

Trend Watch

TOP TAKEAWAYS



Worlds of Flavor heats up with an Asian Fusion theme

This year the Culinary Institute of America hosted its 17th Worlds of Flavor conference in Napa Valley, CA, and Smithfield Foods was excited to participate in this year's theme: Asian Fusion and Barbecue. The three-day event was filled with culinary demonstrations, workshops, presentations, panels, and, of course, tastings.

In addition to sharing its culinary inspiration, technique and innovation, Smithfield Foods offered its own take on Asian-Fusion cuisine, focusing on pork. Guests at the event had the opportunity to sample Chef Frank Dominquez's tasty dishes, which featured Korean Pork Belly Burnt End Sliders, Jang-Jang Ribs with Cha-Cha Barbecue Sauce and Vietnamese Pork Cheek Tacos.

Table of Contents

- Top Takeaways
- Data to Note
- Pork in the News
- Out-of-the-Box Thinking

AT WORLDS OF FLAVOR, CHEF FRANK WOWED THE CROWD WITH HIS DELICIOUS ASIAN-FUSION PORK INNOVATIONS



Korean Pork Belly Burnt End Sliders

Smoked pork belly burnt ends, stuffed in a steamed bun with raspberry wasabi mustard, crisp Asian slaw and house-made pickles.



Jang-Jang Ribs with Cha-Cha Barbecue Sauce

Gochujang-marinated St. Louis Ribs seasoned with a spicy Kansas City rub and smoked with cherry wood. They are glazed with a Sriracha BBQ sauce and finished with a dusting of dehydrated Sriracha.



Vietnamese Pork Cheek Tacos

Bulgogi-marinated smoked pork cheek lined in a Vietnamese rice paper taco shell, topped with spicy peanut sauce and Asian slaw.

DATA TO NOTE



Ribs al Pastor

Asian-Latin Fusion Cuisine is on the Rise, and Pork Is at the Center of Plate

Asian-Latin fusion is a hot trend in restaurants across the country, and chefs are featuring pork as the star protein in these dishes. Although it may be surprising to some, these two cuisines have many similarities, making them the perfect pairing for a fusion. Pantry staples such as chiles for heat, tamarind and coconut for savory and sweet dishes, and coriander and cilantro are prominent ingredients in both Southeast Asian and Mexican cooking.¹

Fusion cuisines focus on using chiles, garlic, citrus fruits, tropical fruits, herbs and other spices to create flavor profiles from both sides, creating the perfect balance of the two cuisines. Herbs and spices aren't the only similarities Asian and Mexican cuisines have; pork is heavily highlighted in both East and West cultures.² Pork is used as a filling in many dishes on both sides, such as dumplings and empanadas. But these cuisines don't just use pork as a filler; pork is also utilized as a center-of-plate option, featuring short ribs, spare ribs and pork belly.

The versatility of pork lends itself to being the perfect protein to use in fusion cuisines. Pictured on the right are some examples of how chefs are playing up pork on their Asian-Latin Fusion menus.

Smithfield
Farmland[®]
FOODSERVICE GROUP
PORK. SOLVED.



Asian Style Paella served with Chinese lap chang pork sausage, spicy sausage, pork carnitas, edamame, bean sprouts, scallions.
Saucy Porka, Chicago IL



Pork Arepas with hoisin, corn masa and avocado crema fresca.
Zengo, Washington, D.C.



Chubby Pork Belly: kochujang-lacquered kurobuta pork belly rice bowl with fried egg, pickled radishes, water spinach, Chinese broccoli, cotija and peanuts.
Chego, Los Angeles, CA

PORK IN THE NEWS



Wonton Tacos

Smithfield
Farmland[®]
 FOODSERVICE GROUP
PORK. SOLVED.

Korean-Inspired Dishes Are on the Upswing Nationwide

Korean fusion menus have spread like wildfire across the nation. What started as a trend in Los Angeles, Korean-inspired dishes have made their way into restaurants in all parts of the US. Innovative chefs have been utilizing the flavors of Korean staples, such as cabbage kimchi and gochujang, to bring different flavor profiles into their dishes.³

Dean Small, founder of Synergy Restaurants Consultants, has been following the trend since 2009 when the Korean-inspired menus started in Los Angeles. In a report for Nation's Restaurant News, Small says, "People are totally embracing gochujang, anything fermented. It's new. It's fun to say. It's accessible. [It's] what's next."⁴

So why the sudden fascination with Korean-inspired cuisine? Korean food is known for bringing in umami, the strong savory flavor that is often called the "fifth sense".⁵ It brings a new level of taste and sensation to those who eat dishes that have the right balance of ingredients. In the 2015 Technomic Trend Watch, an upswing of Asian cuisine was predicted, and a quick glance at menus across the country proves that prediction to be true.

TECHNOMIC'S TAKE

TECHNOMIC

2015 Trends to Watch

1
Lights! Camera! ACTION!

Dining is no longer just a personal experience, but a staged event that imparts bragging rights. Plating and lighting are increasingly designed with phone snapshots and social-media sharing in mind. Customers collaborate to put on the show; menus, marketing, even charitable efforts are crowdsourced.

2
SMALL-Minded

Small is in: Diners demand petite plates and flexible portions; units are smaller with shrunken, laser-focused menus, multi-use equipment and expanded hours to leverage fixed costs; labor pressures mean leaner staffing and more technology (though a backlash is brewing as many diners seek to unplug and be waited on).

3
Foodservice EVERYWHERE

Alternative forms of foodservice swallow share—from retailers' ever-more-sophisticated onsite restaurants to fresh-food-and-drink vending to enterprises that deliver ingredients to your door. Meanwhile, in the restaurant world, fast casual shakes out, segment lines blur further, pop-ups proliferate and demand for tech-enabled delivery heats up.

4
Signature BEVERAGES

Cocktails may come in kegs; classics like the Negroni ride the retro wave but get competition from new wine, beer and cider cocktails; flavorful and flavored whiskeys trend up along with spiced rums and liqueurs. Operators are increasingly differentiating themselves with non-alcohol drinks, too—from handcrafted or small-batch sodas to pressed juices to health-halo teas, crafted more for social-media buzz than for eating.

5
There's something ABOUT ASIA

Asian foods have been trending for years, but the world's biggest and fastest-moving continent always delivers something new. In 2015, look for the breakout of Korean, mainstreaming of Vietnamese and upscaling of spicy ramen noodles, the quintessential Asian street food.

OUT-OF-THE-BOX THINKING

Smithfield
Farmland[®]
FOODSERVICE GROUP
PORK. SOLVED.



Asian-Style Pork Ribs

Chefs Wow Customers with Menu Options that Have an Asian Flair

With fusion flavors being hot and on-trend at the moment, chefs are using this opportunity to show their creative side with Asian-inspired dishes featuring pork. The versatility of pork makes it perfect for any day part, and pork can be menued in a variety of ways to showcase Asian flavors. Take a look at some of the creative ways these operations are using Asian flavors and pork together.



Adobo Braised Pork Belly topped with soy vinegar, garlic, herb salad, wilted greens, caramelized onion jus.

Sunda, Chicago, IL



Korean Sliders
Pork shoulder marinated in Korean BBQ sauce topped with lettuce, tomato, sesame seeds.

Bites, Chicago, IL



Crispy Pork Belly Roll with sweet and sour plums, chicharron, brussels sprout "coleslaw" + plum wine sauce.

SumoMaya, Scottsdale, AZ



This Little Piggy Went to China
Sesame cheddar biscuit, Szechuan pork sausage, sunny eggs, chili garlic chive sauce, blackberries.

Little Goat Diner, Chicago, IL