



# START HERE

*with ideas for*

**APPETIZERS, SMALL PLATES, AND BAR SNACKS**





# FIRST UP

with **SPECIAL APPS**

*Starters of all kinds represent a great source of guest satisfaction—and add-on sales.*

Appetizers, small plates, and bar snacks are an operator's best friend. The category invites experimentation; at a price point and portion size that will encourage guest trial, and build average check sizes. These items are good for the kitchen, too, creating an opportunity to cross-utilize ingredients and labor-intensive prep. Many popular starters can also do double- and triple-duty as shareables, and even lunch plates or side dishes (think sliders and crispy fried Brussels sprouts).

Small wonder, then, that 88.5% of operators menu appetizers, according to Technomic, at an average price of \$9.92 per item.<sup>1</sup> For casual-dining restaurants, in particular, appetizers and bar snacks are a visit occasion driver, with notable interest in innovative and ethnic flavors for the mealpart. Upgrading familiar favorites like fries and shrimp can be a smart strategy.



## TOP 10 APPETIZERS (% by menu penetration<sup>2</sup>):

<b>83.4%</b> Salad	<b>20.6%</b> Chicken strips
<b>61.1%</b> Soup	<b>18.8%</b> Nachos
<b>43.3%</b> Wings	<b>17.7%</b> Fried cheese
<b>29.4%</b> Fries	<b>15.5%</b> Quesadillas
<b>22.0%</b> Calamari	<b>15.4%</b> Meatballs

Increasingly, appetizers are being served at the bar (44% of consumers said they would be very likely or likely to consume an app at the bar in 2017, vs 41% in 2015).<sup>3</sup> And that suggests an opportunity to use starters and snacks as a vehicle for increasing beverage sales as well.

### Sources:

1: Technomic Ignite, Appetizers (2019).

2: Datassential Category Overviews: Appetizer, July 2019.

3: Technomic for Nestlé Professional, Casual-Dining: Appetizer Insights & Building the Bar Business (April 2018).



# Microbrew and Blue Cheese Cheddar Fondue

**10 PORTIONS** | Fondue is staging a comeback, and this one gets extra appeal from the addition of craft brew, plus hearty dippers including wings and soft pretzels.

**Chef-mate**

## INGREDIENTS

**2 ½ cups** Chef-mate® Basic Cheddar Cheese Sauce

**4 Tbsp** Beer, local/craft brown ale

**4 Tbsp** Blue cheese, crumbled

**2 Tbsp** Parsley, chopped

**1 qt** Celery, sticks

**1 qt** Carrot, sticks

**1 ¼ pt** Cherry tomatoes

**1 ½ qt** Cauliflower florets, blanched

**2 ½ lb** Chicken wings, prepared

**2 lb** Seasoned potato wedges, prepared

**5 ea** Soft pretzels, prepared

Salt and pepper, to taste

## METHOD

- 1** In a pot over medium heat, combine cheese sauce and beer. Heat, stirring frequently.
- 2** In a stainless steel bowl, whisk together heated cheese sauce plus blue cheese.
- 3** Add blue cheese mixture to the pot and heat, stirring well.
- 4** Garnish sauce with parsley and serve warm with fresh vegetables, chicken wings, potato wedges, and pretzels.

### Serving Suggestions/Variations:

- Experiment with other beer styles for a wide range of flavors, adjusting the beer ratio to taste
- Substitute different vegetables, proteins, and more, such as broccoli and asparagus, sliced sausages, and tortilla chips



# Chili Flatbread

**5 PORTIONS** | Versatile flatbreads are great shareable bar snacks, and they can be made with all kinds of toppings, including ever-popular chili.

**Chef-mate**

## INGREDIENTS

**4 cups** Chef-mate® Chili Con Carne with Beans

**2 ½ cups** Cheddar cheese, shredded

**3 ½ Tbsp** Scallion, sliced

**1 cup** Red onion, small dice

**2 ea** Flatbreads, prepared

## METHOD

- 1** Preheat oven to 400°F.
- 2** In a small saucepan, heat chili over medium low heat, stirring frequently until simmering.
- 3** Drain oil from chili.
- 4** Spread chili, cheese, and red onion evenly on flatbread.
- 5** Place flatbread on oven pan and bake 6 minutes.
- 6** Garnish with scallions and cut as desired.

### Serving Suggestions/Variations:

- Serve with variety of pickles and/or roasted vegetables, such as pickled banana peppers and roasted Brussels sprouts
- Use a whole grain flatbread



# Pot Roast Sliders

**30 PORTIONS** | Comforting braised pot roast meets on-trend slider in a delicious shareable appetizer or bar snack.

## INGREDIENTS

**1 fl oz** Vegetable oil

**14 lb** Beef chuck, pot roast

**7 oz** Trio® Au Jus Mix

**1 gal** Water

**60 slices** Pickles, bread and butter, sliced

**30 ea** Bread, whole wheat, slider buns, halved

## METHOD

- 1** Heat oil in an ovenproof pot, and sear the beef on all sides to brown.
- 2** Prepare the au jus mix with water per the package directions, and pour over the beef.
- 3** Cover and place in a 325°F oven for 2–3 hours, or until tender.
- 4** Drain and reserve the au jus. Shred the beef and hold warm.
- 5** For each sandwich, place 1 ½ oz of beef and 2 pickle slices on bun. Serve with 1 oz portion of au jus.

TRIO





# Burnt Ends Mac & Cheese Poutine

**12 PORTIONS** | The classic Canadian snack gets a premium upgrade with a topping of white cheddar macaroni and cheese and brisket burnt ends.

## INGREDIENTS

**72 oz** French fries, prepared, hot

**6 lb** Stouffer's® White Cheddar Mac & Cheese, heated

**48 oz** Smoked brisket burnt ends, heated

**24 oz** Jalapeño cheese curds

**12 oz** Crispy fried onions, prepared

**12 tsp** Chives, chopped

**12 fl oz** Kansas City-style barbecue sauce

## METHOD



- 1** For each portion, place 6 oz of French fries in a serving bowl and top with 8 oz heated white cheddar mac & cheese, 4 oz heated burnt ends, 2 oz jalapeño cheese curds, and 1 oz crispy fried onions.
- 2** Top poutine with chives and a 1 oz drizzle of Kansas City-style barbecue sauce.



# Tuna Tartare

**4 PORTIONS** | Forming marinated cubed tuna and ripe avocado in a ring mold creates an elegant presentation for this classic raw tuna specialty.

## INGREDIENTS

**8 oz** Tuna steak, diced

**2 tsp** Chives, fresh, chopped

**2 tsp** Maggi® Seasoning

**1 tsp** Oil, grapeseed

**1** Avocado

**2 tsp** Lime juice, fresh

**2 tsp** Shallot, diced, fried

## METHOD



- 1** Toss diced tuna with chives, seasoning, and oil. Season to taste.
- 2** Dice avocado just before service, and toss gently with lime juice.
- 3** For each serving place a ring mold on a plate. Place avocado in the ring mold. Pat it down gently with the bottom of a spoon to create a flat surface. Top avocado with diced tuna. Gently pat tuna to create a flat surface so when the ring mold is removed the tartare remains in a cylindrical shape.
- 4** Remove ring mold and top the tartare with crispy shallots.
- 5** Garnish with micro greens and brunoise of radish. Additional sauce may be drizzled on the plate.



# Deviled Eggs

**60 PORTIONS** | The endlessly versatile classic is a mainstay on appetizer and bar snack menus, and it just keeps getting more popular.



## INGREDIENTS

**30 each** Eggs, boiled, cut in half

**10 oz** Mayonnaise

**1 oz** Dijon mustard

**½ oz** White wine vinegar

**½ oz** Minor's® Chicken Base  
(No Added MSG)\*

## METHOD

- 1** Remove egg yolks from whites.
- 2** Place egg yolks in a processor and process until the yolks are completely crumbled, about 2–3 minutes.
- 3** Mix in remaining ingredients and place yolk mixture in a piping bag.
- 4** Pipe the egg yolks back into the egg whites. Garnish as desired.

**Variations:** Replace the chicken base with other Minor's bases to create new and exciting deviled eggs.

**1) Crispy Ham:** Add 1 Tbsp Minor's Ham Base and garnish with crispy ham, julienne radish, and chives.

**2) Smoked Salmon:** Add 1 Tbsp Minor's Seafood Base and garnish with everything bagel spice, smoked salmon, pickled red onion, diced cucumber, and hand-cut crispy crouton.

**3) Caesar:** Add 1 Tbsp Minor's Seafood Base, ½ Tbsp Minor's Roasted Garlic Flavor Concentrate, 15g grated Parmesan, ½ tsp Maggi® Seasoning, and ½ tsp black pepper and garnish with bias-cut romaine ribs, crispy hand-cut crouton, and a piece of shaved Parmesan.

**4) Harissa:** Add 1 Tbsp Minor's Chicken Base and 1 tsp Minor's Roasted Garlic Flavor Concentrate and garnish with harissa, goat cheese, and cilantro.

**5) Za'atar:** Add 2 Tbsp za'atar mix and ¾ Tbsp Minor's Sautéed Vegetable Base and garnish with feta cheese, sliced olive, lemon zest, and cucumber.

**6) Chorizo:** Add a pinch of saffron, 1 Tbsp Minor's Shrimp Base, and 1 Tbsp chorizo cooking oil and garnish with a piece of chopped shrimp, cooked crispy Spanish chorizo, and chopped parsley.





# Grilled Cauliflower Steak with Pesto

**10 PORTIONS** | Grilled cauliflower steak is glazed with pesto and served with a mixture of crispy Brussels sprouts, pomegranate, and corn along with a schmear of smoky chipotle crema.

## INGREDIENTS

**1 pt** Crème fraiche

**½ cup** Minor's® Chipotle Flavor Concentrate

**2 ea** Cauliflower, whole (1 lb)

**1 Tbsp** Minor's GreenLeaf™ Cilantro Pesto Sauce

**2 tsp** Olive oil

**½ pouch** Brussels sprouts, halved

Salt and pepper, to taste

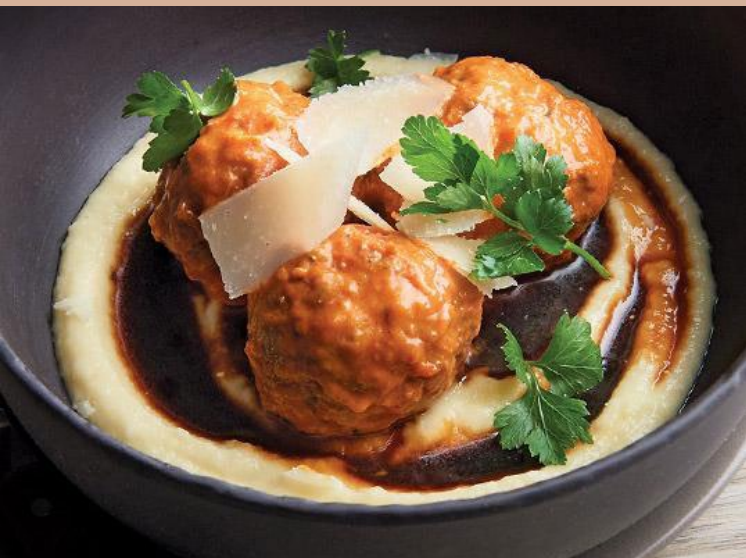
**¼ cup** Pomegranate seeds

**½ Tbsp** Corn, fresh, roasted, off the cob

## METHOD



- 1** In a small bowl, whisk crème fraiche and chipotle flavor concentrate until smooth.
- 2** Cross-cut cauliflower into steaks. Glaze with GreenLeaf Cilantro Pesto.
- 3** On a grill over medium high flame, add pesto-glazed cauliflower and cook for 2–3 minutes on each side until cooked through. Finish in oven at 350°F if needed.
- 4** Add olive oil to sauté pan and sear Brussels sprouts over medium high flame until crispy. Season with salt and pepper to taste and cook until tender.
- 5** Mix Brussels sprouts, pomegranate seeds, and corn in a medium bowl.
- 6** Pool cilantro crema on the plate and top with cauliflower steak.
- 7** Garnish with corn mixture and serve.



# Fennel Black Pepper Meatballs

**10 PORTIONS** | Two kinds of fennel, red wine, and black pepper bring a touch of sophistication to the ever-popular meatball.

## INGREDIENTS

**¾ lb** Ground beef

**¾ lb** Ground veal

**1 Tbsp** Garlic, minced

**1 Tbsp** Shallot, minced

**1 Tbsp** Scallion, sliced ⅛ inch

**1 tsp** Fennel seeds, toasted, ground

**2 tsp** Kosher salt, fine

**1 tsp** Black pepper, cracked

**2 Tbsp** Worcestershire sauce

**1 ea** Egg, beaten

**½ cup** Panko breadcrumbs

**3 Tbsp** Olive oil

**¼ cup** Fennel bulb, julienned

**3 Tbsp** Red wine

**¼ cup** Minor's® Classical Reductions™  
Reduced Brown Stock, prepared  
as demi glace

**2 Tbsp** Butter, in ¼-inch cubes

## METHOD



- 1 Pre-heat oven to 350°F.
- 2 In a bowl add beef, veal, garlic, shallots, scallions, fennel seeds, salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce, egg, and panko. Mix gently until evenly mixed. Form into 2 oz meatballs.
- 3 In a cast-iron skillet over medium high heat, add oil and heat until the oil shimmers. Add meatballs and brown evenly on all sides, about 6–8 minutes. Place skillet in the oven and cook meatballs until internal temperature reaches 155°F. Remove and transfer to serving dish; cover with foil.
- 4 Return skillet to the heat, add julienned fennel and cook until caramelized, about 3 minutes.
- 5 Deglaze with red wine and reduce au sec, or almost dry.
- 6 Add demi glace and bring to a simmer.
- 7 Mount with butter and pour finished sauce over meatballs.

### Serving Suggestion/Variation:

Serve with cheesy polenta and freshly shaved hard cheese.



# Cold Brew Candied Bacon

**10 PORTIONS** | This sweet and savory handheld is a perfect bar snack, and it can also be used to garnish salads, cheese and charcuterie plates, and even Bloody Marys.

## INGREDIENTS

**20 strips** Thick cut bacon

**¼ cup** NESCAFÉ® Cold Brew Coffee Concentrate

**1 cup** Agave syrup

## METHOD

- 1** Place bacon flat on parchment-lined sheet tray and bake at 350° F until desired doneness is cooked halfway.
- 2** Combine NESCAFÉ Cold Brew Coffee Concentrate and agave syrup and mix well.
- 3** After bacon is cooked halfway through remove from oven and brush both sides liberally with agave and cold brew mixture.
- 4** Place back into oven to finish cooking.





# More Ideas for Starters



Crispy Calamari with Alfredo Sauce,  
Gluten Free made with Stouffer's® Alfredo Sauce Gluten Free

Offer something with a little **participatory excitement**, such as Korean-style marinated steak bulgogi with lettuce wraps or build-your-own fish tacos.

**Bread**—from crostini and bruschetta to Middle Eastern-style flatbreads—is a perfect carrier for a wide variety of appetizer-worthy proteins and vegetables. Consider a menu section with several different types that patrons can mix-and-match.

**Skewering foods** adds a fun twist. Try threading on marinated vegetables, cubes of steak with Bearnaise dipping sauce, or even spicy boneless fried chicken wings.

Don't forget old favorites like **nachos and potato skins**, with creative toppings such as ale-braised pulled pork or four cheeses and caramelized onions.

**Next-level veggies** like roasted carrots with chimichurri sauce and blistered shishito peppers appeal to flexitarians and can do double duty as side dishes.

Turn global preps into **fusion handhelds** by recasting poke (a Hawaiian marinated fish specialty) as a filling for tostadas or wrapping chicken mole in an eggroll skin.

**Elevated dips** like smoked salmon spread or a tasting of several different varieties of hummus are perfect for crudités, crackers, and breadsticks.

**Fritters** represent a great way to repurpose prep and odd bits, from broken shrimp and salmon trim to a bumper crop of corn or zucchini.

**French fries, as well as other fried vegetables** such as sweet potatoes and onion strings, can be served with a wide variety of dips, dusts, and toppings; serving them in a paper cone makes for an interesting presentation.

**Simple but high quality** can be best when it comes to bar snacks: spiced nuts, marinated olives, truffled popcorn, housemade potato chips, hot pretzels, cheese straws.



# FIRST THINGS FIRST *with* **Nestlé Brands**

Nestlé Professional offers a number of products within its portfolio of brands that are perfect for appetizers, bar snacks, and small plates, from Chef-mate® cheese

sauces to Minor's® global flavor concentrates and sauces. Whether you're going for classic favorites or an innovative new signature, start things off with Nestlé Professional.



Cheesy Dippers made with Trio® Cheese Sauce

*For more information on the entire product line,  
go to [NestleProfessional.com](http://NestleProfessional.com).*



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