

# MILK

*The Wholesome, Nutritious Beverage*



California milk is a perennial favorite for people of all ages. The growing popularity of organic, whole and flavored milk such as chocolate, continue to attract new buyers. In the front-of-the-house, customers order milk in the conventional way, as a beverage, but the expansion of breakfast to all day-parts, has increased milk's usage in coffee, cereals, etc. – all of which add to the operator's bottom line.

## FLUID MILK FACTS



The Golden State became America's leading milk-producing state in 1993 and has led the nation in milk production ever since. In California, production reached **39.8 billion** pounds in 2017, accounting for **18.5%** of the nation's total.

Whole milk mentions on menus grew **1.7%** between the first quarter of 2016 and 2017; they grew **7.1%** on children's menus and **7.7%** on dessert menus during the same periods.



In a survey of milk-drinking school children, **70%** prefer a flavored milk with chocolate the overwhelming no.1 choice.

Fluid milk produced and sold in California adheres to higher nutritional standards for protein, calcium and other nutrients than milk under federal standards. This is accomplished by fortifying the milk with nonfat milk solids, which improves taste and adds nutritional benefits.



Nothing packs a protein and nutrition punch like an 8-ounce glass of California milk. A 1-cup serving of two-percent, low-fat milk provides eight grams of protein. In addition, restaurant customers benefit from eight other essential nutrients in the milk, including vitamin D, calcium and potassium.



### STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store fresh fluid milk in a refrigerator set at 38°-40°F. Keep the container closed to prevent the absorption of refrigerator flavors.
- The "sell by" date stamped on fluid milk tells you how long a retail store can keep the product for sale on the shelf. Regardless of the date, discard fluid milk with an off odor or taste.
- Freezing fluid milk is not recommended, as it causes undesirable changes to its texture and appearance.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Front-of-the-House

Many operators are taking advantage of consumers' rekindled appreciation for milk. Restaurants, schools and other non-commercial operations serve up more chocolate, whole and organic milk. For example, consumption of flavored whole milk grew by 13.6% in the past year. Organic whole milk is following this upward trend. In 2017, consumption of this dairy beverage increased by 1.4%.

The booming demand for specialty coffee also drives increased use of milk and creamers. Cereal – in a bowl full of fresh milk – is also appearing on more menus as restaurant operators see the classic favorite as a kid-friendly draw and a nostalgic choice for older customers



## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Coffee Enjoyed All Day Long

Americans have a love affair with coffee, another beverage made better with California milk. Coffee drinkers indulged even more in 2017, in a recent survey, the percentage of consumers who reported having a coffee drink within the past day jumped five points over 2016, to 62%.

### Hot or Cold, Day or Night – Breakfast Rules

Breakfast and brunch menus continue to expand in scope and creativity. “All-day breakfast” is available at many restaurants – a move that appeals to 54% of consumers who want to eat breakfast foods at non-traditional times, according to Technomic. Milk enjoys a special place in breakfast meals.

### Milk-Based Beverages

Creative restaurateurs seek inspiration from many sources, including pastry and cakes, to prepare specially flavored beverages with Real California milk. One perennial favorite is easy-to-prepare hot cocoa drinks, which delight both children and adults. Creamy Mexican Horchata drinks with Real California Milk are also appearing on more menus.

### The Smoothie Sensation

Smoothies and protein shakes come in a variety of flavors with milk providing the creamy, thick smoothness. The drinks have taken off as on-the-go meal replacements available at not only smoothie shops, but also fast food restaurants and fast casual establishments.

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# MILK

*A Resourceful, Healthy Ingredient*



Chefs are drawn to Real California Milk as a cooking ingredient because of its versatility and nutrition. They use it as a creative solution to a variety of menu applications to attract today's demanding diners keen on healthy, clean label foods and beverages. Chefs know that cooking with multi-purpose California milk adds volume, creaminess, flavor and texture to custards, sauces, soups, potatoes, entrees, casseroles, baked goods and more.

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Nothing packs a protein and nutrition punch like an 8-ounce glass of Real California milk. A 1-cup serving of two-percent, low-fat milk provides eight grams of protein. In addition, restaurant customers would benefit from eight other essential nutrients in the milk, including vitamin D, calcium and potassium.



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## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Real California milk is used in many baking recipes, including custards, cookies, cakes and breads. When brushed on edges before baking, milk encourages the browning reactions characteristic of baked goods like pastry crusts, cookies and biscuits. Most varieties of drinking milk (nonfat, low-fat or whole) may be used interchangeably in baking.

Milk is a key ingredient of classic comfort foods Mac and Cheese and used in center-of-the-plate entrees, such as poached fish in milk. Adding milk to soups is a useful ingredient because it adds a creamy mouthfeel and rich flavor. It softens some of the bold flavors in soup and improves flavor balance.

In cooking with milk, here are a few tips:

**Don't let milk boil:** To avoid curdling, heat milk gently over medium- low heat. Stirring while heating milk gently will prevent burning. If a "skin" forms during heating, simply skim it from the top.

**Stabilize with starch:** Flour or cornstarch help stabilize milk emulsions to prevent from separating. A common technique is to thicken sauce or soup with roux before adding milk.

**Avoid strong acids:** If the sauce or soup contains an acidic ingredient like wine, tomatoes or lemon juice, the milk is more likely to curdle. To counteract the effect of the acid, use a starch.

**Temper the milk:** Don't add cold milk directly into a hot liquid. Instead, simply heat the milk gently in a saucepan before adding it.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Milk Used in a Variety of Breakfast Dishes

Chefs have found new ways to expand their breakfast menus for adults and children. Creative breakfast menus with Real California milk as a key ingredient include meals such as pancake sandwiches, chicken and waffles, and egg casseroles.

### Milkshakes Enjoying Resurgence in Popularity

Real California milk is also a mainstay in a long-time consumer favorite – milkshakes, which provide foodservice operators with a significant opportunity to drive business and increase customer satisfaction.

### Milk Foam Decorates Desserts

Pastry chefs are adding an artistic touch to desserts with dehydrated milk foam. The foam dresses up the presentation of coffee drinks and dishes such as banana cream pie.

### Braising Meats in Milk

What's old is new again as chefs are using Real California milk to braise meats producing buttery, rich sauces. The milk proteins help to tenderize the meat and create mouthwatering meals.

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# REAL CALIFORNIA CHEESE

*A Foodservice Favorite Enjoyed All Day Long*



California has produced cheese for as long as it has made wine – more than 200 years. And just like the state’s wines, California cheeses are among the finest in the world. California’s cheesemakers delight palates with new cheese varieties and lead the way in the American cheesemaking renaissance.

Today, more than 50 California cow’s milk cheesemakers produce 250 varieties and styles of award-winning cheeses available and used by restaurant operators and chefs through the U.S. and the world.

## CHEESE FACTS

California cheeses vary in style, flavor and age, but they fall into five main categories: fresh (unripened), soft and soft-ripened, semi-hard and hard, very hard, and spiced and flavored. California produces a wide range of cheeses from Monterey Jack, Mozzarella and Cheddar to artisan blues and Brie.

California is the second largest cheese producing state in the nation, responsible for more than 2.5 billion pounds of cheese in 2017.



California is the largest producer of Mozzarella and Hispanic-style cheeses. The state also produces more Monterey Jack than any other state. This California original is a descendant of a type of cheese produced in the California missions more than 200 years ago.



The Real California Milk seal ensures that the cheese was made using 100% California milk from California’s more than 1,300 dairy farm families.



## STORAGE & HANDLING

When purchasing cheese, make sure the package is properly and tightly wrapped and sealed, and that the cheese inside looks appealing. Keep cheeses in the refrigerator until needed. Once opened, follow these simple guidelines for storing cheese:

- Fresh cheeses can last for a few weeks if properly stored; if you detect mold on a fresh cheese, discard it.
- Soft-ripened cheese will keep for up to several weeks if properly stored. If you plan to use a soft-ripened cheese within a few days, store it in the refrigerator in its original plastic wrap.
- Semi-hard and hard cheeses can remain enjoyable for four to eight weeks if properly stored. If they’re not going to be used in a few days, re-wrap the cheese in parchment or wax paper, which allows the cheese to breathe. Then store the cheese in a covered plastic container or an open resealable-type food storage bag and open the container a few times a week to let in fresh air.
- Very hard cheeses (typically used for grating) are much lower in moisture than other cheeses and will keep for months stored in the same way as semi-hard cheeses.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Cheese can bring bold flavors and variety to any foodservice daypart and creates an easy way to tap into popular food trends. Use multiple cheeses to add layers of flavor throughout the menu.

Weight is the best method to measure cheese for recipes: 4 ounces of natural cheese equals 1 cup shredded cheese (1 ounce = 1/4 cup).

To melt cheese, use a low temperature for a short time. Hard cheeses, which can withstand higher cooking temperatures versus soft cheeses, are ideal for cooking and baking. Shred, grate or cut cheese into pieces before melting. Minimize stirring, which can cause cheese to become lumpy.

Add cheese toppings to food at the end of baking or broiling and heat just long enough to melt.

Soft and soft-ripened cheeses have enough water to make them blend well into soufflés, custards and fillings; remove the rind before using.

### Front-of-the-House

Foodservice operators have expanded their use of California cheese courses, plates and boards as appetizers and desserts. Serve several varieties in one to 2 oz. servings and include a variation of flavors and textures from fresh to aged.

## CHEESEMAKING PROCESS

Cheese is made by adding acid or starter culture to milk, this causes the sugar in the milk to ferment. Curdling (coagulating) milk causes it to separate into semi-solid curds and liquid whey. The type of cheese produced is determined by a number of factors including the culture, the amount of whey in the curds, how the curd is worked after whey drainage, the amount of pressure applied to the curds, and if the cheese is intended to be fresh or aged.

Fresh cheeses are made from uncooked or cooked curd, drained of whey and formed. For aged cheese, the curds are stirred and, in some cases, heated; then the whey is drained and the curds are salted and pressed to form cheese. Fresh cheeses are consumed immediately while aged cheeses can be ripened for a period of time ranging from weeks to years.

Cheese can be made from whole milk (full fat), 2 percent fat (reduced-fat), 1 percent fat (low-fat), nonfat or a combination of these milks. Some cheeses require that the milk be enriched with cream. Most cheese in the U.S. is made from cow's milk.

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# SPECIALTY CHEESE

*Unique Varieties & Styles a Boon to Foodservice Operators*



California is the nation's leading milk producer and the second-largest producer of cheese – it's home to more than 50 cheesemakers who produce 250 varieties and styles of cow's milk cheeses that carry the Real California Milk seal. These cheeses vary in style, flavor and aging – they range from soft to hard, can be spiced and flavored, washed rind and include artisan, American, European, Hispanic-style and Middle Eastern varieties.

When it comes to cheese, American consumers want authenticity, bold flavor, snack sophistication, information to-go, freshness, tradition and performance. Foodservice operators are building on these opportunities to offer more menu choices with cheese, and also taking advantage of consumer desire for more ethnic and adventurous meal options by serving dishes featuring Real California specialty cheeses.

## SPECIALTY CHEESE FACTS

Of the 250 varieties and styles of cow's milk cheese produced in California, more than 100 are spiced and flavored varieties.

Examples of the most popular Real California specialty cheeses include: Feta, Blue, Burrata, Gouda, Asiago, Mediterranean String Cheese and Ackawi.

The Real California Milk seal ensures that the cheese was made using 100% California milk from California's more than 1,300 dairy farm families.



## STORAGE & HANDLING

When purchasing cheese, make sure the package is properly and tightly wrapped and sealed, and that the cheese inside looks appealing. Keep cheeses in the refrigerator until needed. Once opened, follow these simple guidelines for storing cheese:

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- Soft-ripened cheese will keep for up to several weeks if properly stored. If you plan to use a soft-ripened cheese within a few days, store it in the refrigerator in its original plastic wrap.
- Semi-hard and hard cheeses can remain enjoyable for four to eight weeks if properly stored. If they're not going to be used in a few days, re-wrap the cheese in parchment or wax paper, which allows the cheese to breathe. Then store the cheese in a covered plastic container or a resealable-type food storage bag and open it a few times a week to let in fresh air.
- Very hard cheeses (typically used for grating) are much lower in moisture than other cheeses and will keep for months stored in the same way as semi-hard cheeses.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Specialty cheeses bring richness, interest, and craveability to any foodservice daypart. For example, when a menu calls for grated Parmesan, try branching out to other hard California cheeses like aged Gouda, Asiago or Dry Jack. From pastas to pizzas, it's an easy way to bring interest to the menu and the plate.

A best practice is to add cheese as the last ingredient in a sauce or soup and heat until melted. Avoid heating at too high a temperature or the cheese may become rubbery or stringy. Also, minimize stirring, which can cause the cheese to become lumpy. Blue and pungent cheeses should be added sparingly to recipes since they tend to melt quickly and burn easily. In baking, chill cheese before grating and adding to pastry dough.

Most diners enjoy some type of cheese in or on their salad. Expand their options by using bold, distinctive cheeses such as Feta and Pepper Jack. Use flavor-forward cheeses to kick up the flavor, richness, and indulgence factors.

### Front-of-the-House

Patrons enjoy sharing so why not offer them a cheese course, which is appearing on restaurant menus as both an appetizer and dessert. With their intoxicatingly rich, and complex flavor, Real California cheese plates can create a memorable experience with Blue, Teleme, Burrata and many other varieties mixed in charcuterie meats, artisan honey, chutney or toasted nuts.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Customers Know Best

Hot and spicy flavors dominate trend forecasts for flavored cheeses such as hot pepper, garlic, habanero and pesto. Operators should look for new globally-inspired spice blends to join the mix including Latin American, Middle Eastern, Southeast Asian and Mediterranean.

### Burrata in a Growth Spurt

Burrata has broken out on burger menus, such as the Burrata Burger with smoked pancetta and caramelized onions. Other burgers feature a version accompanied by Portobello mushrooms, basil-almond pesto, baby arugula and heirloom tomatoes. Chefs are taking the classic heirloom tomato and Burrata salads and dressing them up with prosciutto, arugula and balsamic vinegar. Following on the popularity of Avocado toast, add heirloom tomato and Burrata toast to your menu.

### Hispanic-Style Cheeses Sizzle

The cuisines of Mexico, Central America and South America are on trend, and California dairy products from these regions have a lot of appeal with American consumers. Loaded fries and potato chips as starters are popular, so consider adding an ethnic slant by way of Hispanic-style cheeses. Substituting Hispanic-style dairy products in traditional salads is one way to spice up a classic Caesar salad with Cotija instead of Parmesan.

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# CHEESE – AMERICAN ORIGINALS

*California Milk Provides a Home-Grown Personality*



Cheese is the foundation for classic restaurant favorites like grilled cheese, mac & cheese, nachos and cheeseburgers. Cheddar, Colby and Monterey Jack are mainstays in the back-of-the-house at all types of restaurants – their versatility and availability make them ideal for main courses, appetizers and snacking. For example, Cheddar is offered as mild, sharp, or extra-sharp, and also white or yellow, giving chefs great flexibility in recipes. Monterey Jack has many flavored versions with Pepper Jack emerging as a key ingredient to give a spicy kick in many dishes.

## AMERICAN ORIGINALS FACTS

California cheesemakers produce more than 350 million pounds of **Cheddar** annually. It's not a type of cheese, but rather a process. The curds are formed into sheets and stacked to promote draining of the whey. They're then cut into little pieces and pressed into molds for uniformity of texture and shape. And don't judge a Cheddar by its color – the orange coloring of many versions comes from annatto seeds; many Cheddars are as creamy-white as the milk from which they came.

**Colby** is similar to mellow cheddar but is not “cheddared.” The whey is replaced by water during cooking, reducing the acidity of the curd and resulting in a moister, milder cheese. Longhorn is Colby with a traditional half-moon shape.

Originating with Franciscan friars in the 18th century, **Monterey Jack** got its name from David Jacks, a land baron who began acquiring farms in Monterey, Calif. He began selling the cheese, queso blanco pais, which became known as Jack's Cheese, and then Monterey Jack's cheese. Today, the cheese is semi-hard, mild and slightly nutty with excellent meltability.

**Dry Jack** was a happy accident that occurred in 1915, when a San Francisco cheese seller forgot about some wheels of fresh Jack in storage. When discovered, they were hard, dry and salty, making them perfect for grating. It's referred to as “America's Parmesan.”

**Teleme** was also invented in Northern California in the early 1900's. The rich flavor, texture and character of the cheese add a tangy burst to dishes from pizza to polenta.



### STORAGE & HANDLING

Most cheeses will maintain their flavor and quality in a refrigerator for extended periods, but use the following guidelines for storing cheese after opening:

- Fresh cheeses should be treated just like milk and kept refrigerated. Many fresh cheeses can last for a few weeks if properly stored, so note the freshness date on the package before you buy. If you detect mold on a fresh cheese, discard it.
- Semi-hard and hard cheeses will last four to eight weeks if properly stored. After opening consider removing the original plastic wrap and re-wrapping in parchment or wax paper, which allows the cheese to breathe.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

From traditional appetizers to sweet desserts, chefs are finding numerous ways to incorporate American originals in their recipes. Add tuna melts, cheese fries, fondue, quesadillas and croquettes to the menu. American cheeses are also great as toppings for salads and baked potatoes, and shredded on Mexican foods. Dry Jack adds a jolt of flavor to salads. Or stuff a melting cheese into the crust of pizzas.

### Front-of-the-House

Nothing says California like a selection of hand-crafted cheeses. Elegant California cheeses are being showcased in cheese courses all across the foodservice spectrum – at restaurants, of course, but also with caterers, delis and in retail. The cheese offerings are offered as appetizers, mid-meal and dessert. California's artisan cheeses bring flavor and luxury to any customer experience.



## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Hot, Hot, Hot

Chefs know that the natural creaminess of cheese is the perfect balance to add heat. In many food categories spicy is hot and the demand for peppers in American-style cheeses keeps growing. Whether Jalapeño, Ghost Peppers or Habanero, foodservice operators are adding spicy jacks and Cheddars as sandwich toppings, stir-ins for soups or melted on potatoes.

### Cooking with Teleme

Chefs are discovering the quintessential California cheese, Teleme, adding the creamy, luscious cheese to hamburgers, risotto and pizza. It's also delightful with pears or apples as a dessert with a drizzle of honey. Or as a light breakfast on toast or a croissant.

### Elevated Cheese Curds

These bouncy chunks of curdled milk are signature ingredients in poutine, a mound of fries topped with gravy and cheese curds. The once-humble and homey poutine is now being dressed up by chefs who incorporate such high-end ingredients braised short ribs, beef brisket and pulled pork.

### Flavored Cheese

Consumers at retail have made smoked cheese, as well as herb- and vegetable-flavored cheeses, category killers. Chefs are discovering new ways to mellow out American Classic cheeses by adding these subtler flavors to dishes.

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# ITALIAN-STYLE CHEESES

*A Love Affair with Mozzarella and More*



According to a 2018 USDA report, Italian-style cheeses accounted for over five billion pounds of the 12+ billion pounds of cheese produced in the United States in 2017. The proliferation of pizza on menus across the country – no longer limited to Italian restaurants – has helped expand the market for not only Mozzarella, but also Provolone and Parmesan.

Overall, Mozzarella is the No. 1-produced cheese in the country. California cheese processors produced 1.4 billion pounds of this Italian favorite, making the state America's top Mozzarella producer. Within California, Mozzarella accounts for about 59% of the total cheese production. While it has long been known as “the pizza cheese,” foodservice operators are finding multiple ways to incorporate milky, soft, luscious fresh Mozzarella and the firmer, drier, grate-able versions into dishes.

## ITALIAN-STYLE CHEESE FACTS

**Mozzarella** is made in fresh and drier styles; the latter can also be smoked. Both are produced with whole milk or part-skim milk.

**Parmesan** comes from the word “Parmesano,” which means “of or from Parma” in Italian. Parmesan-style cheese made in America incorporates the Old World practices: Cow's milk curds are cooked, salted or brined, and allowed to age for a minimum of 10 months. The longer the aging, the deeper the flavor.

**Provolone** is a semi-hard cheese with a mild, smoky flavor. It gets firmer as it ages. And like Mozzarella, it's a pulled or stretched-curd cheese, and comes in two varieties: dolce (mild, aged 2 to 3 three months) and piccante (aged 6 to 12 months and with a sharp taste).

**Asiago** and **Romano**, which are Italian-style cheeses with a sharp, caramel flavor, are used to add depth of flavor to lasagna and upscale macaroni and cheese, sprinkled on pizza crust, and as grating alternatives to Parmesan.



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- Soft-ripened cheeses will keep for several weeks if properly stored.
- Semi-hard and hard cheeses will last four to eight weeks if properly stored. After opening consider removing the original plastic wrap and re-wrapping in parchment or wax paper, which allows the cheese to breathe. After re-wrapping a cheese, store in a covered plastic container or resealable food storage bag and open it a couple times a week to let in fresh air.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Italian-style cheeses are the foundation of pizza as Mozzarella, Provolone and Parmesan are the leading cheese toppings. Many other Italian dishes, such as lasagna, ravioli, and chicken Parmesan, include generous portions of these cheeses.

The Parmesan-laden Caesar salad is *de rigueur*, but that doesn't mean there isn't room for diversification. Change up the greens, from romaine to kale, arugula, even Brussel sprouts leaves, and add grilled salmon or tuna to the Parm party. In lemon Parmesan risotto with asparagus, the assertive cheese complements the tart citrus. Mix fresh Mozzarella with salty ham and honeydew melon for an upscale first course. And mild, creamy Ricotta is a carrier for almost any sweet and savory ingredients.

### Front-of-the-House

Parmesan grated over warm pasta dishes are must-offers to customers. The deep, nutty flavor of this cheese adds depth to just about any pasta dish. The Mozzarella, tomato and basil salad known as *Caprese*, has graduated from specialty summer to an everyday salad on the menu.



## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Burrata Booming

Diners on the West and East coasts discovered Burrata a decade or more ago, and now Middle America has access to this unctuously rich and silky cheese, thanks to overnight shipping. Burrata ("battered" in Italian) is a pouch filled with Mozzarella and fresh cream. Cut into the pouch and milky decadence spills onto the plate. It's great with a drizzle of olive oil and a grind of pepper, but truly shines when served with juicy tomatoes and fresh greens, and smeared on garlic-rubbed, grilled bread. Burrata is also becoming more popular on pizza.

### Ricotta for Breakfast

Yogurt and cereal will never be replaced as breakfast staples, but a bowl of Ricotta cheese with fresh fruit, drizzled with honey and topped with crunchy granola, is a smart addition to any menu. Given the popularity of avocado toast, chefs have added toast items with Ricotta as a base. These new items are topped with sun-dried tomatoes, olive blends and capers and olive oil.

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# MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE CHEESES

*Middle East Inspires California's Dairy Delights*



The emergence of Greek-style yogurt set the American food world on fire, and opened doors for other Mediterranean dairy products, particularly cheeses. While Feta is as beloved as ever, there is more to Mediterranean cheese than the salty, crumbly Feta that's sprinkled over salads, marinated in herbs and olive oil, and used as a foundation ingredient for baked spanakopita spinach pie.

California dairy processors are adapting cow's milk to replicate the flavors of traditional cheeses from Greece, Lebanon, Syria, Persia (Iran) and elsewhere along the Mediterranean Sea to create new varieties and tie the Old World to New.

## MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE CHEESE FACTS

**Feta** is a Greek invention, said to be one of the oldest cheeses known to humankind. The word Feta comes from the Italian word "fetta," meaning slice, to fit the cheese into barrels for brining. A salty brine is key to Feta cheese production, giving it a tangy snap and savory salinity.

**Ackawi** is a semi-firm, unripened cow's milk cheese with a mild flavor and a smooth, yet firm texture. As one of the oldest cheeses produced in Lebanon and Syria, Ackawi is salty and white like Feta, yet softer in texture and ideal for enjoyment at the table with bread and fruit.

**Halloumi** has a firm texture and high melting point, so it can be easily grilled and fried. It's ideal for topping salads, adding creaminess to gyro-style lamb and chicken sandwiches, and as a salty contrast to prosciutto-wrapped melon. Fry it until golden brown and top it with tomato sauce, as one would polenta.

**Labneh** (also known as labane and labanah) is a "yogurt cheese" made by draining thick, full-fat yogurt overnight in cloth. It's similar to Greek yogurt and traditionally eaten at breakfast. The main difference between the two yogurts is the texture. Labneh is thicker because it is highly concentrated. Labneh is used as a yogurt spread and is commonly paired with pita bread, toast, and veggies. It's also an excellent substitute for cream cheese.



### STORAGE & HANDLING

When purchasing cheese, make sure the package is properly and tightly wrapped and sealed, and that the cheese inside looks appealing. Do not purchase any cheese that looks dry or discolored, as the package seal may be broken. Most cheeses will maintain their flavor and quality in a refrigerator for extended periods, but use the following guidelines for storing cheese after opening:

- Fresh cheeses should be treated just like milk and kept refrigerated. Many fresh cheeses can last for a few weeks if properly stored, so note the freshness date on the package before you buy. If you detect mold on a fresh cheese, discard it.
- Soft-ripened cheeses will keep for up to several weeks if properly stored.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Chefs and bar managers should consider adding “mezze” plates to menus. Feta, hummus, roasted red peppers, Kalamata olives, almonds and a drizzle of olive oil pack a huge flavor punch as a shared first course and make for a substantial bar offering. Consider replacing de rigueur sandwich cheeses such as Jack and Provolone with more tantalizing Halloumi. Savory pies such as spanakopita are popular in Mediterranean cuisine – chefs can create their own savory fillings with greens, herbs and fresh cheeses like Feta.

### Front-of-the-House

Put on a show with flaming saganaki, a Greek appetizer of Feta or Halloumi cheese fried in a pan, flambéed tableside, doused with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice and served with bread. Suggest high-acid white wines to match the spectacle and increase profits. Absent the flames, Mediterranean-style cheeses, offered as appetizers or part of meal-ending cheese plates, add new and intriguing flavors to adventurous, pleasure-seeking diners.



## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Cheese & Hummus Pairings

Following the popularity of hummus bars in London, U.S. restaurateurs are introducing this chickpea, garlic- and tahini-laced dip to menus in myriad ways. Hummus has opened the doors to non-Middle Eastern restaurants and grocers to introduce Mediterranean-style cheeses to their offerings. The cheeses are accompanying hummus in dishes as a replacement for mayo in sandwiches, a creamy base for an heirloom tomato salad, and an easy yet complex dip for pita chips.

### Cheese – A Healthy Choice

Healthy food trends provide foodservice operators with opportunities to attract and keep customers. The popularity of the “Mediterranean” diet has resulted in the opening of a number of new chain restaurants in recent years. Promoting Mediterranean dishes with portions of fish, vegetables, olives, and Mediterranean-style cheeses will boost business.

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# FRESH HISPANIC-STYLE CHEESES

*Adding Authentic Flavor to Latin Dishes and More*



California's rich Hispanic culture and heritage help make the state the country's leading producer of Hispanic- or Mexican-style cheese and dairy products. In 2017, a total of 135 million pounds were produced – all bearing the Real California Milk seal, which certifies they are made exclusively from California milk.

Hispanic-style cheeses are available in either fresh or aged. Two of the most popular fresh varieties are Queso Fresco, which is soft, moist and slightly acidic, and Oaxaca, a mild, firm white cheese similar to Mozzarella.

## HISPANIC-STYLE CHEESE FACTS

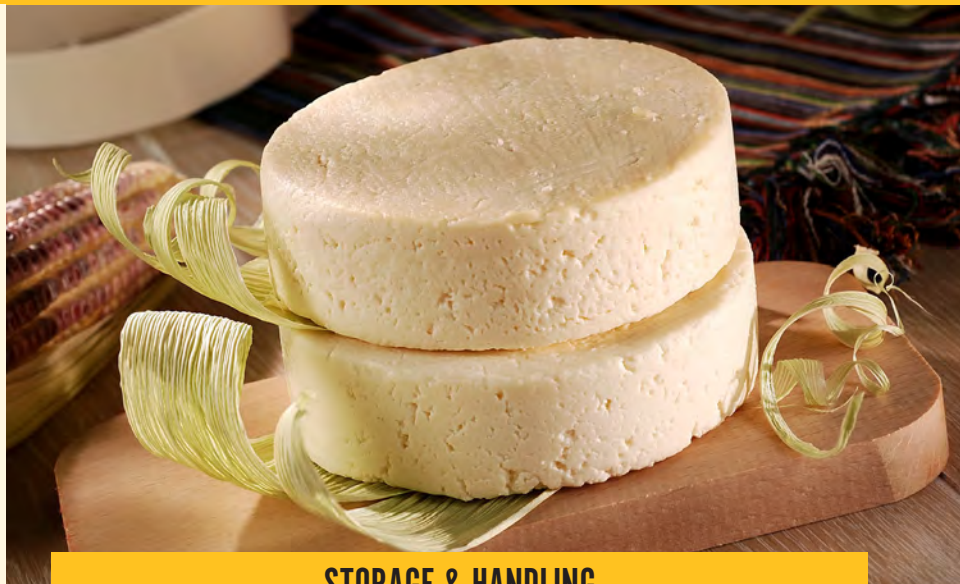
California is the top producer of Hispanic-style cheeses in the nation producing more than 25 varieties and styles. This amounts to approximately 5.4 percent of the total cheese production in the state.

The top four California Hispanic-style cheese producers make more than 20 varieties of Hispanic-style cheeses.

Hispanic-style cheeses are a low-cost way to add authenticity to Latin-inspired dishes.

Besides Queso Fresco and Oaxaca, the other top varieties of fresh Hispanic-style cheeses include:

- Queso Blanco Fresco – popular for frying
- Panela – with a firm texture similar to fresh (or high-moisture) Mozzarella
- Requesón – has a soft, grainy texture similar to Ricotta



## STORAGE & HANDLING

- When purchasing cheese, make sure the package is properly and tightly wrapped and sealed, and that the cheese inside looks appealing. Do not use any cheese that looks dry or discolored, as the package seal may be broken. With fresh cheeses, check the freshness date on the package.
- Fresh cheeses should be treated just like milk and kept refrigerated. Many fresh cheeses can last for a few weeks if properly stored, so note the freshness date on the package before you buy. If you detect mold on a fresh cheese, discard it.
- To melt cheese, use a low temperature for a brief time. Add cheese toppings to dishes at the end of baking or broiling and heat just long enough to melt. Soft cheeses have enough water to blend well into beans, side-dishes and fillings.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Queso Fresco is a soft, fresh cheese. Like Ricotta, Queso Fresco is easily crumbled or caramelized and the ideal ingredient on enchiladas and tostadas. The cheese is used to add flavor and color to traditional dishes, but also unique flavor for pasta, vegetables, omelets and salads.

Oaxaca makes the perfect topping for pizza as it's very similar to Mozzarella. Shredded, it can top refried beans, tostadas, and soups. Sliced, it melts wonderfully for quesadillas. Building on the popularity of barbecue, chefs add shredded Oaxaca in BBQ chicken quesadillas to attract diners who can't get enough of the smoky favorite.

### Front-of-the-House

The popularity of charcuterie boards offers a foundation for Oaxaca and Queso Fresco. Present these cheeses as a substitute for Provolone or Ricotta to drive consumer interest in a Latin-style charcuterie board.

Chunks, crumbles or shreds of Hispanic-style soft cheeses work well on corn salads or to create a Mexican salad with avocado and tomatoes.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Menu Ideas

Fresh Hispanic-style cheeses drive consumer interest on menus in both signature dishes and Limited-Time-Offers. In recent years they have been key ingredients in mainstream fast food items like queso bacon burgers, fries and chicken sandwiches.

- Queso Fresco gives dishes like pasta primavera and au gratin potatoes a rich, creamy texture. Or menu it diced in a watermelon, arugula salad with heirloom tomatoes and a balsamic vinaigrette with basil and mint.
- Oaxaca is delicious in portobello quesadillas and as the main ingredient in "queso fundido," which means molten cheese. And to push the envelope a bit, Oaxaca adds flair to crêpes with corn and zucchini blossoms.

### The New Nachos

Nachos on menus are driving trial and exciting consumers. From their introduction in the 1980s, nachos have delighted bar and casual restaurant patrons. In this era of authenticity, chefs are substituting Hispanic-style melting cheeses for old stand-by Cheddar or Monterey Jack.

### Cheese & Corn

The latest crossover menu hit is Mexican Street Corn, which is delighting consumers and restaurant managers. Simply roast corn-on-the-cob and serve sprinkled with Queso Fresco, cilantro and chili powder.

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# AGED HISPANIC-STYLE CHEESES

*So Authentic and Flavorful*



California's rich Hispanic culture and heritage help make the state the country's leading producer of Hispanic- or Mexican-style cheese and dairy products. In 2017, a total of 135 million pounds were produced – all bearing the Real California Milk seal, which certifies they are natural cheeses made exclusively from California milk.

Hispanic-style cheeses are produced either aged or fresh. Aged Hispanic-style cheeses, commonly called “añejo” (or “aged”), are different from their “aged” European and American counterparts. Their characteristic dry texture and pungent, sharp flavor comes from being salted, pressed and dried rather than being “aged” for a long time.

California cheesemakers produce a number of aged, semi-firm and firm Hispanic-style cheeses. The two most popular are Cotija, which is a strong, pungent cheese with a distinct sharpness, and Manchego, which is comparable to a creamy, sharp cheddar cheese.

## HISPANIC-STYLE CHEESE FACTS

California is the top producer of Hispanic-style cheeses in the nation producing more than 25 varieties and styles. This amounts to approximately 5.4 percent of the total cheese production in the state.

The top four California Hispanic-style cheese producers make more than 20 varieties of Hispanic-style cheeses.

Hispanic-style cheeses are a low-cost way to add authenticity to Latin-inspired dishes.

Besides Cotija and Manchego, the other top varieties aged Hispanic-style cheeses include:

- Asadero – tangy, similar to Provolone
- Enchilado – dry, crumbly white cheese with a red coating



## STORAGE & HANDLING

- When purchasing cheese, make sure the package is properly and tightly wrapped and sealed, and that the cheese inside looks appealing. Do not use any cheese that looks dry or discolored, as the package seal may be broken.
- While fresh cheeses should be treated just like milk and kept refrigerated, semi-hard and hard cheeses will last four to eight weeks if properly stored. After opening consider removing the original plastic wrap and re-wrapping in parchment or wax paper, which allows the cheese to breathe.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Americans' palates have expanded and grown more adventurous each year. Chefs are featuring authentic "south-of-the-border" menu items that center on the use of authentic Hispanic-style cheeses. Cooking and garnishing with these cheeses add value and authenticity. A few types of Hispanic-style cheeses will soften but not melt (or flow) when heated or used in cooked dishes. So, it's important to know your cheeses:

- **Asadero** is a mild, firm cheese molded into a log and sold sliced. It is similar to Provolone in its slightly tangy taste and firm texture. It melts well and is used in such dishes as quesadillas and nachos as well as on hamburgers and sandwiches.
- Named after the town of Cotija, Mexico, where it originated, **Cotija** is a firm, very salty cheese similar to a dry Feta. Cotija is available in a wheel or grated and can be used in a similar way to Feta – crumbled and sprinkled as a condiment over soups, salads and beans. It's also ideal with baked gnocchi for a lighter texture and elevated flavor.
- **Enchilado** is a dry, crumbly white cheese distinguished by its colorful reddish appearance, the result of a coating of mild red chili or paprika, which adds a slightly spicy flavor. Crumble or slice onto Mexican foods, soups and salads. In cooked dishes, it softens but does not melt.
- **Manchego** is derived from the famous cheese of La Mancha, Spain, where it's made from sheep's milk. The Hispanic-style version uses low-fat cow's milk and has a mellow, nutty flavor. This firm golden cheese has become popular for blending into gourmet mac & cheese with chorizo and melted onto flatbreads or pizza.

### Front-of-the-House

The popularity of charcuterie and cheese flights allows a platform to develop one with Latin flair. All of the añejo cheeses pair beautifully with meats, olives and dried fruit. Chefs use them as snacking or sandwich cheeses, and as an accompaniment to fruit and wine. Two decades ago, mainstream American menus were introduced to Tex-Mex and brought consumers around to spicy foods topped with Hispanic-style cheese. Beef and chicken quesadillas are still popular as well as taco salads and Tex-Mex Chicken Ranch salads.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Popular Pupusas

Pupusas are a hand-formed traditional Salvadoran dish of a thick corn tortilla stuffed with aged Hispanic-style cheese and savory fillings. Great on the grill, these tortillas are becoming more popular on menus. Chefs spread Hispanic-style cheese on pupusas and then serve with traditional ancho sauce or with a sweet vinegar sauce.

### Cheese & Corn

The latest crossover menu hit is Mexican Street Corn, which is delighting consumers and restaurant managers. Simply roast corn-on-the-cob and serve sprinkled with a Hispanic-style cheese, cilantro and chili powder.

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# COTTAGE CHEESE

*Protein-Rich Ingredient On-Trend in Many Dishes*



With its healthy attributes, cottage cheese is appearing on more menus and in recipes. Cottage cheese is part of the family of fresh, rindless cheeses not intended for ripening. It is a fresh, moist, slightly tangy cheese that features small, dense curds and has long been favored by chefs for adding creaminess and protein to side dishes such as fruits, salads and vegetables.

## COTTAGE CHEESE FACTS



Cottage cheese is considered one of the first cheeses made in America. In the 18th century, settlers used milk leftovers from making butter to create a soft cheese in their small “cottage” homes.

Total production of cottage cheese in California in 2017 was 108.3 million pounds.



Cottage cheese is made by adding an acid, such as vinegar, or a lactic-acid bacterial culture to pasteurized milk, which separates the milk solids from the liquid whey. After the curd forms, cheesemakers gently cut it into pieces that allow additional whey to drain away. Finally, the curds are rinsed and salted.

Cottage cheese is a great source of protein, riboflavin, calcium and B vitamins.



Commercial cottage cheese is available in nonfat, low-fat (1% milkfat), and whole (4% milkfat) varieties.



### STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store cottage cheese in a refrigerator set at 38°–40°F in the container in which it was sold.
- The “sell by” date stamped on cottage cheese products tells you how long the retail store can keep the product for sale on the shelf.
- If any mold forms on the surface of cottage cheese, discard it immediately.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Cottage cheese is gaining in popularity in kitchens as chefs look to expand their healthy offerings, differentiate dishes or reduce calories.

Cottage cheese is anything but plain, providing an interesting platform for savory and sweet creations. With its mild flavor and creamy texture, cottage cheese can be used in place of cream cheese or ricotta in dips, casseroles, pancakes and desserts. The unique curds can provide an interesting texture to pastry dough or can be blended to a smoother texture before adding to a recipe, such as classic Coeur à la Crème.

Chefs also add cottage cheese to blue cheese dressing to create a chunky texture at a lower cost and with fewer calories.

### Front-of-the-House

A recent California Milk Advisory Board consumer survey found that 71% of Americans have a favorable sentiment about cottage cheese, something operators should consider as an easy substitution for sour cream, high-protein addition to avocado toast or mixed with fruit and blended into dipping sauces.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

Grocery stores have been moving cottage cheese away from sour cream and positioning it with yogurt; chefs are making similar changes substituting cottage cheese for sour cream to highlight the added protein, reduced fat and lower calories in dishes. To replace sour cream in recipes, blend one cup of cottage cheese with 4 tablespoons of milk and 2 teaspoons of lemon juice.

Cottage cheese is also making an appearance in the “grab-and-go” category as a snack with extra ingredients including crackers with tomato chutney or caramelized onions, as well as nuts and dried fruit.



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# YOGURT

*Popularity Growing as Healthy Food & Beverage*



Yogurt is more popular than ever, thanks to its health benefits, versatility and tart dairy flavor. Production expanded dramatically in the past decade, due primarily to demand for Greek yogurt, which accounts for half of all U.S. yogurt sales. Yogurt drinks – a snack favorite and go-to breakfast beverage – have driven recent growth. California is the nation's leading milk-producing state and is the second largest producer of yogurt.

## YOGURT FACTS



Total yogurt production in California in 2017 was 442.4 million pounds, an increase of 12.0% over the prior year.

Yogurt's name is Turkish in origin; it was initially brought to North America by Turkish immigrants in the 1700's.



It was first manufactured commercially in Spain in 1919 by Isaac Carasso whose company Danone was named after his son, Daniel. After Daniel moved to the U.S., he began producing yogurt in New York in the 1940s under the Dannon Yogurt label, which introduced fruit on the bottom in 1947.

The three popular varieties of yogurt – Greek, Icelandic and Australian – are all richer and creamier than traditional yogurt due to differences in straining and cooking. Greek yogurt is the more tart and tangy, which makes it ideal in recipes for savory uses.



The health benefits go beyond the protein, calcium, vitamins B-2 and B-12, and potassium; it's recognized today as a source of probiotics for healthy digestion.

Regular yogurt contains no less than 3.25 percent milkfat, low-fat yogurt contains between 0.5 and 2 percent milkfat, and non-fat yogurt contains no more than 0.5 grams milkfat per serving.



Plain yogurt is unflavored, made from pasteurized non-fat, low-fat or whole milk. Flavored yogurt is sweetened and includes fruit or other flavors. It is not generally used in baking.



## STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store yogurt in a refrigerator set at 38°–40°F in the container in which it was sold.
- If separation occurs, gently stir the liquid back into the yogurt.
- Discard yogurt that has become moldy.
- Freezing yogurt is not recommended.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Chefs recognize that yogurt is an important part of many regional cuisines, including Mediterranean, Eastern European, Middle Eastern, East Indian and Chinese.

Yogurt is wonderfully versatile. It can be used as a flavorful, calcium-rich addition to dips, dressings, shakes and soups. Yogurt can be substituted for higher fat sour cream, and drained through cheesecloth to make yogurt “cheese.” It’s a nutritious substitute for sour cream on salsa, baked potatoes and soups, and for mayonnaise in almost any recipe as well as in dressings and dips. Chefs are also using it as a meat marinade.

When substituting yogurt for milk in baking, do not add any of the baking soda called for in the recipe unless the recipe’s list of ingredients includes brown sugar, molasses, or honey. In that case, use the amount called for in the recipe.

Yogurt tenderizes the protein in flour, resulting in soft-to-the-bite muffins, pastries or cakes. Its slightly acidic flavor adds a bit of tang. You can prevent curdling when using yogurt in hot dishes by adding the yogurt as late as possible during preparation, heating gradually and stirring gently.

### Front-of-the-House

Yogurt is a popular meal, snack and condiment. As a result, restaurant operators should have it available as long as they have their doors open. At quick-service restaurants, in both occurrences and items, yogurt mentions on menus are up 40 percent in the past year according to Technomic.

Although delicious on its own, yogurt is often topped with granola, fresh orange, dark chocolate, pistachios, fresh pineapple, toasted coconut, hazelnuts, fresh blueberries, honey, strawberries and kiwi.

## WHAT’S TRENDING

### The Healthy Choice

Technomic reports that 87% of consumers consider nutrient-dense yogurt a part of healthy diet. Restaurant operators are capitalizing by creating new trends within the cultured dairy market. In the yogurt category, examples include: flavor mash-ups, snacking options with smoothie drinks and smoothie bowls, smoked yogurt and even “boozy” yogurt drinks. Other growing trends in the category are probiotics and higher nutrient density —adding things like vitamins and high-protein as well as hidden fruits and vegetables.

### On-the-Go with Yogurt

A significant consumer trend is the idea of “portable protein.” Consumers know that protein is what makes them go. The trick for foodservice operators is to provide that “go” on-the-go. Successful operators can prepare a host of ready-to-go snacks or breakfast foods, packaged for fast pick-up and easy opening. Popular examples include: single-serve yogurt and parfaits (hand-scooped yogurt with fruit and granola).

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# BUTTER

*Naturally Delicious*



Driven by strong consumer desire for natural food products, butter boasts a significant resurgence. Americans place a higher value on products with fewer ingredients and butter fits this trend perfectly. The ingredient deck is simple: for sweet butter, the only ingredient is cream; salted butter contains cream and salt. This is a restaurant operator's dream, and it's ideal for everything from condiments to baking to sauces.

## BUTTER FACTS



California is the largest butter producer in the country. In 2017, California dairy processors churned **534 million** pounds.

Commercial butter in the U.S. contains **80-82%** milkfat; in addition, there's **16-17%** water and **1-2%** solids (mainly protein and salt). European-style butter is a cultured butter churned longer to attain at least **82%** butterfat.



The word "butter" is derived from the Greek word *bou-tyron*, which translates to "cow cheese." Its first recorded use goes back 4,000 years.



Real California butter is full of nutrients including: Conjugated linoleic acid – an anti-inflammatory fatty acid, healthy saturated fats, butyrate (an anti-inflammatory) and Vitamins A, D, E, and K2.



## STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store butter in the refrigerator tightly wrapped or in a covered dish.
- Keep it away from highly aromatic foods so it doesn't pick up external flavors.
- Butter is safe at room temperature for short periods, but refrigerate to maintain peak flavor.
- To freeze butter, overwrap the original package with aluminum foil. Subsequently, to soften butter quickly, cut it into 1/8th-inch slices and place the slices in a bowl. Or grate the frozen butter with a box grater. For best results, do not soften butter in a microwave.
- Frozen salted butter will generally maintain best quality for about 12 months, while unsalted butter will stay at peak quality for about six months; in both cases, the butter will remain safe beyond those times.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

As a cooking ingredient, butter is better because of its rich flavor, moisture and ideal melting properties.

Butter has a higher smoke point than olive oil and enhances the flavor of everything it's cooked with, such as meats and vegetables. Butter also adds a silky, creamy texture to sauces that provides a vibrancy and improved mouthfeel. New uses for butter include as an ingredient in tomato sauces and in coffee, in place of cream or milk.

When cooking with butter, chefs recommend cutting it into pieces before melting. Additionally, butter continues to cook after it is taken off the heat – it's best to monitor cook time for maximum flavor. Chefs prefer unsalted or “sweet” butter to control the salt amounts in recipes.

Due to butter's popularity and superior nutritional, restaurants have adjusted their menus. McDonald's switched from liquid margarine to butter for its Egg McMuffin® to improve flavor. Jack in the Box Buttery Jack® burger includes a melted garlic herb butter.

Chefs are poaching fish dishes with butter to add rich flavor and preserve moisture. Butter-poached lobster, shrimp and salmon are also growing in popularity.

### Front-of-the-House

In restaurants, bread and butter is often the first food served; setting expectation levels on quality. Of course, nothing compares with a dollop of whipped butter on pancakes and waffles. The popular “all-day-breakfast” trend opens the door for operators to slather butter on toast 24/7.

Garnish fresh asparagus, steamed broccoli and baked potatoes with butter to delight restaurant patrons. When asked what makes the difference between restaurant and home-cooked food, many chefs respond that it's their favorite ingredient ... butter.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Coffee Surge Spurs Demand for Bakery Goods

Coffee houses have expanded their offerings of pastries, donuts and other baked goods. Many urban areas have also seen a resurgence in high-quality local bakeries. Butter is the base ingredient in bakery recipes offering delicious flavor.

### Marginalizing Margarine

Americans crave real butter at the expense of margarine, a trans-fat loaded product made from partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. In recent years, as consumers are more aware of the health risks of trans-fats, they have drastically cut back on margarine and turned to butter. Foodservice operators have capitalized on this trend.

### Boosting Flavor of Butter

Inventive foodservice operators are expanding their use of butter to match the growing demand. Compound butters are featured in both sweet and savory dishes. For sweet compound butters, add lemon or orange zest, maple syrup, honey or cinnamon to spread on pancakes, waffles or cornbread. Savory compound butters use herbs like rosemary, spices or nuts and are used to top beef, pork, or fish and boost the flavor of vegetables. Smoked butter capitalizes on Americans' craving for smoked meats. It's excellent on brisket, corn-on-the-cob and biscuits.

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# SOUR CREAM

*Versatile Ingredient & Add-on with Reduced & Fat-free Versions*



**Sour cream is cultured or acidified light cream. Rich and delicious, it's a traditional addition to Eastern European dishes, a common topping for baked potatoes and nachos, and a great addition to a broad array of dishes. Cultured sour cream, which is the more common type, is soured and thickened by adding lactic acid bacteria to pasteurized cream with at least 18 percent milkfat.**

## SOUR CREAM FACTS



While sour cream has at least 18 percent fat, reduced-fat sour cream contains 25 percent less fat; this light version has less butterfat than regular sour cream, because it is made from a mixture of milk and cream rather than just cream.

Fat-free sour cream contains no cream at all, as it's made primarily from non-fat milk; this version is made with less than 0.5 g of fat for each 50 g of weight.



Cultured sour cream is made by adding a culture of *Streptococcus lactis* to pasteurized cream and incubating at 72°F until the desired sour flavor and thickness emerge.

The culture produces lactic acid, which is responsible for sour cream's thickness and distinctive flavor.



Manufacturers may use an acid, such as vinegar, instead of lactic acid cultures to produce acidified sour cream.

Non-fat milk solids and stabilizers may also be added to commercial sour cream.



### STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store sour cream in a refrigerator set at 38°–40°F in the container in which it was sold.
- If separation occurs, gently stir the liquid back into the sour cream.
- Sour cream stays fresh for 2-3 weeks after it's been opened. If any mold forms on the sour cream's surface, discard it immediately.
- Sour cream can be frozen. Freezing may slightly change the texture of sour cream, but any difference is unnoticeable in cooked dishes.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Sour cream's versatility as a natural additive has made it a staple in restaurant kitchens. It is kept on hand to make quick dips and dressings, thicken soups and sauces and, of course, as a condiment.

Much like yogurt, sour cream also tenderizes and softens baked goods. Rich and acidic in nature, this semi-liquid acts as a fat to produce moist, tender textures in a variety of sweet dishes, such as cookies, scones and cakes.

The relatively low milkfat in sour cream makes it susceptible to curdling at high cooking temperatures. To prevent curdling when using sour cream in hot dishes, add it as late as possible during preparation, heat gradually and stir gently. Sour cream can be used to enrich a dish after cooking and just before serving.

Because of its rich texture, sour cream is a traditional addition to Eastern European dishes such as beet soup (borscht), potato, pea, cabbage, pickle soup and vegetable soups, and a wide array of other dishes.

### Front-of-the-House

Encourage patrons to apply or top California sour cream on their appetizers, entrees, sides and desserts. It's most popular usage is with baked potatoes, where it's often blended with chives, seasoned salt and bacon bits. Chefs are also using it as a topping on crêpes, pancakes and as a dip with vegetable platters.

Sour cream is the California dairy staple that "cools" spicy Mexican-American cuisine such as tacos and chili with its rich, creamy tang. A dollop of sour cream makes a perfect garnish atop steaming tortilla soup or sizzling fajitas, and is the key ingredient for nachos, party dips and dressings.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

### Dairy Fats are Back!

Dairy fats are not only healthy, but also offer tremendous flavor. Not only sour cream, but whole milk and butter are more popular than ever in recipes at a wide variety of restaurants.

### Sour Cream Featured on Pizza

With the growing popularity of vegetarian pizzas, sour cream is appearing as part of a blend with a soft cheese. The freshness and silky taste works great with any number of toppings such as onions, basil and vegetables.

### The Baked Potato Debate

Restaurant patrons have an age-old debate regarding toppings for their baked potatoes. Some want butter, others defend their favorite side dishes' accompaniment as sour cream. Here in California, the nation's largest producer of butter, there is no debate, we prefer both!



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# CRÈME FRAÎCHE

*A Versatile Cream Sure to Delight*



French for “fresh cream,” crème fraîche originated in Normandy and is used lavishly in sauces, drizzled over vegetables and spooned on fresh fruit. It is a thickened cream in which lactic acids and naturally occurring bacteria have been allowed to slowly develop into a slightly tangy, nutty flavor and velvety rich texture, ranging from that of sour cream to almost as solid as room-temperature butter. With its higher fat content, crème fraîche is ideal for cooking as it won’t separate or curdle under high heat like sour cream and yogurt.

## CRÈME FRAÎCHE FACTS



To make crème fraîche, cream is pasteurized and then seeded with a starter culture, much the way yogurt and cheese are made. The cream is then left until slightly soured and thick.

Crème fraîche is less acidic than buttermilk, yogurt or sour cream, although in general crème fraîche and sour cream are interchangeable in recipes. It is thicker, has a richer flavor, and is less tangy than sour cream.



In France, crème fraîche was traditionally made from unpasteurized cream that naturally contained the right bacteria to thicken it. Since cream is pasteurized in California, crème fraîche is made by adding fermenting agents to cream, such as lemon, with the necessary bacteria.

Crème fraîche will have the fat content of the cream used to make it, typically about 30%, and does not contain any added thickeners.



## STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store crème fraîche in the refrigerator, which is typically set at 38-40°F. Keep it tightly sealed in the container and it will typically keep for up to eight weeks.
- If separation occurs, gently stir the liquid back into the crème fraîche.
- If any mold forms on the surface of the crème fraîche, discard it immediately.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Back-of-the-House

Crème fraîche is the ideal flavorful addition for sauces, soups, meats, fish and desserts because it can be boiled and reduced without curdling. Its tangy flavor and luxurious texture adds acidity and richness to a wide variety of dishes.

- For breakfast, serve hot pancakes or warm scones with plenty of crème fraîche. Any omelet is enhanced with a dollop of crème fraîche. Crème fraîche can be whipped by itself and used as a stand-alone topping.
- Stir crème fraîche into foods like risotto, soups and creamy pasta sauces just before serving to add richness, balanced with a mildly tangy flavor.
- Include the appealing flavor of crème fraîche in mashed or au gratin potatoes.
- Gently toss grilled vegetables with a little crème fraîche and season with coarsely ground pepper.
- For desserts, whip crème fraîche with a small amount of sugar and a dash of vanilla and serve chilled on fresh berries or peach shortcakes.

### Front-of-the-House

Crème fraîche is a delicious topping that adds a burst of flavor to a variety of appetizers, sides and desserts. Operators can impress patrons by offering crème fraîche alongside sour cream – they're often interchangeable as some like the tanginess of sour cream, while others like the richness of crème fraîche. Crème fraîche can be spooned over fresh fruit or cooked vegetables and is often used as a garnish with soups. It can be used anywhere you might use sour cream, like over a baked potato or a range of ethnic foods that favor creamy toppings.

## WHAT'S TRENDING

### A New Menu Favorite

Restaurant operators are finding creative ways to showcase crème fraîche on menus, starting with appetizers. The delicious cheese is appearing on more cheese plates and a favorite pairing with caviar. Another fresh discovery is as a secret ingredient in macaroni and cheese.

### Added to Beverages

Gourmet coffee shops are adding crème fraîche to coffee beverages. It's also found favor with mixologists adding it to cocktails.



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# GELATO

*Italian Dessert Becoming Frozen Favorite in U.S.*



**Gelato is Italian for ice cream. Although the two frozen treats share some common ingredients, the recipe for each and how they're made result in two different flavor and texture profiles. After years of being a specialty dessert found only in big city Italian restaurants, gelato is now mainstream in showcases at pizzerias as well as in gelato stores throughout the country. Technomic confirmed the growing demand as a recent survey showed 33% of consumers would order gelato for dessert in 2017, compared to 29% two years earlier.**

**Foodservice operators can work with producers of gelato made with Real California milk to tap into the growing popularity and offer a lower-calorie alternative to ice cream. Also by offering gelato, pizzerias and Italian restaurants are adding more authenticity to their menus.**

## GELATO FACTS

There are several key differences between gelato and ice cream.



- Like ice cream, gelato has a base of milk, cream and sugar. It generally contains more milk than cream, which results in a lower percentage of butterfat and more intense flavor.
- Gelato is churned at a slower speed than ice cream resulting in a denser product because less air is whipped into the mixture (Gelato: 25-30% air vs. 50% for ice cream).
- Unlike ice cream, gelato is usually made without egg yolks.



While U.S. law requires 10% butterfat for ice cream, there's no standard legal definition for gelato. Italian law states it must have a minimum of 3.5% butterfat.

Gelato is available in a myriad of fruit flavors as well as popular vanilla, chocolate, hazelnut, and stracciatella (vanilla with crunchy chocolate pieces).



## STORAGE & HANDLING

- Ice cream is typically served frozen, but gelato is stored and served at a slightly warmer temperature, around 15°F, so it's not completely frozen.
- Foodservice operators generally serve gelato in showcases with pans displaying six to 24 flavors. Authentic gelato isn't scooped, it's served with a spade.
- The "best used by" date stamped on some gelato cartons tells you how long the product will be at top eating quality.
- After serving, return the gelato carton to the freezer immediately to help prevent ice crystals, which can form when gelato partially thaws and then refreezes.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Front-of-the-House

The gelato snack and dessert trend has expanded beyond pizzerias and Italian restaurants. The most popular display in many Italian restaurants is the showcase in a prominent spot near the front counter or main dining area where the colorful, multi-flavored offerings sell themselves. Foodservice operators at non-Italian independent restaurants are also including gelato on dessert menus, as many consumers see it as a healthier and satisfying alternative to other sweets. There's an opportunity to upsell desserts by adding gelato as it gives customers the impression the dessert is special and worth the price. Additionally, operators are using gelato in place of ice cream in soda fountain specialties, such as milkshakes and malts.



## WHAT'S TRENDING

### New, On-Trend Flavors

In Italy, gelato is generally served with two-flavor combinations side-by-side. In California, gelato makers are adding their own twist by creating flavorful combinations inspired by popular ice cream and frozen yogurt flavors, such as cake batter, cookie dough, peanut butter cup, and more.

### Cheers with Gelato

Mixing gelato and wine or spirits to create desserts with popular cocktail flavor profiles is a trend that satisfies adult palates.

### Newest Dessert Option

Combine a scoop of gelato with a shot of espresso and it's an affogato — a growing application that's a dessert and beverage in one. Some operators use the simple affogato as a starting point for more elaborate dessert drinks.

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# ICE CREAM & SOFT SERVE

*California Top Producer of Frozen Favorites*



Without a doubt, ice cream is one of Americans' most popular indulgences. It's the ultimate comfort food – the go-to choice after a long day at the office or school. Americans are considered to be the No.1 consumers of ice cream in the world, eating almost a pint a week – 48 pints of ice cream a year.

## ICE CREAM FACTS

California ice cream production in 2017 totaled 106 million gallons.



The most popular ice cream flavors in the nation are vanilla, chocolate, cookies 'n cream and mint chocolate chip.

Ice cream is an energy-dense food, high in protein; it also provides small doses of calcium and numerous Vitamins including A and D.



It's estimated nine percent of total milk production in the U.S. is devoted to ice cream.

Ice cream is made by stirring, while freezing, a combination of milk or cream, sweetener and flavoring. Rapid freezing helps keep ice crystals small, while agitation incorporates air into the mixture, increasing volume.



Commercial ice cream mixes are pasteurized and homogenized before freezing and mixing and usually contain stabilizers and emulsifiers to improve texture and body.

Soft serve, which has been sold commercially since the late 1930s, is softer than regular ice creams due to air introduced during freezing.



The amount of air used changes the taste of soft serve. Low quantities of air make a heavier soft serve, while higher air content tastes creamier and lighter.



## STORAGE & HANDLING

- Store ice cream in a sealed container in the freezer, set at 0 F.
- The “best used by” date stamped on some ice cream cartons tells you how long the product will be at top eating quality.
- To soften ice cream, transfer to the refrigerator for 10-20 minutes before serving. For faster softening, place the ice cream in its cardboard container in a microwave set to high and follow these timing guidelines (not recommended for products in plastic containers):
  - One pint = 10 to 15 seconds
  - One quart = 15 to 25 seconds
  - One half gallon = 30 to 40 seconds
- After serving ice cream, return the carton to the freezer immediately to help prevent ice crystals, which can form when ice cream partially thaws and then refreezes.



## FOODSERVICE APPLICATIONS

### Front-of-the-House

Business-minded foodservice operators covering all categories would do well to stock ice cream for their patrons—at least the ever popular vanilla and chocolate. Many restaurants offer California ice cream as part of dessert menus or in carry-out settings with multiple topping options – pecans are the most popular nut and strawberries the favorite fruit choice. Waffle cones and sugar cones are equally popular devices for consumers to load their icy treats.

Milkshakes have a strong following too as nothing is more gratifying on a hot summer day or night than a cool, refreshing milkshake. According to a recent Technomic report, 60 percent of consumers ordered a milkshake from foodservice in the past month.

Soft serve tastes best when the flavor is light and the texture is rich. Adding multicolored sprinkles, fruits or chopped nuts turns soft serve into an epic snack. Consumers young and old are used to seeing soft serve and its signature ridged swirl at mall kiosks and beach stands.

### Ice Cream – Here’s the Scoop

Commercial ice cream must contain at least 10 percent milk fat, some premium ice creams contain 16 percent milk fat. Soft serve ice cream, as the name indicates, has a softer texture than traditional ice cream or gelato. Soft serve is lower in milk-fat (at 3-6 percent) than ice cream and is produced at a slightly higher temperature.

Both soft serve and regular ice cream are served in cups, cones or over another dessert. They’re also popular in milkshakes, which provide foodservice operators with a significant opportunity to drive visits, boost average tickets and increase customer satisfaction.

A scoop of Real California ice cream adds perceived value and pleasure as a dessert or snack. As the nation’s no. 1 producer of ice cream, California is the source of many smiles from very satisfied ice cream lovers throughout the country.

## WHAT’S TRENDING

### Door-to-Door Service

A number of ice cream retailers are now offering home delivery of scoops and quarts in line with the growing trend of off-premise indulging.

### Fast Frozen Ice Cream

Liquid nitrogen is gaining in popularity as a way to fast freeze, custom-ordered ice cream. Flavor combinations are selected and instead of scooping out of freezers, the creamy mix is flash frozen with liquid nitrogen and served. The ice cream shops claim the flash freezing creates a smoother, creamier product.

### Bite-Size May Be Better

While “super-sizing” has a certain following, a recent Technomic report shows that downsizing may be the way to go with desserts: Approximately 34 percent of consumers say they are more likely to order dessert if a smaller-portion option is available. Miniature desserts or dessert “flights” not only appeal to children and calorie-conscious consumers, but also could lead to off-hours business as consumers drop by for a quick pick-me-up. product.

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