

UK eating out growth in anywhere, anytime gourmet food-on-the-go, says Horizons? Ones to Watch

Quality food-on-the-go has become the key growth area in the UK's eating out market with new concepts consistently emerging in transport hubs and shopping centres as well as high streets locations, as consumers increasingly eat when they want, where they want.

This is one of the key findings in the latest **Ones to Watch** report, compiled by foodservice consultancy Horizons, which identifies the nation's dining out trends by analysing emerging small-scale eating out brands and operators growing rapidly over the past three years.

The focus of many of the latest concepts is on gourmet versions of established food-on-the go favourites, such as burgers and hot dogs, as well as upmarket coffee shops, a continued growth in street food and outlets specialising in healthy food.

?A wider variety of takeaway foods are available as consumers expect better quality food-on-the-go,? commented Horizons' director of services Paul Backman. ?New specialists are emerging, such as outlets selling dishes with just one or two ingredients or Artisan versions of popular concepts. Many are focusing their attention on high traffic areas such as shopping malls, railway stations and airports.?

Transport hubs, for example, are now providing more space for eating out brands. London's Kings Cross station now has triple the concourse space and features established foodservice brands Burger King, Caffè Nero, Pret A Manger and Starbucks as well as up and coming Ones to Watch brands such as Benito's Hat Mexican Kitchen (burrito quick service) and Yalla Yalla (Lebanese street food).

Additionally established operators have extended their concepts to offer transport hub-specific variations such as Giraffe's (world food restaurant) Giraffe Stop (a food-on-the-go, quick service format with a largely takeaway menu and some seating), and Prezzo (Italian restaurant) opening its first outlet offering takeaway dishes such as flatbreads, pizza, pasta and salad at Kings Cross.

The first phase of the £25m redevelopment of London's Waterloo Station includes a Yo! Sushi, Carluccio's and the Benugo variant Benugo Sports Bar and Grill. A new Corney and Barrow concept, C&B Cabin, is also expected to open there in the future.

Fast food goes gourmet with the rollout of brands such as Gourmet Burger Kitchen and Meat Liquor alongside Primo's, The Gourmet Hot Dog Company and the soon to open Bubbledogs, offering gourmet hot dogs. In the capital the trend is further evident with the opening of Dach & Sons, selling hotdogs, burgers and sliders in Hampstead, and Roost, selling upmarket chicken snacks at Street Feast in East London.

Many of the new concepts focus on limited menu offers such as Chicken Shop, owned by Nick Jones, the man behind Soho House, the London-based chain Burger & Lobster, and Mark Hix's Tramshed, which sells steaks and chicken-based dishes.

Coffee shops continue to be a UK success story with high street brands expanding their repertoire as consumers becoming more knowledgeable and discerning about coffee

While the market is still dominated by Costa, Starbucks and Caffè Nero, smaller brands are offering something different - perhaps a local feel or a higher quality coffee. Artisan coffee shops, with an emphasis on quality beans, top spec espresso machines, expert baristas and often latte art, also add a point of differentiation to the larger chains. . Last month Tesco, in partnership with the founders of the Taylor St Baristas chain, opened the first Harris + Hoole artisan coffee shop in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, while Greggs the Baker opened Greggs Moment in Newcastle, with three more planned.

Ones to Watch demonstrates that there is a continued appetite for food and coffee on the go, but consumers are demanding a better quality and wider variety which the specialists are moving in to provide.

Top 5 Ones to Watch in the UK eating out market

1. Coffee shops (quick service): We're now seeing smaller brands entering the market, which was largely created, and is now dominated, by Costa, Starbucks and Caffè Nero. These arrivals are offering something different - perhaps a local feel, higher quality coffee or cheaper prices. Artisan coffee shops, with an emphasis on quality coffee beans, top spec espresso machines, expert baristas and often latte art, also bring a point of difference to the sector.

Key Ones to Watch*: Coffee#1, SOHO Coffee Co, Love Coffee, Greggs Moment, Sacred Cafe, Taylor St Baristas

2. Pub restaurants (casual dining): Pub food continues to improve as pub operators, both independent and chains, take on the high street restaurant chains with quality food served in a relaxed pub environment at good prices. As alcohol sales decline pub companies have the legacy of large, often outdated estates. Improving their food offer has boosted declining revenues. Smaller independent operators have pushed the boundaries with more gourmet food in modern surroundings.

Key Ones to Watch: Cloverleaf Restaurants, Eating Inn, Peach Pubs, Renaissance Pubs

3. Healthy eating (quick service): Nutritious, appetising food has become more exciting as operators are increasingly capturing consumer demand for healthy food. Allied to the growth of the healthy quick service sector are healthy eating restaurants such as Bill's and Leon.

Key Ones to Watch: Chop'd, Food To Go, Pod, Tossed

4. Gourmet burgers (casual dining): Burgers made with quality ingredients in unusual and exciting taste combinations, often with food provenance a key selling point. The trend was first seen 10 years ago, though newcomers are still emerging.

Key Ones to Watch: Byron, Handmade Burger Co

5. Frozen yoghurt (quick service): Frozen yoghurt served in a variety of fruit and chocolate flavours, often in outlets with vivid décor and contemporary styling. Appealing to consumers as a quick and affordable treat. UK brands such as Frae and Snog, compete with US-based Pinkberry, which has over 100 outlets in the US. These, mainly London-centric brands, often target their marketing at 16-25 year olds providing a younger person's equivalent to a coffee shop. Marketing activities include free samples and a strong presence at summer festivals.

Key Ones to Watch brands: Frae, Snog, Pinkberry, Yog, Yoomoo

*Ones to Watch brands are identified by Horizons as having 5-12 outlets and for showing growth rates, in terms of outlet numbers, of at least 20% over the past three years combined.

Horizons' Bubbling Under* trends:

Mexican burrito fast casual: Fast, affordable Mexican food.

Bubbling Under brands: Benito's Hat Mexican Kitchen, Burro Burrito, Chilango, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Freebirds World Burrito, Flying Burrito, Nineteen Ten, Poncho No. 8

Street food: A great way to try value-for-money new cuisines on-the-go.

Bubbling Under brands: Daddy Donkey (Mexican), Luardos (Mexican) Mooli's (Indian), NOW (Chinese), Street Kitchen (Various), Tuk Cho (Oriental), Yalla Yalla (Lebanese)

Tea bars: Premium teas offering an alternative to coffee shops.

Bubbling Under brands: Leaf, tea, Teacup, TeaSmith, Tea Monkey, Teapod

Brazilian churrascaria: All you can eat steakhouses and grilled poultry with a South American edge.

Bubbling Under brands: Bem Brasil, Cabana, Viva Brazil

British restaurants: British food with contemporary.

Bubbling Under brands: Bumpkin, Union Jacks

Japanese quick service: Oriental sushi, soups and salads.

Bubbling Under brands: Me Love, Mori Sushi

Spanish restaurants: tapas, chorizo and paella.

Bubbling Under brands: Brindisa, Camino

*Bubbling Under brands are those currently with less than five outlets, but which are showing signs of significant growth for the future.

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Editor's Note

Horizons helps its clients make better business decisions by providing accurate and detailed information about the foodservice market, its trend, and opportunities. The company provides consultancy services, workshops and statistical information based on its model of the sector and database of key accounts across Europe.

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