



SPOTTED... MAY 26

A sneak peek into consumer demands, flavours, and future trends, spotted in May 2026.

World Cup 2026. Future Food Tracker. BBQ Week.

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GEARING UP TO THE 2026 FIFA WORLD CUP



As the countdown to the 2026 FIFA World Cup begins, the UK foodservice sector is already adapting menus and experiences to capture football-driven social occasions. Operators are leaning into globally inspired flavours that reflect the tournament's international identity, with Korean, Latin American, Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian influences appearing across pubs, QSRs and casual dining menus. Loaded fries, stacked burgers, tacos, sharers and street-food-inspired formats are proving particularly popular because they are highly social, visually impactful and ideal for group viewing occasions.

Industry reports suggest consumers are seeking elevated comfort food, authentic global flavours and memorable occasions they cannot easily recreate at home — positioning the World Cup as a major catalyst for innovation across the UK hospitality market in 2026.

Lumina Intelligence reports average spend per eating-out visit reached £18.35 in Q1 2026, with consumers increasingly choosing quality, atmosphere and premium casual experiences over frequent low-cost visits. This creates a major opportunity for hospitality venues during the World Cup, where live sport, themed menus and communal experiences can justify higher spend.

FUTURE FOOD TRACKER UPDATE



BRINGING TRENDS TO THE TABLE

Good Sense Research. + tfp

We see little change in what consumers are eating out, though Pan-Asian popularity continues to grow

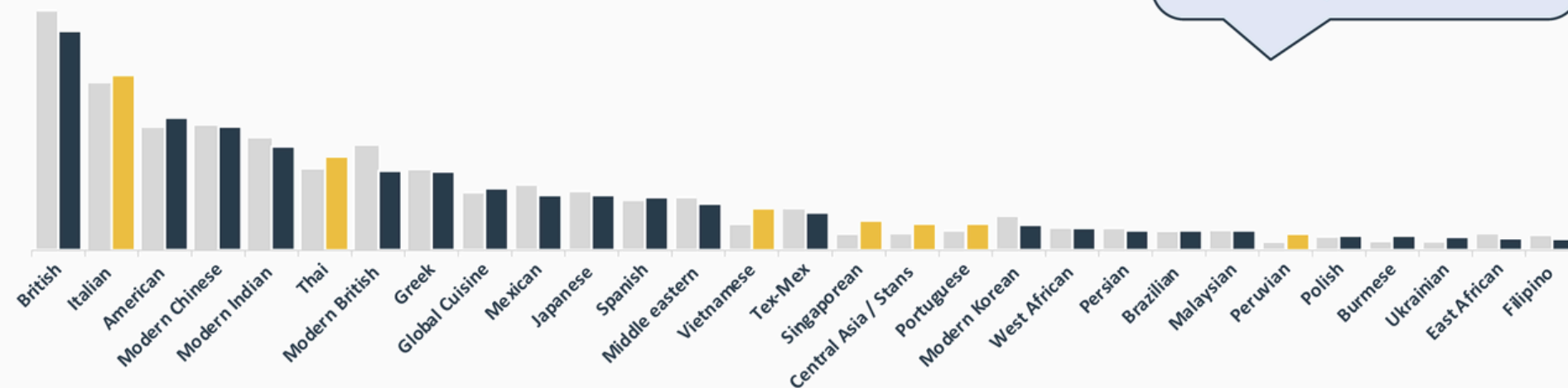
Cuisines **Eaten Out**

(Q1 2025 vs Q1 2026)

■ Q1 25 ■ Q1 26

Consumers are eating across a similar number of cuisines as last year

Q1 26: 3.6
vs.
Q1 25: 3.6



Q. Which of the following cuisines have you ordered when eating out or for delivery in the last month?
 ■ Cuisines highlighted in yellow show a 2% growth or more vs Q1 25



GLP-1 is part of the health conversation, but it is a signal, not the story: it reflects a wider cultural shift around 'healthy made easy'



27%
of diners are 'GLP-1 curious'
(likely to consider using GLP-1 in future)

The reality of GLP-1

Those using GLP-1...

- 75% say food has become more about **management** than pleasure
- 32% feel **less excited** about meal occasions
- 70% are eating more **high-protein** foods
- 67% are eating more **high-fibre** foods

Q. How likely are you to consider the use of appetite suppressants in the future?
 Data on the right taken from the GLP-1 pulse programme: Appetite Shift



HEALTH INGREDIENT FOCUS



Consumers in 2026 are taking a far more ingredient-conscious approach to food and drink, with attention shifting away from simple calorie counting toward what products are actually made from. Across both retail and foodservice, diners are increasingly looking for recognisable ingredients, shorter ingredient lists and foods perceived as more natural or minimally processed.

For operators and brands, this shift is shaping everything from menu development to product innovation. Plant-forward dishes built around vegetables, grains and legumes are outperforming heavily processed meat alternatives, while “functional indulgence” is emerging as a key opportunity — offering comfort foods with added nutritional benefits or cleaner ingredient credentials. Retailers are also leaning into transparency, with provenance, protein quality and digestive wellness becoming stronger selling points across snacking, ready meals and food-to-go.



NATIONAL BBQ WEEK



National BBQ Week 2026 is seeing UK consumers move beyond traditional barbecue flavours and embrace more globally inspired, flavour-forward cooking. Sweet and spicy combinations continue to dominate, with hot honey, chilli jams and fruit-led heat bringing a fresh twist to classic BBQ dishes. Korean, Caribbean and Latin American influences are particularly strong this year, with ingredients like gochujang, jerk seasoning, tajín and chimichurri appearing across marinades, glazes and sauces.

Consumers are increasingly looking for restaurant-style flavour experiences at home, driving demand for bold seasonings, smoky profiles and layered spice blends that feel more premium and adventurous. Plant-forward grilling is evolving too, with charred vegetables, mushrooms and halloumi becoming increasingly popular additions to modern BBQ menus alongside traditional meats.