

nutripro[®]

NESTLÉ PROFESSIONAL NUTRITION MAGAZINE

Simple & Authentic Embracing Transparency

The shift
toward
authenticity

Boosting
color
& flavor



an honest APPROACH TO FOOD

There was a time when how food was made mattered a lot less to guests than how it tasted.

Today, consumers around the world increasingly care about both. They want to know what their food is made of and where it comes from. And more and more of them are choosing foods made with recognizable ingredients, less artificial dyes or other additives, and more familiar, authentic, or traditional cooking methods.¹

In response to these new preferences, several grocery store chains and food manufacturers have already shifted toward simpler ingredients,² and those expectations are shaping what restaurants do, too. As this trend continues, it's important to understand how your guests' expectations are

changing, and what you can do to keep delivering great results with a more selective set of ingredients and cooking methods. Let's take a closer look at this movement.

Taking the mystery out of the menu

From the grocery store to the restaurant, today's customers are looking for a combination of transparency and integrity. Which factors are most important to them?



A Simple Ingredient List

The idea of a product made with the least ingredients possible is appealing to 68% of global consumers.³



Recognizable Ingredients

Forty percent of global respondents say the absence of artificial colors and flavors is very important when choosing food.⁴



Local Sources

3/5 shoppers said the place of origin was as or more important to them as other factors such as price and quality.⁶



More Natural Ingredients

Consumer research suggests that consumers tend to believe that products described as 'natural' are also healthy.⁷



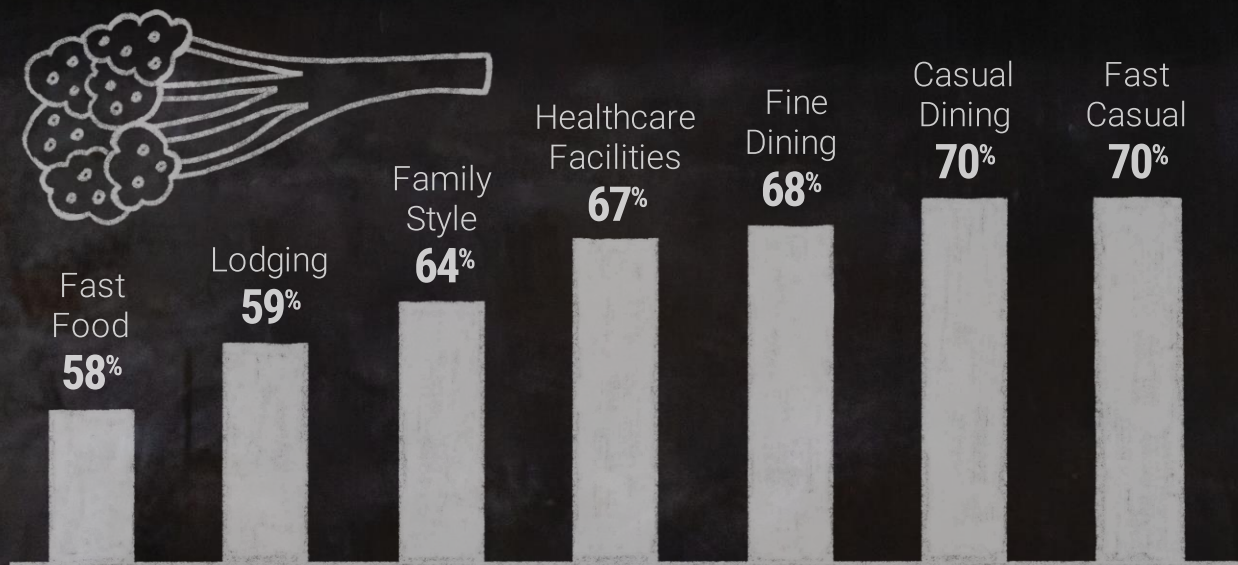
Familiar Preparation Methods

A study of 30,000 people in 60 countries showed that traditional food production methods are perceived as preserving the food's natural state.⁵



FRESH *expectations*

EXPECTATIONS EXTEND INTO EVERY DINING CATEGORY.



While 7 out of 10 consumers expect to find more natural, authentic food in casual dining and fast casual restaurants, more than half of them expect even fast food and lodging to offer this type of food.⁸


INGREDIENTS:

WHAT CONSUMERS WANT
TO SEE ON A MENU⁹

61% WANT
NATURAL



31% WANT
LOCAL



TODAY'S CONSUMERS ARE INCREASINGLY
INTERESTED IN LOCAL OR NATURAL FOODS.

70% OF MILLENNIAL WOULD PREFER TO
BUY PRODUCTS WHICH ARE LOCAL
AND RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT.⁹

MOST CONSUMERS
CONSIDER
LOCAL
PRODUCTS
FRESHER—
70%
GLOBALLY³



43%
OF CONSUMERS ARE
**MORE
LIKELY**
TO PURCHASE AND
SPEND MORE FOR
NATURAL FOODS⁸



82% OF OPERATORS SAY NATURAL
INGREDIENTS HAVE A POSITIVE
EFFECT ON SALES⁸

WHERE DOES YOUR FOOD COME FROM?

Consider the Source

Consumers increasingly want to know what's in their food, and one way you can reassure them is by drawing attention to where it comes from. By incorporating meat and produce from local farms into your menu, you can provide more of the transparency that your guests are hungry for.

There are many ways to source fresh and authentic foods. As the farm-to-fork trend continues to grow,¹¹ you can partner with nearby farms to supply chicken, beef, or seasonal produce. Some restaurants are moving the "farm" closer to their tables,¹² offering salad greens grown in their own plot or herbs snipped from a greenhouse on-site. You can also give your guests an authentic experience by buying food from the regions where it's grown—such as virgin olive oil from Greece or Parmesan cheese from Italy.

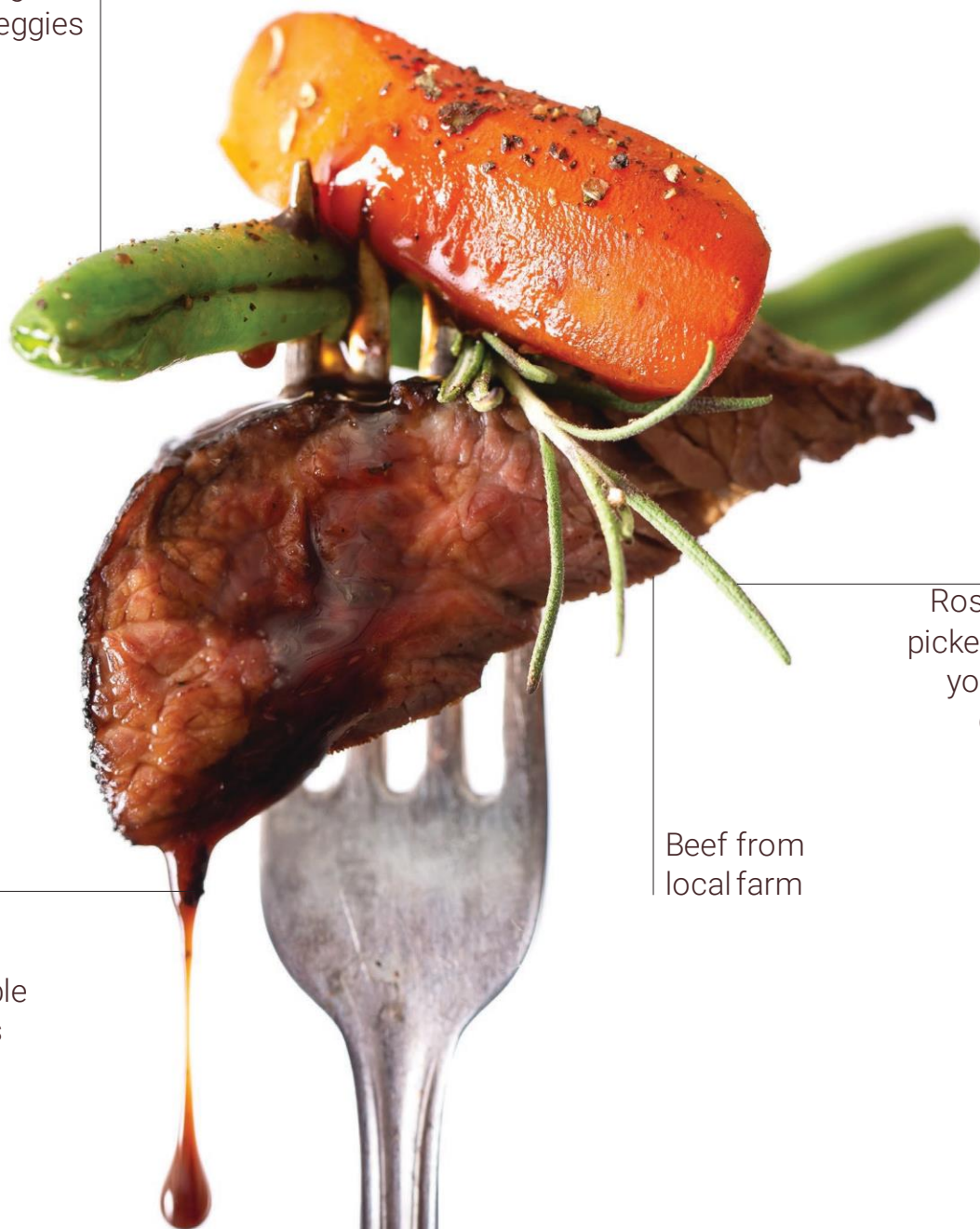
Making these ingredients the stars of your dishes will go a long way toward building consumer trust, and you can get creative with sauces, stocks, and other accents from your existing suppliers to complete the experience.

WHY INCLUDE LOCAL FOOD?

1. It supports the local economy. With 59% of consumers rating "social responsibility" as an important factor when choosing restaurants,¹³ being a good citizen of your community is a good strategy. By sourcing some ingredients from your neighbors, you can help support the local economy, and your guests will be happy to help support them, too.
2. It lets you experiment with seasonal variety. It's always a pleasure to add just-picked produce to your menu, and customers appreciate it, too. In fact, seasonal menus deliver 26% more orders!¹³
3. It's fresher. When the farm is hours or minutes from the kitchen, ingredients can be served at peak freshness. Some consumers may perceive fresher food as healthier, and fresher food will likely have better color and texture.
4. It can be more environmentally friendly. When meat and produce come from local farms, they don't have to travel as far to the restaurant, and less energy is spent on refrigerating them along the way.



Fresh organic
veggies



Rosemary
picked from
your own
garden

Beef from
local farm

Reduced
stock with
recognizable
ingredients

FOLLOW THE FOOD

Coloring FOOD

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COLOR

We already know that color appeals to people's visual senses, but did you know it can also affect the way they experience its flavor? Some studies have shown that adding food coloring can deliver as much as 10% more perceived sweetness.¹⁵ Another showed that adding food coloring to a clear solution changed the way people detected basic tastes in the solution.¹⁶

YELLOW: reduced the detection threshold for sourness and increased the threshold for the detection of sweetness.

GREEN: decreased people's detection of sweetness.

RED: reduced the threshold for the detection of bitterness.¹⁶

10 tips for cooking with color

1. Use fresh, uncooked fruits and vegetables to add pigment, or complement pale foods with bright sauces like green pesto or mango salsa.
2. Keep the flavor profile of pigments in mind when adding them to dishes to make sure they don't clash.
3. Blend fresh or cooked berries into batters or beverages to make them pink, purple, or blue.
4. Freeze-dry fruits and grind to a powder for a shelf-stable dye you can mix into frostings or beverages.
5. Cook and puree beets, spinach, or squash and work it into pasta to turn it red, green, or orange.
6. Ask your fishmonger for squid ink that you can add to pasta, rice, or bread to make it black. For a vegan option, you can also use charcoal powder as a black dye.
7. Soak saffron in water for a rich golden hue, traditionally used in rice, paella, and bouillabaisse.
8. Mix ground coffee or cocoa powder into icings for cakes and cookies.
9. Add golden-yellow turmeric powder to brighten curry, eggs, meat, tofu, or potatoes.
10. Stir in some dried spirulina (algae powder) to turn yogurt or ice cream a beautiful blue.

DID YOU KNOW?

Blood orange, light orange, citrus, and pink are trending up in consumer products.¹⁷

Nature's Palette

Fruits, vegetables, spices, and other natural sources yield every color of the rainbow, allowing you to enhance the natural hues in any dish or add interest to pale or colorless foods like pasta, rice, yogurt, pastries, and beverages.



Enhancing TEXTURES

Some dishes need additional ingredients to hold their form or improve their mouthfeel, but you don't have to rely on artificial emulsifiers, thickeners, or other unrecognizable ingredients to do that. Instead, try these familiar ingredients to provide these important culinary functions.

THICKENING

Starch is a time-honored way to add body and a smooth mouthfeel to sauce or soup, and it's also used in some desserts and sweets. It can be made from many ingredients, including corn, tapioca, and potato. Note that vegetable starches need to be blended in gradually, have a short holding time when reconstituted, and are not freeze/thaw stable.

BINDING

While not as familiar to Western diners, Guar gum, made from dried guar beans, is commonly used for binding milk solids, flour, oil, and spices together in Indian desserts such as besan laddoo. It can also be found in baked goods and ice cream, and it may be used to thicken, improve texture, and extend shelf life.

EMULSIFYING

Because some of the proteins in eggs attract water while others repel it, they are ideal for emulsifying oil-and-water mixtures. However, note that eggs are a common food allergen and also not suitable for vegan recipes. Mustard seeds have a coating called mucilage that also attracts water, so mustard can be helpful for emulsifying vinaigrettes.

GELLING

Gelatin from animal bones or hides can be used to help certain foods set, but it's not suitable for vegetarian dishes and tends to melt when subjected to heat. As another alternative, seaweed agar will set gels effectively, and it is much more heat-stable.

DID YOU KNOW?

Guar beans are legumes that are native to Asia. They are eaten whole in some traditional Indian stir-fries, curries, and soups, or turned into the guar gum used in many products.





BUILDING *flavors*

One of the pleasures of cooking is playing with the flavor of foods, and adding or intensifying tastes with certain ingredients allows you to experiment while giving guests the simple, authentic experience they want.

SALTY

White table salt is a standard, but it's far from the only choice. Salts from various parts of the world can add interest in terms of color and texture, along with interesting variations in mineral flavors.

**Kosher
Himalayan pink
Sea salt**

**Black Hawaiian
Fleur de sel
Smoked salt**

SWEET

Try nature's own sweeteners, such as honey and maple syrup. Both of these ingredients add their own flavor profile along with extra sweetness. You can also use ingredients like stevia leaves to enhance sweetness without adding additional calories.

BITTER

Emphasize bitterness with citrus zest, squid ink, dark chocolate, or espresso powder.

SAVORY/UMAMI

The savory taste of umami has been identified as one of the flavors responsible for people “liking” a food.¹⁷ It occurs naturally in foods that contain the common amino acid glutamate, like meat, sun-dried tomatoes, Parmesan cheese, and mushrooms.

Certain ingredients also interact with each other to enhance umami flavors

TRY THESE COMBINATIONS

Kombu seaweed + dried bonito

Onions, celery, and carrot + beef

Spring onions and ginger + chicken

FIRE & ICE

While they’re not related to temperature, the experiences we perceive as “burning” or “cooling” can also intensify the eating experience. Look for these ingredients to turn up the heat or keep your guests cool.

HOT

**Hot pepper
Cinnamon
Ginger
Garlic**

COLD

**Mint
Tarragon**

SOUR

A squeeze of lemon or a dollop of yogurt or sour cream adds sourness that sets off other flavors dramatically. You can also experiment with the many flavored vinegars available today, from apple cider to balsamic to pear to harissa.

PRESERVE *the goodness*

With the shift toward simple, authentic ingredients and processes, there's a rising interest in traditional preservation methods.



DRYING

Drying is an ancient technique that removes water from food to prevent microbe growth. Food can be dried in the sun, oven, or freezer. Dried foods retain many of their nutrients, can be stored at room temperature, and can be used in their dried form or rehydrated.

SALTING

Like drying, salting pulls the liquid out of foods to inhibit microbe growth. Meat and vegetables can be preserved by pressing them between layers of dry salt and sealing them, or brining them in a liquid solution.

SMOKING

Meat, poultry, and fish can be preserved through smoking, another ancient preservation method that dries food while adding color and flavor. The food is typically soaked in brine before being exposed to smoke and then refrigerated.

MARINATING

Soaking or injecting meat or poultry with an acidic marinade made from vinegar, lemon juice, soy sauce, or wine can extend its shelf life by limiting microbial growth. Food should be stored in the refrigerator while marinating and cooked within five days.

PICKLING

Vegetables and fruit can be preserved by pickling, a 4000-year-old method which involves soaking them in a hot brine of water, salt, sugar, vinegar, and spices. Pickled foods can be kept in sealed containers for several months without spoiling.

CONFITURE

Ripe fruit can be preserved by cooking it with a high concentration of sugar, sealing it in jars, and boiling the jars in water. This method can be used to make preserves, jams, and jellies, which last for about two years unopened.

CANNING

Vegetables or sauces are placed in jars with water, then sealed and immersed in a boiling water bath to kill microbes. These foods last approximately one year.





FERMENTING

to your health



Living Legends

Fermentation is another ancient way to prevent food from spoiling—but unlike most preservation methods, it purposely introduces bacteria to the food. Using a living culture of friendly micro-organisms, it changes the food into something that tastes different and lasts longer. This method has been used to create many types of fermented foods and beverages around the globe.

In some foods, processes like pasteurization, baking, and filtering destroy the organisms responsible for fermentation. However, foods and beverages like kimchi, yogurt, kombucha, and sauerkraut still contain live cultures when we consume them. These beneficial bacteria, known as probiotics, may benefit human health by reducing risk for some acute and chronic diseases and helping maintain a healthy gut.¹⁹

KOMBUCHA

THE NEW CRAFT DRINK

Some restaurants now serve fermented drinks like kombucha on tap, adding to their guests' experience and increasing their profits.

FERMENTED FOODS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Show & TELL

There are many ways you can demonstrate your commitment to natural ingredients.

PUT YOUR WORK ON DISPLAY

From food trucks to open windows in brick-and-mortar establishments, guests enjoy being able to see into the kitchen where they can watch their food being made. If your layout does not allow this, you can tell these stories yourself by explaining the way you make your food or sharing photos of your visits to local farms and markets on social media.

INVITE THE FARMS IN

If you rely on local farms for your ingredients, share their names proudly on signage or in the menu. You might post a board that you can update season-by-season, noting where certain ingredients were harvested and what dishes they're featured in. (This can be a smart way to boost sales, too.) Guests enjoy learning that you support your local community, and knowing that they're eating something grown or raised nearby makes them feel good about dining with you.

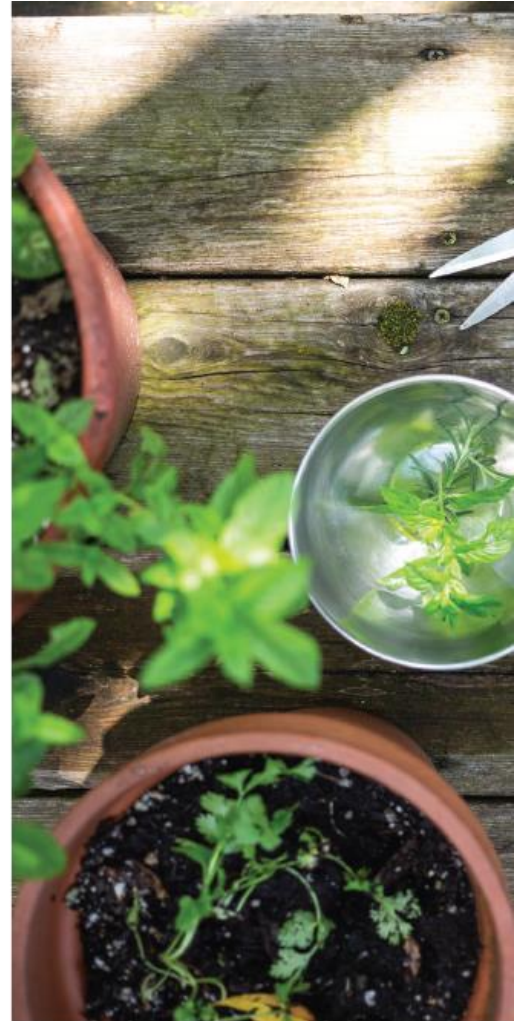
The movement back toward more recognizable & familiar ingredients can be an exciting time for the restaurant industry. This is our opportunity to explore the world of plants and animal ingredients more closely and deliver amazing dining experiences that guests perceive as fresher, healthier, and more desirable.

GROW HERBS IN PLAIN SIGHT

Potted herbs in the windowsill add color to your restaurant and make diners feel close to their food. Consider labelling each pot to educate guests and add another layer of transparency to what you do. As a bonus, growing your own herbs means that you always have a fresh supply on hand, ready to snip and serve as you need them.

PROMOTE YOUR NATURAL INGREDIENTS & METHODS

Consumers are looking for foods like this, so if you've got them, flaunt them! Consider adding descriptive language to play up natural flavors (ground vanilla bean, crushed strawberries) on the menu, and train your servers to describe how herbs are locally grown or vegetables are pickled in-house.





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