

## FOOD MATTERS

# Hot Plates

MOVE OVER, KALE! WE EXPLORE WHAT'S NEXT AND THE 10 BIGGEST FOOD TRENDS ON THE HORIZON

By Kerri-Ann Jennings

 We've seen a lot of trendy foods over the last 10 years. Kale and quinoa are now staples but were virtual unknowns when we started this magazine. What's the next hot thing? David Sax, author of *The Tastemakers: Why We're Crazy for Cupcakes but Fed Up With Fondue*, weighs in on the new food trends to watch.

**1 Tree-flavored foods** Maple syrup has long been the “forest” on your plate, but now pine, birch, and other conifers are showing up in syrups, in drinks, and as seasonings. Sax says this references the foraged foods trend and other culinary traditions, such as Japanese pine mushroom soup.

**2 Matcha lattes** Goodbye, plain green tea. Vibrantly colored, full-bodied matcha is here. Matcha is a green tea made from ground whole tea leaves. It's full of antioxidants and can stand up to steamed milk, Sax says. “It's kind of like a drinkable green-tea ice cream.”

**3 Wood-fired cooking** Wood fires impart tremendous smoky flavor to all sorts of food, including Latin American-style barbecue and pizza. Sax says this trend plays into the



growing passion for Slow Food, plus it adds rich flavor without extra calories.

**4 Seaweed snacks** Nutrient-rich seaweed is getting more shelf space in the snack aisles. But the taste has really evolved, says Sax, from toasted, salty sheets of nori to “seaweed snacks that are more akin to other snacks—puffed up with air and made crunchy.”

**5 Healthy granola** As health foods get trendy, they typically get less simple and healthy, Sax says. Granola is now set to reclaim

its healthy image. More small-batch producers are coming to market with shorter ingredient lists.

**6 Single-origin honey** There's lots of buzz around fancy honey and the threatened bees that produce it. Two kinds to look for: single-origin honey, a honey produced from very specific regions, and flavored honey, which derives flavor from neighboring crops.

**7 Better snacks** “‘Healthy’ snacks now taste better,” says Sax. Today's vegan snack foods,

in particular, take advantage of coconut oil and its flesh, giving foods such as vegan ice cream and butterless toffee a better mouth feel and improved taste.

**8 Savory peanut butters** America's great love now meets its passion for spice: jalapeño-, chipotle-, and masala-flavored peanut butters play up the spread's savory flavor. It gets bonus health points: Natural peanut butter is super satiating, thanks to fat, protein, and fiber.

**9 Chic Chinese** Chinese food moves beyond Kung Pao chicken and egg rolls. Lots of hip Chinese restaurants are opening around North America, according to Sax. Look for everything from artisanal dim sum to fried rice with shaved truffles.

**10 More yogurt** As the Greek yogurt trend has progressed, it's gotten farther from its roots: unsweetened and good for you. What's next? Icelandic skyr and Middle Eastern kefir, but Sax thinks fromage blanc, with its rich texture and smooth flavor, will take the Greek throne.

Reviewed by  
Hansa Bhargava, MD  
WebMD Medical Editor