

TRENDS

TO KNOW

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ENTER THE WORLD OF ENTRÉE TRENDS



THE TREND

Entrées are a critical part of most operators' menu strategies, and on average, each of these menus feature approximately 51 entrée options (Datassential's *Entrée Inspiration Report*). To add interest to entrée menus, take note of mega trends, which range from featuring meat as a garnish and vegetables as the center-of-plate main to globally-inspired comfort foods (birria tacos are the fastest-growing entrée on menus) to mashup concepts (think Philly cheesesteak pizzas) to sides sizing up and becoming entrées (like caprese salad, for instance, which is up 226% on entrée menus over the past 4 years, according to Datassential Menu Trends, and typically stars fresh mozzarella). Regional U.S. entrées are also trending, with concepts like Detroit-style pizza (up 99%) available in many cities outside of its hometown and showcasing a variety of toppings and cheeses.

DAIRY REPORT

Entrées present operators with a prime opportunity to leverage a wide range of dairy products. To add interest to entrée menus, lean into mega trends like regional U.S. items, such as Detroit-style pizza (which is rectangular) or Philly cheesesteak pizza for a mashup (both concepts can showcase a variety of cheeses, so don't be afraid to think outside the box), or capitalize on globally-inspired birria tacos (which have trended on social media and can be topped with Mexican cheeses like cotija). Consider, too, how traditional sides like caprese salad are sizing up to become entrées, showcasing fresh mozzarella prominently.

MENU INSPIRATION

BIRRIA QUESA TACOS

On the Border | Irving, TX (HQ)
Beef barbacoa, Mexican cheese, diced onion, and cilantro in crispy flour tortillas, served with hot consommé for dipping.

THE PRAIRIE DETROIT-STYLE PIZZA

The Detroit Pizza Bar | Detroit, MI
A premium cheese blend, cauliflower, broccoli, shredded carrots, mushrooms, and diced tomatoes, topped with red sauce.

MEDITERRANEAN BOWL

Goddess and the Baker | Chicago, IL (HQ)
Arugula salad tossed with quinoa, tomatoes, cucumber in lemon vinaigrette, 6-minute egg, hummus, tzatziki, feta, za'atar, and sourdough toast.

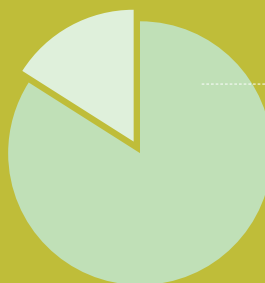
CAPRESE SALAD

Bruno's | Haddon Township, NJ
Fresh tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, roasted peppers, extra virgin olive oil. Add-on protein: chicken, jumbo shrimp, or jumbo lump crab meat.

CURRIED CAULIFLOWER TACO

Taco Shack | Stuart, FL
Curry-roasted cauliflower, avocado, black beans, roasted corn, cotija cheese, and secret sauce, served on a flour tortilla.

DATA FILE



84%

OF CONSUMERS
TYPICALLY PURCHASE AN
ENTRÉE WHEN THEY GO
OUT TO EAT AT A
RESTAURANT

Datassential's 2025 Trends Report

TREND STAGE

UBIQUITY



Entrées are Ubiquitous but serve as key parts of most menus. While comfort food entrées (pizza, burgers, sandwiches, etc.) are mainstays and opportunities for showcasing an array of dairy products, especially cheese, twists on comfort can add interest and help operators stand out. For example, consider leaning into U.S. regional entrées such as Proliferation-level Detroit-style pizza, or globally-inspired items like Adoption-level social media sensation birria tacos. Mashups like Philly cheesesteak pizza that lean into safe experimentation can also add intrigue to menus and be vehicles for showcasing cheese.

Look to entrées as opportunities for showcasing dairy of all kinds, especially cheese, which ties into all sorts of mainstay comfort food entrées, as well as trending regional comfort foods like Detroit-style pizza. Also consider how mashups like Philly cheesesteak pizza can tap into safe experimentation, and don't overlook globally-inspired options like birria tacos or plant-forward cauliflower tacos, which could showcase cheeses like cotija.

KEY TAKEAWAY