

Cash in on Seasonal Splurging



Adjust your menu and the calendar does most of the marketing for you.

The reigning champ of seasonal special flavors - pumpkin spice - boosts a restaurant's bottom line. It's not just pumpkin spice that's on the menu...top Fast Casual restaurant chains add limited time offer holiday specials showcasing peppermint, egg nog, and more.¹

“SEASONALITY IS ALWAYS A GOOD POINT TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION, ESPECIALLY SEASONALITY DURING THE HOLIDAYS. TRADITIONS RESONATE WITH PEOPLE AND, OFTENTIMES, TRADITIONS SURROUND THE HOLIDAYS.”

- RAFAEL STEIN, NESTLÉ PROFESSIONAL, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CHEF

The formula is simple: feature flavors and ingredients that are off the customer's radar most of the year but become top of mind as the holidays approach. Changing one or two items on the menu is one way Fast Casual restaurants can stay seasonal. Nestlé Professional Business Development Chef Rafael Stein gives the example of Panera seasonal salads. He adds, "Panera has apple squash soup and spicy smoothies. They follow seasonality."

It's a different story at Mexican, Italian, Asian, pizza, or gourmet burger concepts where natural fits for seasonal items are tough to come by. As Nestlé Development Chef Vid Lutz notes, ingredients may change with the season, but proteins stay the same.

But it can be done. Many of the tastes Fast Casual customers crave are easy add-ins to beverage and dessert offerings. Peppermint tea is one quick take,² gingerbread ice cream or milkshakes another.³

Late fall and early winter also signal the arrival of soup and stew season along with other hot-and-hearty favorites. Try adding carrots, mushrooms, broccoli, and avocados to seasonal soups paired with a winter craft beer.⁴

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Sources:

¹ Datassential, On the Menu, December 2015

² Datassential, MenuTrends Snapshot – Peppermint

³ Datassential, MenuTrends Snapshot – Gingerbread

⁴ Datassential, Seasonal Soup Trends, October 2016

NESTLÉ PROFESSIONAL CHEF TIPS

**Add flavor and value
Seasonal flavors for
December include
cardamom, nutmeg,
coriander, and warm spices.**
