



## SPOTLIGHT

# New-year trends menu serves bite-size desserts

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**HAPPY NEW YEAR**, fellow diners! According to various culinary prognosticators, 2007 is going to be the year when healthier fare created with organic, sustainable and whole-grain ingredients will make its mark on restaurant menus.

Then again, they're also saying that bite-size desserts, pork, traditional breakfasts and injera bread will be popular. Here are a few predictions:

- According to a survey of 1,000 chefs by the National Restaurant Association, the most sizzling trends right now include: bite-sized desserts; locally grown and organic produce; flatbreads; bottled waters; pomegranates; figs; grass-fed and free-range meat; whole-grain breads; gourmet salts; and ginger.

The chefs also say pan-seared, grilled and braised items will be hot in 2007 but that's just silly. Those techniques have never not been hot and have formed the backbone of restaurant cooking for decades.

- If you're looking for good chain restaurant service this year, a survey by Corporate Research International reveals that the top fast-food restaurants service-wise are Subway, followed by Quiznos and Sonic. Tops among full-service eateries is Olive Garden, followed by Outback Steakhouse and Texas Roadhouse.
- A Zagat Survey of notable chefs resulted in a 2007 wish list including: more duck; health care for restaurant workers; healthy kids' menu items; wines from Greece, South Africa and Lebanon; smaller portions; sustainable foods; fine dining service at ethnic restaurants; real Mexican food; marrow on non-French menus; more pork; and diners who call to cancel reservations.
- According to the trend spotters at Mintel Custom Solutions, upcoming food trends include: more ingredients from the Amazon including aca' and cupuacu; fair-trade and sustainable ingredients; local and seasonal foods; a greater focus on traditional ingredients and recipes; teen-targeted food products; and traditional breakfasts.
- Trendspotters Marian Salzman and Ira Matathia are looking for the rise of highly personalized weight loss regimens; Greek yogurt; Portuguese peri-peri sauces; Ethiopian injera bread; organic snack-foods; and locally sourced—not just organic—ingredients.
- Restaurantbiz.com predicts that 2007 may bring more whole grain-defined menu items and far fewer restaurant dishes cooked in trans fats.