

FE&S reports on the hottest trends in tabletop design, concept development and other areas of the foodservice industry — both at the back and front of the house.

Stepped-Up Street Food

Street food-inspired dishes remain a top trend across all industry segments. From Chinese dumplings to Latin pupusas, any easy-to-eat, handheld and globally inspired food remains a top choice for many consumers. The rise of the food hall only contributes to street foods' expanse. Here's our list for the trendiest of the trending street foods and their equipment and supply implications, from prep to cooking and serving or packaging.



Globally Inspired Street Food

Dumplings

This form of comfort food appears in many different cuisines, from Chinese to African, Brazilian, Eastern European, Turkish and more. Cooks stuff these pasta — or wonton wrapper — pockets with meat and/or veggies before lightly steaming or simmering the dumplings in soups or stews.

Equipment possibilities: combi ovens, steamers, basket and bamboo steamers, chopsticks, soup kettles and saucepots.

Tempura Anything

A staple of Japanese cuisine, chefs now tempura-style everything

from pickled vegetables to sweet potatoes, fruit and more. All types of restaurants embrace the trend, not just ethnic ones.

Equipment possibilities: high-volume, efficient fryers or larger, deep skillets for pan-frying.

Kabobs

Looking for ways to showcase global flavors, chefs in commercial restaurant and noncommercial college and university settings continue to turn to kabobs thanks to their easy-to-prepare-and-serve format. Variations include Peruvian anticuchos with skewered meats and seafood to Japanese yakitori

grilled over charcoal and Moroccan lamb kefta.

Equipment possibilities: wood- or charcoal-fired grills, metal and (soaked) wood skewers.

Pupusas

These thick cornmeal patties or tortillas stuffed with savory fillings are commonly eaten as street food in El Salvador. Traditionally served with curtido, a pickled cabbage relish, and tomato sauce, chefs find these handheld treats pair well with just about any hot sauce, relish or dipping condiment.

Equipment possibilities: mixing bowls, large skillets for pan-frying, pickling jars and containers for curtido or other relish, wax paper or compostable containers for serving.

Ramen and Pho

A staple in Japanese, Vietnamese and Southeast Asian cuisines, ramen and pho blend vegetables and noodles with herbs, aromatics and sometimes proteins in big bowls of steaming broth. No need for spoons — traditional enjoyment involves chopsticks for wrapping up noodles and slurping of the broth using two hands.

Equipment possibilities: soup kettles and large saucepots, large serving bowls, chopsticks, ladles.



TRENDING STREET FOOD CONDIMENTS AND SPICES

Gochujang Korean chile paste for dumplings, rice cakes, fried chicken and Chinese-style bao
Habanero sauce Mexican hot sauce for tacos, tortas and more
Calabrian chile peppers Italian chiles with oil that chefs can drizzle onto pizza
Berber Ethiopian spice mix for fried fish, lentil stews, meat and vegetable dishes

Source: *Datassential*

64%

The percentage of chefs who believe street food remains a top trend for 2018.

Source: *National Restaurant Association's What's Hot 2018 Culinary Forecast*