Negroni to avoid over-diluting the drink.
- Quality Ice:** Use large, slow-melting ice cubes for the best presentation and taste.

46200	Reddy Ice/IceBlox Ice Cubes Symmetrical 1.75" X 1.75"	1/100 ct
46202	Reddy Ice/IceBlox Ice Cubes Spheres 2.25"	1/100 ct
4288	Tractor Beverages Drink Citrus Ginger Haymaker Organic Can	12/12 oz
4294	Tractor Beverages Drink Dragon Berry Haymaker Organic Can	12/12 oz
2140	Babe Beverages Drink Yerba Mate Passion Fruit D.F. Can No Sugar Added	12/12 oz
7773	Brighton Farms Milk Coconut Barista Series Carton Vegan/Dairy/Gluten Free	12/32 oz
7775	Brighton Farms Drink Almondmilk Barista Series Carton Vegan/Dairy/Gluten Free	12/32 oz
7779	Brighton Farms Drink Oatmilk Barista Series Carton Vegan/Dairy/Gluten Free	12/32 oz

# BEVERAGES

## The New Frontline in Foodservice Innovation

In a world where businesses are always looking for new ways to attract customers and increase profits, one area has emerged as a major focus: beverages. This is more than a passing trend - it's a shift in how restaurants and foodservice operators think about their business. Drinks are no longer just something to accompany a meal; they have become a key factor in standing out from the competition. As we move through 2026, beverages are proving to be one of the most dynamic and profitable areas for growth.



## Why Beverages Matter More Than Ever



Even in a challenging environment, drinks are showing promise. Overall restaurant sales may be flat or slightly down due to higher prices and lower customer traffic, but beverages are standing out as a bright spot. Growth in drink sales has often matched or exceeded overall foodservice growth, and cold beverages in particular are becoming increasingly popular.



## Competition Is Heating Up

As more chains and independent operators focus on drinks, the market is becoming more competitive. Large chains like McDonald's and Starbucks are making drinks a priority, while newer chains that focus heavily on beverages are also growing rapidly. This shows that standing still is not an option as unique drinks can bring in customers and set a brand apart from competitors.

# Trends Shaping Beverage Innovation

## Functional Drinks



Many new beverages promise benefits beyond taste, such as energy, focus, stress relief, or wellness boosts. Drinks like energy beverages, enhanced waters, and caffeinated refreshers are in high demand.

## Sustainability

More operators are considering the environment, using local ingredients, eco-friendly packaging, and reducing waste. These efforts appeal to conscious consumers and can save money.

## Craft & Artisanal Approaches

Just as craft beer and coffee became popular, hand-prepared drinks using premium ingredients are now expected. Small-batch syrups, artisanal mixers, and housemade beverages are gaining popularity.



## Why Operators Need to Act

A strong drink program is no longer optional but a core part of running a successful business. Well-designed beverage offerings can strengthen brand identity by creating signature drinks that customers associate with the brand, show that the business understands current trends and preferences, and highlight creativity and innovation, helping position the operation as forward-thinking. The most successful operators will treat beverages not as a side item, but as a central platform for profit, creativity, and brand distinction.



## Leading the Beverage Revolution

Beverages have become a key area of opportunity for restaurants and foodservice operators. Those who embrace this change can stand out, attract loyal customers, and increase profits. People are eager for new and exciting drinks, and those who respond quickly and creatively will gain a strong advantage in a competitive market.

The question is no longer whether to focus on beverages, but how quickly and effectively operators can make them a centerpiece of their business. The “drink revolution” is underway and those who lead it will reap the rewards.

*Elevate Your Burgers with*  
**Pasteurized Shell Eggs**



**MICHAEL  
FOODS**

Easy to refill  
Lasting freshness



**Tork Constant Air Freshener**

Tork Constant Air Freshener delivers continuous odor-neutralizing fragrance for up to 90-days, unlike traditional systems which have a "spray and fade" effect. It is easy for staff to refill and maintain, so they have more time to focus on what matters most to your business.

Ask your Jordano's rep to learn more!

www.tork.com



**BELGIORISO**  
**HISPANIC SELECTION**

**NEW!**



Pack/Description	Jordano's Code
4/5# Grated Cotija Bag	18934
4/5# Shredded Oaxaca Bag	18932

AVAILABLE AT  
**JORDANO'S**



*Spring Menus Made Easy*  
**WITH IDAHOAN® POTATOES**

Bring bright, seasonal dishes to the plate without adding back-of-house prep. Idahoan® potatoes deliver scratch-like flavor and smooth, consistent results in minutes.

**Request a FREE Sample!**



Learn more at  
[Idahoanfoodservice.com](http://Idahoanfoodservice.com) or call 888.635.8115



## SPRING FORWARD WITH FLAVOR

Spring has sprung! As we enter the season of patio vibes, fresh menus, and unforgettable experiences, don't let bland, boring dishes bring your business down. Create craveable dishes that shine with bold flavor and seasonal creativity with quality Ambrosia ingredients.

### Perfect for:

- Breakfast/Brunch & Lunch
- Dinner & Dessert
- Bars & Cocktails
- Catering
- Special Events
- Buffet Spreads
- Cafeterias

### LEARN MORE

1(800) 631-7070

[www.ambrosia-foods.com](http://www.ambrosia-foods.com)



## COUNTY FAIR FRESH PICKLED PRODUCTS



Crisp and delicious pickled products, sustainably grown and made from the freshest produce for an amazingly satisfying **CRUNCH!**

**PICKLE SPEARS - CHIPS - WHOLES - SAUERKRAUT - RELISH**



**PLEASANT VALLEY FARM**  
AMERICAN GROWN

# CUSTOM LABELED BOTTLED WATER



16.9oz Value

16.9oz Modern Bullet

16oz Alumitek Aluminum

16oz Trivium White Aluminum

22oz Ball Aluminum

One Gallon



Your message on a bottle.  
We offer Purified, Spring, Electrolyte Enhanced and Alkaline waters.  
Available from 8oz to 1 Gallon, we have a water to suit any need.



323-724-8223 | customerservice@chameleonbeverage.com | www.ChameleonBeverage.com

**CHAMELEON**  
BEVERAGE COMPANY INC

## CHEF INSPIRED, ARTISAN FILLED PASTAS, SAUCES & ITALIAN DESSERTS

From our family to yours, only the best will do!®



ITEM #43417



ITEM #43431



ITEM #43427



ITEM #43546



ITEM #43409



ITEM #43553

ITEM #43409  
RAVIOLI BURRATA  
STRACCIATELLA IQF  
LARGE HEXAGON  
8-10 PCS/LB - 2/2.5 LB.

ITEM #43431  
PASTA LASAGNA  
SHEET WAVY IQF  
1/10 LB.

ITEM #43417  
RAVIOLI LOBSTER  
JUMBO  
HEXAGONAL IQF  
10 PCS/LB - 2/2.5 LB.

ITEM #43546  
TORTELLINI  
CHEESE  
TRI-COLOR IQF  
2/5 LB.

ITEM #43427  
PASTA LASAGNA SHEET  
SMOOTH IQF  
1/10 LB.

ITEM #43553  
TORTELLINI CHEESE  
PLAIN IQF  
2/5 LB.



SEVIROLI FOODS // 516.222.6220 // STVIROLI.COM

# New Bites on the Block

As our community continues to grow, we're excited to welcome a new wave of culinary talent to the scene. From fresh concepts to bold flavors, these recently opened spots are already making their mark and bringing something unique to the table. In the following pages, we're highlighting a few of our newest customers sharing a glimpse into their stories, their food, and what makes each one worth a visit.



## Santa Barbara County

### Little Bird Kitchen

Little Bird Kitchen, located in the Santa Barbara Public Market, is a go-to spot for elevated comfort food. The menu features standouts like a perfectly crispy fried chicken sandwich, along with golden onion rings and fries that don't disappoint. Portions are generous, and the quality is consistently strong. For something a bit lighter, the kale salad with cranberries, mango, and almonds is a fresh, well-balanced option. Set inside the lively Public Market, home to a mix of local food vendors, it's an easy and appealing stop for a casual meal in Santa Barbara.



### Arnie's Roof Top Bar

Perched above Linden Square in the heart of Carpinteria, Arnie's is a cocktail-forward rooftop bar designed for gathering and unwinding. Expect handcrafted drinks, open-air lounge seating, glowing fireplaces, and sweeping views - all coming together to create an easygoing space for connection and celebration.



### Marisella

Marisella is Chef Danny Grant's coastal Italian love letter to California, blending timeless hospitality with a relaxed elegance. Rooted in Amalfi Coast traditions and inspired by California's land and sea, the menu features handmade pastas, local seafood, and wood-fired meats, all served in a softly lit space that evokes the romance of coastal living. A thoughtful wine list, curated martini program, and interiors that reflect this Italian-Californian influence create an atmosphere that invites guests to settle in and stay awhile.

# Kern County

## Willow Ranch

Willow Ranch is a laid-back American BBQ spot serving wood-smoked meats, burgers, and seafood. The property also features a rustic barn, making it a popular choice for events and gatherings. Guests often note the friendly, attentive staff and strong value, with well-seasoned meats and house-made barbecue sauce standing out. Favorites include the Flat Iron steak with sweet potato fries, the shredded BBQ beef sandwich with potato salad, and the homemade coconut cream pie.



## Vecchio's Pizzeria & Gelateria

Vecchio's is a locally owned, family-run restaurant bringing authentic Neapolitan-style pizza, handcrafted gelato, and more to the Belcourt area. Vecchio's brings Neapolitan tradition to life with wood-fired pizzas, seasonal Italian favorites, and handcrafted gelato inspired by 150-year-old recipes. With a focus on genuine flavors and warm hospitality, it's a welcoming place for the community to gather and enjoy a taste of Italy.



# San Luis Obsipo County

## Avila Market in Avila Beach

Avila Market is a lively market and deli serving a full menu built to satisfy any craving. From juicy burgers and stacked sandwiches to hearty breakfast plates and refreshing açai bowls, the lineup is both varied and crowd-pleasing. With an emphasis on quality ingredients and bold, approachable flavors, it's a reliable stop for a casual, satisfying bite in Avila Beach.



## Mo's Smokehouse BBQ in Pismo

Just steps from the beach in Pismo, Mo's Smokehouse BBQ has quickly made a name for its bold, smoky flavors. The tri-tip sandwich is a standout - piled high on a soft roll and finished with a house-made BBQ sauce that strikes the right balance of richness and tang. After a morning on the sand, it's an easy go-to, and for many locals, a stop at Mo's has become part of the post-beach routine.



# Ventura County

## Boney Mountain Pizza

Boney Mountain Pizza brings a relaxed, community-focused energy to Newbury Park with California-style pizza, cold craft beer, and a full bar. Known for its crowd-pleasing pies and wings, it's also a go-to spot for game day, with plenty of screens

and a lively, sports-friendly atmosphere.

Whether you're stopping in for a casual meal or settling in to watch the game, it's built for easygoing gatherings and local connection.



## Victoria's Pub

Victoria's Pub brings the camaraderie, charm, and flavors of a traditional English pub to Ventura. The menu offers a mix of classic British fare alongside American favorites, complemented by a wide selection of draft, domestic, imported, and craft beers. Guests can enjoy billiards or traditional darts in a relaxed, welcoming setting.

## *What's Cooking in 2026:*

# The Forces Shaping the Future of Food



As 2026 unfolds, restaurants are finding their footing in a landscape defined by tighter budgets, smaller teams, and shifting customer expectations. Step into any busy kitchen and you'll still see the familiar rhythm cooks moving in sync, relying on repetition and timing to keep orders flowing. But behind that rhythm, subtle changes are reshaping how kitchens operate.

Customers are changing, too. They're more selective about where they spend, looking for meals that feel worth it - thoughtful, satisfying, and aligned with their everyday lives. In response, restaurants are making more deliberate choices, from the way menus are designed to the tools they rely on behind the scenes.

This year isn't about flashy reinvention. It's about practical, sustainable changes that make a real difference. From flavor trends to workflow adjustments, here's what's driving the industry forward.

### *Value Becomes the Deciding Factor*

Dining out is no longer just about convenience or indulgence, it's about value. Customers are paying closer attention to what they get for their money, weighing quality, portion, and overall experience.

Restaurants that succeed in this environment are the ones that strike a careful balance: delivering consistent, high-quality meals at prices that feel fair. Instead of trying to do everything, many are focusing on what matters most to their regulars and investing in those areas.

The result is a more thoughtful dining experience; one that feels reliable without feeling routine.

### *Smarter Tools, Not Flashier Ones*

Behind the scenes, restaurant operators are rethinking what they need from their equipment. After years of eye-catching innovations, the focus is shifting toward tools that simply work - reliably, efficiently, and day after day.

In busy kitchens, consistency is everything. Equipment that can handle high demand, reduce prep time, and hold up under pressure is becoming essential. Rather than chasing the newest technology, operators are choosing solutions that solve real problems and deliver long-term value.

## *Automation Steps In Where Teams Feel the Strain*

Staffing challenges remain a constant pressure, and many restaurants are turning to automation to help fill the gaps. The goal isn't to replace people, but to support them, especially during high-pressure moments.

Simple forms of automation, like portioning, timing, or pre-set processes, can take repetitive tasks off employees' plates. That frees up staff to focus on what matters most: preparing food well and delivering a great customer experience.

As teams stay lean and demand stays high, these tools are becoming less of a luxury and more of a necessity.

## *A More Grounded Approach to Growth*

If there's a common thread running through foodservice in 2026, it's a shift toward practicality. Restaurants are moving away from excess and focusing on what truly works for their teams, their customers, and their bottom line.

Diners want meals that feel genuine and enjoyable. Kitchen teams need systems that make their work manageable. And operators are looking for ways to stay creative without adding unnecessary strain.

The businesses that thrive will be the ones that listen closely and respond with intention. In a fast-changing industry, success isn't about doing more, it's about doing the right things, consistently.

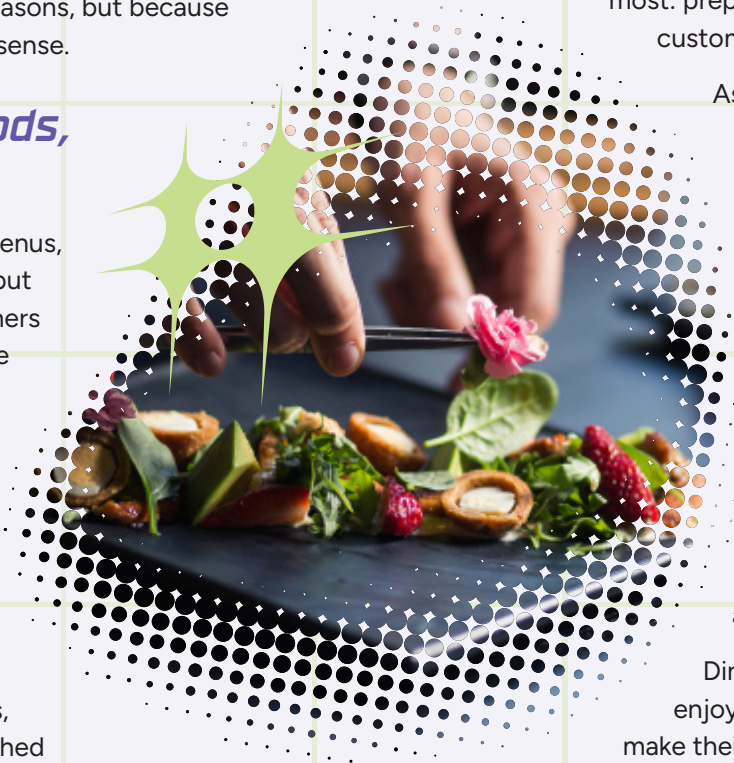
There's also a growing awareness of sustainability. Tools that last longer, reduce waste, or use energy more efficiently are gaining attention not just for environmental reasons, but because they make financial sense.

## *Familiar Foods, Reimagined*

When it comes to menus, comfort is still king but with a twist. Customers continue to gravitate toward familiar favorites, while restaurants look for ways to reinvent those classics without driving up costs.

Simple formats like sandwiches, burgers, and bowls are refreshed with new flavors, sauces, and textures. A slight change - a bold condiment, a different preparation, a global influence - can turn a standard item into something memorable.

This approach allows restaurants to stay creative without overcomplicating their menus. It keeps offerings fresh while maintaining the efficiency that busy kitchens depend on.



**Lamb Weston**  
POSSIBILITIES IN POTATOES 

# LAMB WESTON SEASONED™ FRIES

**A pinch of seasoning.  
A dash of flavor.  
Always crispy.**

**EXPLORE FRIES**






# Baron

Spices & Seasonings

## Spice it up!

When you want the best spices with custom seasonings and personal service to match, turn to Baron Spices and Seasonings for a whole new taste of success!



Proudly Represented By  
Fred Sanchez, Axis Sales & Marketing  
818.577.5001



# Spring Desserts

## Classic Meets Light & Bright

This spring pairing balances nostalgic comfort with a lighter, more refined finish. Built around fruit-forward flavors and contrasting textures, these two desserts give operators flexibility across plated service, catering, and seasonal menus.

One delivers warm, caramelized richness. The other offers a cool, tangy counterpoint—together creating a well-rounded dessert program that feels both familiar and fresh.

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Prepare cupcake pan by spraying with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Spoon approximately 1 teaspoon of melted butter into the bottom of the wells of the cupcake pan. To the melted butter, add 1 tablespoon of brown sugar to each well in the pan. Place one maraschino cherry on top of the brown sugar in each well. Gently press into the brown sugar and butter mixture. On top of that, add a tablespoon of crushed pineapple to each well, and then gently press down on the mixture, to compact it in each well, with the back of a spoon. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine cake mix, pineapple juice, oil and egg, and beat with an electric mixer on low speed for approximately 2 minutes.
4. Scoop or pour batter into each of the muffin cups, on top of the prepared fillings. Fill to the top of the well, but do not overfill.
5. Bake for approximately 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a cupcake comes out clean. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes.
6. After cooling for 10 minutes, gently invert pan, turning cupcakes out. This can be done onto a cooling rack, silicone sheet, parchment paper or a sheet pan. A sheet pan is easiest as you can put it directly onto the cupcake pan, making it easy to invert.

## Pineapple Upside Down Cupcakes

Take a classic flavor combo and turn it into an easy, single-serve dessert built for real kitchen flow. Each one layers pineapple and a maraschino cherry under soft cake batter, baked upside down for that caramelized top and reliable finish every time. They're simple to portion, easy to scale, and hold up well across service whether you're running banquets, catering, or à la carte.

### Ingredients

1/2 cup melted butter (salted or unsalted)	1-1/3 cups pineapple juice
1-1/2 cups light brown sugar	1/3 cups canola oil
24 maraschino cherries	3 eggs
20 ounces can crushed pineapple (drained)	Optional toppings such as powdered sugar, additional cherries, and/or whipped cream, as desired.
15.25 ounce box pineapple cake mix* (any box between 15-18 ounces will work)	

Courtesy of [www.lovefromoven.com](http://www.lovefromoven.com)

# Buttermilk & Raspberry Panna Cotta

A lighter, more refined option that adds contrast to richer offerings. This panna cotta blends tangy buttermilk with cream for a smooth, balanced texture, finished with a bright raspberry layer or compote.

Chilled and clean in presentation, it's ideal for make-ahead prep and streamlined service. The fresh acidity and subtle sweetness make it a natural fit for spring menus.

## Ingredients

1/2 cup buttermilk	1 tablespoon hot water
1 teaspoon unflavored gelatin, divided	1-1/4 cups frozen raspberries (6 ounces)
1-1/2 cups heavy cream	2 teaspoons lemon juice
1/4 cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar, divided	Fresh raspberries and/or mint (optional)
1/2 vanilla bean	

## Instructions

1. For cream layer: Set six small dishes or jars (about 4 ounces each) in a baking pan. Place buttermilk in a medium bowl. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon gelatin over buttermilk; set aside to soften.
2. In a medium, heavy saucepan, combine cream and 1/4 cup sugar. Snip the vanilla bean in half crosswise. (Save one half for another use.) With a paring knife, split the remaining half lengthwise and scrape out the seeds; add both seeds and scraped pod to the cream mixture. Bring to a simmer over medium-high; cook, whisking constantly, 1 minute.
3. Ladle 1/4 cup of the hot cream mixture over the buttermilk mixture; whisk until smooth. Pour in remaining cream mixture; whisk until smooth. Let cool 30 minutes.
4. Remove pod; squeeze to release any remaining seeds, then discard. Ladle cream mixture (a scant 1/3 cup per serving) into dishes. Cover and chill overnight.
5. For raspberry layer: Measure 1 tablespoon hot water into a 2-cup glass measuring cup. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon gelatin over the water; set aside to soften.
6. In a medium saucepan, combine frozen raspberries, 3 tablespoons sugar and the lemon juice. Cook over medium-high, mashing with a fork, until berries are reduced to a pulp and sauce begins to thicken, about 3 minutes. Set a fine-mesh sieve on the measuring cup with the water and gelatin; press the berry mixture through the sieve using a rubber scraper. Discard seeds. Whisk mixture in the cup until smooth. Let cool 30 minutes.
7. Uncover dishes. Pour about 1 tablespoon cooled berry mixture over each cold panna cotta. Cover and chill at least 2 hours. If you like, serve garnished with fresh berries and/or mint.



Courtesy of [www.lmidwestliving.com](http://www.lmidwestliving.com)

# We make the flavors. You make it perfect.



## Nobody brings more to the table

Ken's is all about flavor. Creating it, perfecting it and delivering it in the widest variety of dressings, sauces and marinades. And it's been that way ever since we started with one family recipe in 1941. With all of our success, one thing hasn't changed: our high standards.

Ken's. Flavor-obsessed and laser-focused on making your menu all it can be.



Request a sample and get more  
information at [Kensfoodservice.com](http://Kensfoodservice.com)

**KEN'S**  
A Teriyaki Diner Company