

George Hirsch's Top 10 Lifestyle & Food Trends for 2012

year of active improvement

1. Backyard Vacations

Are you seeking fun in activities & cooking food with a sense of adventure? *Who says you can't stay home?* Backyard vacations themes are all about having a good time with new rules; food, family + fun! This year's all about putting the magic back in your yard with outdoor activities to live it UP!

2. Are You Blushing?

As the US population earns the crown as the nation with the highest global wine consumption; in 2012 it will also be sipping more blush. This is the return to that 70's wine. American's first learned from Lancer's Rosado, which helped shape a generation of American wine drinkers. Today, American produced blush wines are more flavorful and less sweet with lower alcohol content that makes for a wine that goes with just about anything from backyard BBQ's to high-brow cocktail parties.



3. App With Your Entree

While Apple vs. Android duke it out for top handheld devices, the clear winner is the consumer.

Lifestyle apps will really benefit daily activities, assisting everyday choices in eating, entertainment and shopping—more convenient than ever before. More from me on this very topic coming soon!



4. Chocolate Ingredient

Would you like to see the chocolate menu? Who would say no to this offer? This flavorful, sometimes exotic ingredient will be added to more than ice cream sundaes and moles. What used to be considered a dessert or sweet treat will be added to more savory dishes as an ingredient. Transparency here, for those who know me, I do not care for chocolate, so my personal preference didn't influence this pick.

5. The New Tortilla

Easily prepared at home, this pancake-like staple is quick to prepare. This Latin American finger food is a hit for kids of all ages, the only drawback is waiting for the griddle to heat up. Mark my word, by late 2012 you will be tired of hearing the word 'arepas', but not tired of its taste.

6. Comfort, All Grown Up

The simple mac-n-cheese out of a box just won't do. Seems that our level of comfort palate has grown up. Using out of the ordinary toppings, ingredients and preparations to transform the same old comfort food. We just might see smoked meatloaf with chimichurri sauce as a comfort staple.

7. Smart Casual Counter

Uptight restaurants once requiring *jackets only* and *do you have a reservation?* will



make improvement to their unapproachable, outdated demeanor. Seeking quality food + good service will still be part of the profile for the scrupulous and fickle dining customer now looking for a more laid back but authentic dining experience.

8. Flat-out Global

Flat-breads and pizzas with more than pepperoni are topped with everything globally inspired from hummus to kimchee. Although, I've been creating designer pizza and flat bread recipes for years, the only influence I've had on this pick is purely from my friends lining up for seconds! How about my Inman Flat Bread Pizza Recipe?

9. Ergonomic Workstation

The evolution of the smart kitchen 2012: functionality, traffic control, food safety, clever storage and techno appliances will be the efficient home cook's own power sous chef.

10. Green Thumbs Up!

According to the U.S. Dept of Agriculture, sales of 'locally produced food' reached \$4.8 billion in 2008. Locally grown foods will generate over \$7 billion in sales dominated by fruit and veggies in 2011. Backyard veggie gardens will have enthusiasts in search for garden supplies. Remember the 3 P's: fresh produce, seedling plants & garden products while shopping in spring! Remember gardening only takes a sunny windowsill.