

ISSUE 5, 2022 // GFS.CA

foodscape™

**BREAD, BUTTER
AND BEYOND**
A VERSATILE
FAVOURITE

*The gift
of holiday
planning*

Gordon®
FOOD SERVICE



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Stay connected with
Gordon Food Service®



gfs.ca/ideas



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Plan for Success

UPCOMING DATES AND EVENTS

DECEMBER

01 Make a List, Check it Twice

Place your orders and have your year-end specials in place before the holiday season dining crowd arrives.

04 Celebrate Cookies

Sponsor a holiday cookie-making contest or feature a new cookie on the menu each day for a week.

13 Make Cocoa a Comfort Food

Prepare the marshmallows and warm up spirits all month with special hot chocolate drinks.

27 Look Toward 2023

A new year is just around the corner. Make sure guests know what festive plans you have in store to celebrate.

JANUARY

07 Treat Them to Tempura

Step aside, resolutions. Serve customers yummy battered and deep-fried treats they can't make at home.

14 Make Mine Pastrami

Beef up your sandwich menu with the best thing sliced rye – hot pastrami, apple slices, cheddar.

21 Create a 'Use Your Gift Card Day'

Create specials and encourage people to bring friends as they make an occasion of visiting your establishment.

30 Croissants, Anyone?

Offer breakfast croissants, use them as sandwich carriers or sell a takeout box to treat people at the office.

FEBRUARY

02 Why Not Tater Tots?

Bite-size potato nuggets are great as a side, in a burrito or as a tater tot buffet with dips and seasonings.

08 It's a Fine Day for Fettuccini

Use your noodle: Add shrimp, mushrooms, spinach or garden veggies to enhance this Italian favourite.

14 Valentine's Day

Create a meal for two or an indulgent dessert and invite romance to your tables.

23 Beat the Chill with Chili

Offer a different batch of chili every day for a week and encourage a heated debate on which one's best.



HERE FOR TOMORROW

Gordon Food Service® has been part of the food scene for 125 years, and we can't wait for the future. Like you, we're always looking forward to all the good we can do on the exciting road ahead. We are Here for Tomorrow.

Visit gfs.ca for the dates and locations of upcoming shows.

Bread, Butter & Beyond

This staple of the restaurant menu is a versatile customer favourite.



Good news: Consumers on a tight holiday budget still want to treat themselves.

Better news: Elevated bread service is a popular trend that lets guests indulge without overextending your restaurant menu or production capabilities.

Simple breads used multiple ways add tempting menu offerings. Appetizers, shareables, salads, handhelds, entrées and desserts can have a bread component with smart menu planning and workmanship, according to Gordon Food Service® Corporate Consulting Chef Nicholas Gonring.

“Bread can take up a lot of freezer space, so you have to be thoughtful about how it’s used throughout the menu,” he said.

Breads ... and butters

Bread comes in many varieties – whole loaves, sliced, baguettes, rolls, croissants, buns, etc. To satisfy bread-loving consumers, Gonring has two table bread suggestions.

① **Sourdoughs.** “People appreciate the complexity in the fermentation process and the character it adds.”

② **Parker House rolls.** “What’s old is new again. Chefs have been using them in a cluster of six, cutting them apart like one big bun and building little smashburger sliders people can pull apart and share.”

Both breads are ideal for dipping and bread-and-butter service. They’re simple to create and raise cheque averages.

“One way to make it more interesting is with compound butters (see sidebar),” Gonring explained. “There are lots of flavour combinations and they are easy to make.”

COMPOUNDING INTEREST

Making compound butter is as simple as combining softened butter and other ingredients, rolling it, wrapping and freezing for bread service. Some ideas:

Garlic herb butter:

Great on garlic bread (almost any herb works).

Garlic chive butter:

A sourdough or French bread favourite.

Shallot parsley butter:

Spread on warmed bread.

Sun-dried tomato butter:

Perfect for appetizer crostinis.

Orange honey butter:

Try on Irish soda bread, biscuits, cornbread or scones.

Strawberry butter:

Schmear on English muffins.

To build sales, describe it on the menu as hand-churned butter, cave-aged butter or grass-fed butter.

Bread handhelds and beyond

Bread fits the entire menu. On a recent trend-spotting tour in Los Angeles, Gonring saw growth and evolution of two menu items trending before the pandemic:

- ① **Katsu sandos.** “There are a lot of people using thick-cut or ultra soft white milk bread in both crustless and crust-on sandwiches as a carrier for panko-crusted proteins and plant-based options.”
- ② **Croiffles.** “People have continued to evolve and adapt this from when we first saw this at a chocolate shop in 2019. Take an already-baked croissant, slice it as a carrier, fill it with ingredients you would serve at breakfast, lunch or on the dessert menu, then smash it on a waffle iron.”

Both show the value of bread as a handheld carrier. In addition, Gonring notes buns are an insurance policy, resistant to getting soggy like some breads.

“Almost every menu has a bun somewhere,” he said. “A Sienna Bakery® brioche bun elevates burgers, plus it works for other hot

sandwiches that can get soggy wrapped in foil for takeout.”

Bread also shows up on the appetizer menu as crostinis, and it enhances salads as housemade croutons or tuiles – shaved slices of frozen bread baked and elegantly curled.

Leftover bread? No problem

Speaking of salads, panzanella salads make great use of leftover bread. Cubed bread pieces soak up flavours from the vinaigrette or dressing. “I don’t think there’s a season when you can’t make a panzanella salad,” Gonring said. “It’s colourful, recognizable and delicious.”

Leftover bread also joins the brunch menu as strata or becomes a dinner entrée as meatloaf.

“Take crustless white bread after it’s left out to dry. It will soak up your eggs and you won’t see it when you make the strata, but it helps stretch out your eggs and adds texture to the dish,” Gonring said. “Bread also helps you stretch out the beef used in meatloaf.”

Leftover croissants create a more luxurious bread pudding. “It expands the croissant beyond just a carrier for a chicken salad sandwich,” Gonring said. “They’re buttery and way more flavourful than old, stale bread.”



KATSU SANDO



CROIFFLE



PANZANELLA

RECYCLE RECYCLE
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 RECYCLE RECYCLE



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Stay Connected with Social Media



Keeping consumers in the know is just a click away

Your to-do list pushed you to motor all around town, and now it's getting late. You're far from home, hungry and, well, you haven't planned anything for dinner anyway.

A search for "restaurants near me" lands you on a glowing review of an Italian place a few blocks away. Two traffic lights later, you're in front of a carbonara plate that tastes as good as it looked online.

Restaurant social media for the win.

Know the do's and don'ts

A Facebook digital commerce toolkit explains 84% of consumers decide where to eat less than an hour before a meal. The first stop for many people is online, and if your restaurant lacks a social media presence, you may be losing business.

There are a lot of options out there, and it can be overwhelming. Should I be on Facebook? Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, LinkedIn ... all of the above? How often should I post? And what types of images, videos or messaging work best?

It's a lot to consider. As the holiday season approaches, Gordon Food Service® Digital Marketing Supervisor Kristin Johnston suggests some do's and don'ts that are even more important than promoting special events and LTOs on social media. For example:

- DO** Stay relevant and up to date. "We saw this explode during COVID, with people relying on current information about hours of operation, seating and service changes."
- DO** Make sure your online menu is current. "If you're out of something or have to make a substitution, be transparent."
- DON'T** Ignore your social media pages. "If you haven't updated your Facebook page in two years, I have no idea what you serve or if you're still open."
- DON'T** Think social media isn't for you. "It has become necessary for almost every business."

ADVICE FROM THE FIELD

We reached out to our experts and asked for their thoughts on holiday planning. Here's what they said:



PICK PROFIT BUILDERS

Cocktails: Offer socially responsible customers more than \$2 carbonated beverages. A well-crafted zero-proof beverage has higher margins.

LTOs: Special, limited-time offers fit perfectly with today's compact menus. They complement holiday offerings and entice customer visits.

Catering: Plan, plan, plan ... then have a backup plan. When you know what the final products will be, break them into workable sections and go backward from there.

GARETH BERG

BUSINESS SOLUTIONS SPECIALIST

CATERING RAMPS UP REVENUE

Corporate events, staff functions and holiday parties add revenue streams. Simplify costs and planning with high quality and affordable value-added, heat-and-serve apps and entrées.



BRAD ELLIS

COP PRODUCT SPECIALIST

CELEBRATE THE EXPERIENCE



Help guests create holiday memories. Create LTOs with traditional and unique holiday flavours. Incorporate drinkable desserts, nostalgic cocktails with a modern twist, deeply flavoured braised and roasted meats, and don't forget fruits, melons and vegetables of the fall and winter months.

NATHAN VOULGARIS

BUSINESS SOLUTIONS SPECIALIST



Do I need a pro?

Overall, Johnston says, avoid thinking social media is too advanced for you and that you have to hire professional services and photographers to do the job.

"Do I think hiring a pro is worth it? Yes – professionals will give you a lot of quality, but I also understand the expense," she said. "If you can't do it, you may have someone you trust on your staff who can manage social media for you. And we all have great-quality cameras on our phones."

For operators who hire professional photographers, Johnston suggests getting someone to shoot images of staffers, the environment and the entire menu.

"That way, you don't have to think, 'Well, they shot two images, so there's two social posts, and I'm done' – it will give you content for a long time," she said.

Budget-friendly photography may be as close as a local college or art school. Johnston points out that students want to build portfolios, have equipment, know about proper lighting and will likely be more affordable.

Turn negatives into positives

When you have a robust social media presence, be prepared to interact with followers. New customers will find you and loyal customers watch for what's new. On the flip side, some people will post negative comments.

Don't fret and don't ignore it, Johnston says, save that for the cranks, bots or spammers trying to pick a fight. Otherwise, criticism can work in your favour.

"Resist deleting comments – unless they are slander or harassment – but always respond,"

"Resist deleting comments – unless they are slander or harassment – but always respond," she advises. "You can 'like' positive comments and respond to negative ones by apologizing, offering to make it right, or just asking people to contact you directly."

What matters is that people see your restaurant is paying attention and engaging. They know there's a person behind the social media screen, and it shows them you're sincere about creating a good experience.



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The Gift of Holiday Planning

Thinking ahead can help restaurants end the year on a high note.



8 in 10 consumers are cutting back on restaurant visits because of inflation.

Source: restaurantbusinessonline.com



63% of consumers' last LTO was an impulse buy.

Source: Datassential

The autumn aroma of pumpkin spice latte season has barely arrived, alerting restaurant operators that it's time to dive into holiday planning.

In a tough economy, November and December figure to be make or break months more than ever. A smart strategy can make all the difference, says Gordon Food Service® Culinary Specialist Bill Barker.

"When expenses go up, the first thing people cut is their entertainment budget," he said. "But people still want to celebrate, and restaurants can find ways to reach them."

Barker touched on five areas of holiday planning critical to ending the year on a high note.

Rethink catering

Family holiday outings may be down this year. Capturing corporate party business is one way to pick up the slack. Contact the local chamber of commerce for a list of area businesses and connect with them about hosting or catering their holiday parties.

"I think many corporations feel like they owe their employees a celebration this year," Barker said. "Events can happen in your restaurant or, if you are equipped, catered off-site at a banquet hall or even at their offices."

Operators must assure catered food fits their brand and isn't jeopardized by supply-chain issues. Work closely with your Sales Representative to avoid products affected by supply chain or cost issues, Barker urges. And

your catering program also should stress safety to reassure people with pandemic concerns during the emerging winter cold and flu season.

Take on takeout

Holiday planning should include a healthy dose of off-premise dining, promoted by a solid social media marketing schedule and staff awareness.

"Let people know your plans on your website, Facebook, Instagram or wherever," Barker advises. "Also make sure everyone on your staff is well aware of holiday plans, so they can answer questions when a potential customer calls."

Don't overlook packaging as a brand ambassador. The GFSImpress program allows operators to affix restaurant logos and messaging to containers. This reminds everyone at private holiday celebrations about your business.

"Some operators will say packaging is expensive, but if you are serving customers at home, you don't have the expense of washing china or cleaning tables," Barker points out. "Now you can afford a more upscale takeout program."



Market appetizers, LTOs

To excite off-premise and dining-room customers, Barker suggests holiday appetizers and limited-time offers (LTOs). Flavours from the many Mediterranean nations remain popular, and mezze plates are perfect for sharing.

Fresh takes on charcuterie boards are an ideal LTO, Barker says. “It doesn’t need to be meat or cheese. We’re seeing breakfast boards, but it can be seafood, vegetables or sweets if that’s your brand.”

Charcuterie-style boards can be packaged and sent with instructions for assembly at home or at an office event.

Craft a cocktail menu

Seasonal beverages are another holiday fave, and retro cocktails are in vogue, Barker says. Signature drinks or to-go batch mixes (if your liquor laws allow) with prep instructions are a sales builder.

Don’t overlook mocktails for those who prefer zero-proof drinks. “A lot of people don’t drink or are designated drivers, so you can build drinks that

look and taste like cocktails so people don’t feel out of place while everyone else is drinking,” Barker said.

Grow gift card sales

Gift cards are a holiday staple, so promote them early. They put money in your operation now, much of which won’t be redeemed until January, if at all.

“The redemption rate on gift cards is never 100%,” Barker said. “If an operator sells \$10,000 in gift cards and only \$8,000 is redeemed, it’s like free money. And guests who do use gift cards often exceed the card amount.”





YIELD
1 227-g. serving



PREP TIME
30 minutes



COOK TIME
6 minutes



SUGGESTED PRICE
\$15.99



Escape to the Italian coast with pan seared sea scallops. Made with simple ingredients, this dish makes a fine addition to your recipe book. The scallops are combined with crispy prosciutto, served on a bed of wilted greens and covered in a fennel sauce that lights up the Italian experience.

PAN SEARED SEA SCALLOPS WITH CRISPY PROSCIUTTO

INGREDIENTS

170 g.	Prosciutto Ham
1 Tbsp.	Gordon Choice® Liquid Pan and Grill Oil
2 ct.	Sea Scallops, 8-10 ct./0.5 kg.
28 g.	Markon® Ready-Set-Serve® Spinach
14 g.	Radicchio, trimmed and chopped in 2.5 cm. pieces
43 g.	Recipe: Fennel Cream Sauce, warmed

PREPARE THE SEA SCALLOPS WITH CRISPY PROSCIUTTO:

1. Slice the prosciutto ham into 14 g. pieces on an electric slicer.
2. Dry the prosciutto in a food dehydrator.
3. Add oil to a heated sauté pan.
4. Sauté the scallops on both sides until golden, cooking to desired doneness.

5. Remove from the pan and keep warm.
6. Add the spinach and radicchio to the heated pan. Cook and toss until slightly wilted.
7. Place the wilted spinach and radicchio in the centre of the warmed serving plate.
8. Add the scallops.
9. Ladle fennel cream sauce around the vegetables.
10. Place the crispy prosciutto ham on top.


FENNEL CREAM SAUCE


0.9 L.	Gordon Choice Chicken Base, prepare per package instructions
680 g.	Baby Fennel, trimmed
227g.	Gordon Choice 6 mm. Diced Onions
454 g.	Gordon Choice Heavy Whipping Cream
3 Tbsp.	Corn Starch
60 ml.	Water


PREPARE THE FENNEL CREAM SAUCE:


1. Place the prepared chicken stock, fennel and onions in a 3.8 L. sauce pot.
2. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to simmer until the vegetables are tender.
3. Strain fennel and onions from stock.
4. Place fennel and onions in a food processor fitted with a metal blade and pulse to a coarse consistency.
5. Add the fennel and onions back to the chicken stock.
6. Add the heavy cream to the sauce pot, bring to a boil.
7. Place the cornstarch and water in a stainless steel mixing bowl and blend together. Add to the stock mixture and simmer for 2 minutes.
8. Transfer to a storage container and refrigerate until needed for service.

For a sweet surprise, try this raspberry panna cotta. With cream, vanilla, raspberries and hints of mint, this chilled dessert will warm your guests' spirits and brighten any holiday gathering. Prepare to create holiday memories with a dessert poised to become a star on your holiday menu.

 **YIELD**
27 142-g. portions

 **PREP TIME**
30 minutes

 **COOK TIME**
5 minutes

 **SUGGESTED PRICE**
\$4.99

RASPBERRY PANNA COTTA

INGREDIENTS

2.4 L. Gordon Choice® Heavy Whipping Cream
1.4 L. Whole Milk
28 g. Pure Vanilla Extract
43 g. Granulated Sugar
3 pkg. Plain Gelatin (about 3 Tbsp.)
680 g. Raspberry Jam
as needed Raspberries
as needed Markon® Mint Leaves

PREPARE THE PANNA COTTA:

1. Place the heavy whipping cream, milk, vanilla and sugar in a sauce pot.
2. Sprinkle the gelatin over the top of the mixture. Let it sit for 5 minutes.
3. Turn the heat to low. Cook and allow to warm while stirring until the gelatin dissolves completely. Add the raspberry jam and stir until dissolved completely.
4. Place a piece of film wrap directly on top of the liquid. This will prevent skin from forming while the mixture is cooling. Allow to sit until completely cool.
5. Remove the film from the pot and discard. Ladle 142 g. portions into dessert dishes. Loosely cover the dishes with a single piece of film wrap and refrigerate. This will allow moisture to escape while chilling.
6. When fully chilled, individually wrap and refrigerate until needed.

TO SERVE:

Garnish with fresh raspberries and mint. For a more festive offering, add shaved chocolate or holiday cookies.





YIELD
1 227-g. serving



PREP TIME
15 minutes



COOK TIME
3 minutes



SUGGESTED PRICE
\$5.99

PANZANELLA SALAD

INGREDIENTS

85 g.	Sienna Bakery® Ciabatta Bread, thawed
28 g.	Extra Virgin Olive Oil
85 g.	English Cucumber, seeded and sliced into moons
4 ct.	Cherry Tomatoes, sliced in half
3 ct.	Pitted Kalamata Olives, sliced in half
9 g.	Markon® Spanish Onions, thinly sliced
1 Tbsp.	Markon Fresh Basil, julienned
43 g.	Pepper Mill® Parmesan Herb Italian Dressing

PREPARE THE PANZANELLA SALAD:

1. Cut the ciabatta bread into 2.54 cm. pieces. Place the bread in a stainless steel mixing bowl and drizzle with olive oil.
2. Char-grill until golden on all sides.
3. Seed and slice the cucumbers into half moons. Slice the cherry tomatoes and Kalamata olives in half. Slice the Spanish onion into thin slices. Julienne the basil.
4. Place the grilled bread in a stainless steel mixing bowl and add the cucumbers, tomatoes, olives, onions and basil.
5. Drizzle with Italian dressing and mix thoroughly.
6. Serve on a chilled serving plate or bowl.

Fresh bread? Day-old bread? Use either in this colourful alternative to a mixed greens salad that makes for a festive holiday (or anytime) dish. Hints of char-grilled flavour mingle with recognizable and delicious sliced tomatoes, cucumber, onions, basil and Kalamata olives.



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Sienna BAKERY®

NAAN, NOM, NOM...

Call attention to your appetizers with Sienna Bakery® naan breads. The mini bites present a flavourful canvas perfect for creating delicious, profit-building appetizers.

Sienna Bakery crafts all of its breads with small-batch, artisanal care. It's a difference guests will notice for its hearth-baked appearance and perfect marriage of flavour and texture.

Ask your Gordon Food Service® Sales Representative about our complete naan lineup and ideas for your menu.