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AMAZONING & UBERIZING

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RESTAURANTS FOR THE FUTURE

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TRENDS AFFECTING HOW AND WHAT WE EAT

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The article throws light on how the restaurants of the future will be.... healthy, casual and people less. An insight into the trends of the future that will shape the food industry.

BY ANSHUMAN BHARGAVA

Here's how you will have lunch in 2020. You click an app on your phone and search for nearby restaurants. You'd like to eat a high protein chicken salad today. So you choose a restaurant, customize the salad with green wholesome organic vegetables and order it from the app. By the time you reach, you get an SMS that your meal is ready and it's waiting for you in box no. 6! You walk up to box no. 6 and pick up the meal. A digital ticker on box 6 shows your table number - its table C. You walk across to table C. It's a touchscreen table -- the tabletop is the display! But you notice it's not clean -- there are breadcrumbs on it. So you double tap the table and a menu pops up on the surface. You tell the table to 'clean up'. The table sends a message to a cleaner who runs across and wipes the table immediately. The table 'smiles back' and invites you to sit and eat!

You realize that you'd like a soup with the salad. So you tap the table again and choose a soup from the pop up menu! Once your meal's finished, you tap the table for your bill. You swipe your phone over the pay button, enter your pin and you're done.

Welcome to the restaurant of the future – healthy, casual & people less ...

- Trends like these and others are changing the food industry.
- What trends are these? What's driving them?

About the author:

Anshuman Bhargava is Director & Creative Head of 'The Blue Leaves Design Group'.

THE 'AMAZON'ING AND 'UBER' IZING OF FOOD



The biggest disrupters of the restaurant industry have nothing to do with food. They've got to do with delivery...

With a few touches on a phone, you can have almost any food delivered anytime and anywhere. Customers have access to the world's

largest virtual drive thru without ever leaving their homes.

Delivery affects everyone from McDonald's to Starbucks to posh fine dining restaurants. Google, uberEats, Amazon Prime Now, Postmates, Grub Hub, Yelp are making it easier and faster for you to eat. They don't make food -- they're simply middlemen connecting restaurants to customers for fees.

With so much so easily available, how can restaurants still attract diners? By promising them a unique experience they can never have online. By making the restaurant a destination. A healthier one at least ...



RETAILERS DISCOVER FOOD WITH A VENGEANCE

Retailers are discovering the magic of "dwell time" -- the longer you keep a shopper on the premises, the more the shopper will buy per hour of stay. Theme parks understood this decades ago, as did museums with gift shops. Retailers are now realizing that food is a great way to increase shoppers' dwell times.

Suffering serious declines in foot traffic, retailers are hoping to build revenue by luring shoppers into stores for snacks and meals. They'd rather have shoppers spend time in their stores than elsewhere. Food is a unique opportunity to do so.

BUILDING A NUTRITIOUS NATION



After watching aggressive consumers attack Big Food companies over chemicals and additives, people want healthier food.

People want real food -- food made with organic ingredients and free of additives, antibiotics, and other artificial components.

They are ready to pay premium prices for clean food that is good for them and good for the environment. Even big fast food chains like McDonalds and Burger King have introduced healthier options to their menu.

There is still a long way to go but we expect to see a million more restaurants serving nutritious, wholesome organic food to an ever-growing calorie conscious population.

THE RISE OF 'FAST CASUAL'

As we've seen people want healthy delicious food in a unique environment. But time starved millennials demand mouthwatering food that is fast and not too expensive. Lunch hours are shrinking and workers need to eat quickly. But they also want to eat well.

Enter 'Fast-cas' -- or fast-casual restaurants. Experts say they are the future of the restaurant industry. They lie in the middle-ground between traditional fast-food and table-service restaurants.

Their main appeal is 'fresh' and 'local'. Meaning one or two signature items per season. The other hallmark of 'Fast-cas' is adventurous flavors. Garnish your vegetables and sides with new flavors to keep diners coming back for more.

GUZZLE IT DOWN

Drink used to be a side course to the main menu. It's a restaurant driver now. Different types of drinks -- from smoothies, coffees, teas, mock tails,



wine bars -- have become very popular.

Restaurants are trying to make beverages a headlining act instead of a sideshow. There are endless varieties of teas, coffees, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. Drinks are great for casual conversation, impulse buying and refreshing stopovers. There's something for every generation.

OF ETHNIC MASHUPS AND MICRO CUISINES



Diners want something new... yet familiar. Everyone is going super local.

Newer cuisines are emerging -- like Jewish, Singaporean, Mongolian, etc. Restaurants are hyper localizing. They're going ultra regional. So besides global cuisines, restaurants serve state cuisines like Maharashtrian, Bihari, Assamese, etc.

It's about being glocal (ie. global+local) and there's something for everyone.

LETS GO VEGAN



Recent news and documentaries have highlighted how live stock is kept and converted into food for restaurants. Because of this more and more people are turning vegetarian. Being vegan is a burning trend.

Vegan food is further being explored like never before. It's made to look awesome, taste delicious, and be healthier. Restaurants are serving meals composed mostly (or entirely) of vegetables that are great to look at, satisfyingly memorable and compatible with wine.

Rising beef prices, growth of farmers' markets and food halls, need for more natural antioxidants etc. have converted more people.

Chefs are starting to lean toward dishes with a vegetable at the center of the plate instead of a protein.

THE RETURN OF BREAD



For years, Bread's gotten a bad rep because of a no-carb Atkins diet fad and a gluten-free mega movement.

As bread makers have figured out how to make it healthier with more wholesome ingredients, it's making a huge revival. It's in style again.

Chefs are experimenting with flour and bread derivatives like artisan toasts, bagels, babka, gourmet pizzas and flatbreads. Given its convenience and flexibility, we're in the middle of a bread renaissance.



SMALL IS THE NEW BIG

The three-course meal day is gone. Millennials snack more –sometimes more than four to five snacks a day. Snacking has increased by 67% from 2010 to 2015. Baby boomers are the biggest snackers.

So small is the new big. Smaller plates, small portions, small tables.

Tapas and dim sums are very popular. Menus are getting shorter. Dining rooms are getting smaller.

Snacks are obliterating meals. They are fast, convenient and cheap – ideal for a frenzied working generation.

FOOD TECH

From paying before you even arrive to eat, to self service kiosks, touchscreen tables, robotic waiters, to cashier less counters, technology is making the dining experience as person less as possible.

Often called front-facing technology or guest-facing technology, it's turning the way customers do business with restaurants upside down.

As restaurants experiment with tablets and smartphones, diners are now able to:

- Order food and drink right from their tables or online before they even get to the restaurant
- Play games while they're waiting – a plus for families
- Pay with their smartphones
- Be notified when their order is ready, and meet the waiter at the table
- See wine lists on apps
- Technology allows tables to turn faster by eliminating customer downtime. Technology



also cuts down on employee errors while involving the guests directly in their ordering and check out.

- They can be in and out of a restaurant in less than 15 minutes. For full-service restaurants, the trend is tabletop ordering and payment screens. So you are paying for your time at the table and not for the food.
- Who is driving this new trend? Millennials. Their "I want what I want when I want it," mantra dictates the need for new technology options. This large growing group of our population wants immediate gratification, and they want to customize the way they get it.

A MULTISENSORY INTIMATE EXPERIENCE

To beat food delivery, restaurants are striving to make their dining a multisensory experience. There's more innovative use of light, sound, smell and layout. Generation Z wants younger, energetic places with large graphics, loud music, moving visuals and powerful colours.

Food retailers want to provide a personalized intimate experience. After years of stiff benches and backless chairs, the booth is back. There are more PDRs (private dining rooms), open kitchens and two chair tables.

NICHE DINING

More specialty restaurants are catering to a very niche base.

- Wine, wine and more wine. Rare wines, cult wines, and wines from unknown regions are constantly gaining popularity. Prices are decreasing and wine is available on more restaurant drinks lists.



NEW AGE DINING ...

Off-premise food service is continuing to outpace overall restaurant industry growth over the last decade. In fact, the 'no restaurant'

trend is on the rise – which means trading the dining room for an ordering app. Chefs are putting their names on smaller meal boxes. 3D printed food is just getting started.