

Trend Watch

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OUT-OF-THE-BOX THINKING



Top Takeaways

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Elevating the Hot Dog

High-end pork dishes are in high demand these days, but don't doubt the sales power of gourmet hot dogs – yes, gourmet! Making a hot dog “gourmet” might require some creative thinking from restaurant operators, but the payoff is worth it: Foodies everywhere will flock to participating establishments to try this culinary innovation and spread the word through mouthwatering posts on Instagram.

Hot dogs are moving beyond the backyard and ballpark into quick-service cuisine. Gourmet hot dogs are an emerging new dish because they give consumers a meal with more personality and flavor. Chicago's Dog House in Lincoln Park pairs the pork with global toppings and catchy names.

- The Snoop Dog Hot Dog is topped with homemade chili, Colby cheese and onions.
- The German Shepard Hot Dog is topped with Swiss cheese, sauerkraut and grilled onions.

Their specialty hot dogs have become a staple in the city and are beloved by a wide customer base.

CHECK OUT WHAT THESE HOT DOG RESTAURANTS ARE FEATURING ON THEIR MENUS



BBQ SLAW HOT DOG

The BBQ Slaw hot dog is packed with flavors. Jalapeños, pulled pork and onion strings are just a few toppings added to this culinary creation.

James Coney Island, Houston, TX



BOSTON DOG

This “Fab” establishment brings East Coast trends to the West Coast with its famous loaded deep fried hot dog.

Fab Hot Dogs, Reseda, CA



TRENTON THUNDER

This establishment created menu options for cities all over the world. The Trenton Thunder dog, as it's referred to, comes loaded with pork roll, cheese sauce, tomato and pepper jelly.

Destination Dog, New Brunswick, NJ

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TREND REPORT

The Popularity of Pork Shoulder

According to a 2016 Google Trends Report, pork shoulder in particular is among the most frequently searched food items in the United States, with most searches coming from large cities like Boston and Chicago.¹ Many restaurant operators are meeting this curiosity and demand by providing innovative, melt-in-your-mouth dishes. The world of culinary creativity is a playground of possibilities and wonder. The five operators listed below have crafted pork shoulder in unique ways:

1. ROADHOUSE (NASHVILLE, TN)

The Slow & Smoked Platter includes barbecue pork shoulder, baby back ribs with a sauce trio, seasoned fries and bread and butter pickles.



2. MCDONALD'S (NATIONWIDE)

The McRib features ground pork shoulder, covered in tangy barbecue sauce, slivered onions and tart pickles on a hoagie-style bun.



3. BBQ EXCHANGE (GORDONSVILLE, VA)

The Belly-Q – Pork shoulder is the highlight of this sandwich. It's tossed in a savory BBQ sauce and topped with salted peppers.



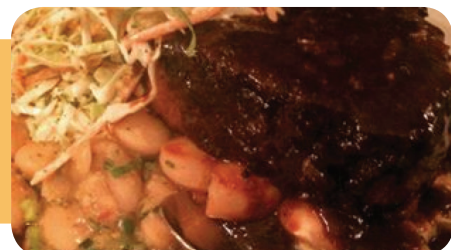
4. STICKY RICE (CHICAGO, IL)

Gang Hung Lay – Pork shoulder cooked in garlic, ginger and a northern-style chili paste, topped with cilantro.



5. SCREEN DOOR (PORTLAND, OR)

Braised Pork Shoulder – Molasses & chili braised pork shoulder over bacon & hock stewed Corona beans with spicy slaw.



Trend Watch

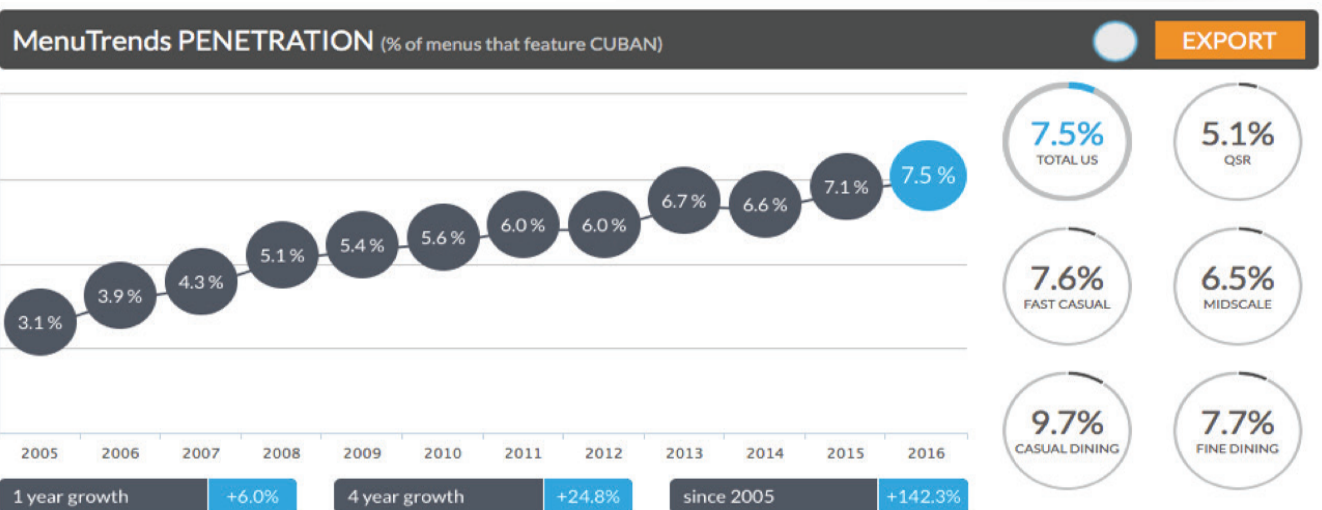
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PORK IN THE NEWS

Cuban Cuisine Is Hot

Pork is constantly pushing the envelope when it comes to culinary innovation, and operators also know just how versatile pork is. Latin cuisine has grown in popularity in the last four years, and the most sought after flavors have been Cuban-inspired. Pork has also experienced an increase in menu penetration, about 4.9% since 2013, due to its adaptability with different flavor profiles, making it the perfect meat to be paired with any ethnic cuisine.²



The 2016 Google Food Trends Report unveiled that a variety of roasted or marinated pork dishes with Cuban tastes and influences were among the top Google food searches.³ Restaurant operators would greatly benefit from incorporating pork-inspired dishes that capture the essence of this Latin culture.