

Today's Restaurant

THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

VOLUME 28

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Beyond the plate: Nurturing your restaurant's greatest asset – its people

By Richard Hartman

The restaurant industry is renowned for its fast-paced, dynamic environment, offering unique challenges and opportunities for employees and managers alike. However, the industry also grapples with high turnover rates and retention challenges. With the rise of remote work in other sectors, the restaurant industry has had to adapt and compete for talent. More employees now seek flexible schedules, better benefits, and opportunities for professional growth, making it essential for restaurants to evolve their practices. In a world where workforce expectations are shifting, and wellness has become a top priority, restaurant businesses must find innovative ways to attract and retain top talent.

Here are 10 strategies that can help transform your business into a desirable place to work while also addressing the specific pain points of the restaurant industry:

Competitive compensation and benefits

Restaurants often struggle to compete with giant corporations when it comes to compensation and benefits. To attract and retain top talent, offering competitive wages, employee benefits, and flexible working arrangements is



Richard Hartman

essential. Employees in the restaurant industry often work long hours, including evenings and weekends. Consider offering additional incentives like overtime pay, performance bonuses, and health care benefits.

Employee wellness programs

Given the industry's demanding nature, prioritizing employee [well-being](#) is crucial. Provide access to wellness programs, including telemedicine, behavioral services, and employee assistance programs (EAP). Offering these services

can help employees manage stress and maintain a healthy work-life balance. Physically and mentally healthy teams tend to be more productive and committed, reducing turnover and improving the customer experience.

Transparent communication

Clear and [understandable](#) is vital in the restaurant industry, where miscommunication can lead to errors and frustration. Ensure employees know their roles and responsibilities and provide regular feedback and performance reviews. Encourage an atmosphere where employees feel comfortable expressing their concerns and suggestions. This fosters a sense of belonging and engagement.

Training and development

Invest in training and development opportunities to help your employees grow and advance in their careers. This could include culinary courses, management training, or even tuition reimbursement for higher education. You'll build a loyal team for your restaurant by nurturing their skills and ambitions.

Flexible scheduling

One of the unique challenges in the restaurant industry is the irregular

See [BEYOND THE PLATE](#) page 11

Ziggi's Coffee to expand throughout Atlanta with brand's largest deal

Beloved coffee brand sells out Atlanta market, bringing 50 new locations to the city



Denver, CO - [Ziggi's Coffee](#), the innovative coffee franchise reimagining how brands connect with their communities, has announced the development of 50 new locations within the Greater Atlanta area. This new expansion comes at a time when Ziggi's is growing throughout the nation and becoming a local household name within

the communities they serve. The signing of 50 new locations within the city of Atlanta is a first for the brand, as this marks Ziggi's largest development deal to date. This news is a large step forward for Ziggi's as the brand is looking to continue its growth across the country with the right franchise partners and brighten the communities it serves.

"We are thrilled to embark on this journey, expanding Ziggi's Coffee throughout the bustling city of Atlanta with a milestone of a development deal signing," said Brandon Knudsen, Ziggi's CEO and Co-founder. "This achievement speaks volumes about the dedication of our team and the loyalty of our customers. Our commitment to innovation, quality, and creating meaningful connections remains at the center of who we are, and we can't wait to serve the Atlanta community with our 50 new locations."

Ziggi's positions itself to become an integral part of every community the brand joins by focusing on drive-thru convenience, friendly service, and an extensive menu lineup. The brand is excited to reach more coffee lovers in Atlanta and become part of the fabric of these customers'

See [ZIGGI'S](#) page 14

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Appell Pie

Another page turned

Howard Appell ♦ Today's Restaurant Publisher

As we turn the page on another year we look forward to 2024 and what it may bring. As my mother always said "The only constant in life is change." Change, that sounds familiar, never mind that's for another column. Looking back on 2023 I guess we could say the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic are still being felt and the economy is still the number one topic of concern.

Staffing and supply chain problems continue to haunt suppliers, managers and the general public. The war in Ukraine still rages on and the war in Israel started up in October with no end in sight. Hostages are being exchanged as I write this column.

Mergers, partnerships and buy-outs were really big in 2023. Edward Don was bought by Sysco, Twitter was bought by Elon Musk and renamed to X, NAKS, Inc. announced the acquisition of Stainless Specialties, Inc. as food companies merged to avoid closing.

Restaurant chains closed hundreds of company-owned locations as large franchisees went bankrupt due to the changing desires of the general public as a result of the pandemic and post pandemic conditions.

Like every company that is adapting to survive, Today's Restaurant is still alive after twenty-eight years of publishing, thanks to you our readers who use our advertisers for their needs throughout the year. Of course, our advertisers are the blood in our veins and we thank each and every one of them for their support, trust and for making an investment in their future by telling their story to our readers. Remember that advertising has to be a line item in your budget whether you are a startup or an existing business of any kind, especially now.

Our thanks to the writers who believe in the value of being seen in Today's Restaurant. These people are experts in their field who submit stories to us for your benefit. They are very much appreciated. Our creative design team headed up by Jim Pollard makes your ads and our newspaper design look great month after month and to Lisa Hoddinott our website designer and webmaster.

I hope that 2024 will be better for all of us and that you will benefit from reading our publication which we have been bringing to you every month for twenty-eight years. In order to prosper in the Intranet world, we have added new products to our menu like our New Openings Reports, Eblast programs, Business Networking groups and online advertising. Our reach on Social Media has grown to over five hundred thousand potential readers.

We are not going to rest on our past achievements we have some new and exciting features that will launch in 2024.

Last but not least a big thank you to our editorial team and office staff who work untold hours to bring you the news of the greatest industry in the world. We all wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

To read our great weekly articles visit www.trnusa.com/blog

If you would like to join us in our Networking groups go to <https://trnusa.com/network-group> to sign up. Restaurant owners, managers and chefs are welcome to join and ask our experts about a problem or any business questions you may have.

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What's Going On

Important new products, corporate news and industry events

Happy Holidays!

Today's Restaurant would like to thank all those brave service men and women that serve in various parts of the Service to protect our Country. At this time of the year when we can be with our families, they cannot. Anyone that has a family member overseas, we ask that they know how much we here at TRN and others appreciate their time and service.



A glimpse into one of Florida's most infamous connections to the history and culture of the Caribbean is now available at the Orlando Vineland Premium Outlet Mall. **Caribbean Moonshine**, - CaribbeanMoonshine.com - a 3,000-square-foot craft distillery, tasting room, bar, and tropics-inspired retail store aims to bring some of the best craft spirits from the Caribbean to the U.S. mainland. According to store creators, Steve Nichols and Mike Weber, two long-time travel industry professionals and entrepreneurs, visitors to the Orlando retail outlet also can see displays of some of the history and lore of rum-making in both the islands and in Florida. "Florida was something of a bootlegger's paradise after the 1926 Great Miami Hurricane and during the decade of the 1930s, when prohibition was enforced," Nichols said. "During those years, stills popped up all around Florida, and infamous mobster Al Capone was known to have run the "Lost City" distillery hidden deep in the Everglades." "Our goal is to recreate a sense of those times," Nichols said, "for both Floridians and visitors from around the world."

Retired NFL linebacker and philanthropist **Stephen Tulloch**, known for his impressive 11-year pro football career with the Tennessee Titans, Detroit Lions, and Philadelphia Eagles, is set to embark on a new business venture with the launch of his own "Signature 55" coffee line. This flavorful endeavor not only celebrates Tulloch's love for gourmet coffee but also serves a greater purpose by contributing to [The Stephen Tulloch Foundation](#). During



his NFL career, Tulloch discovered the power of coffee as a key element in fueling his day. Now, as owner of [Circle House Coffee](#) in Fort Lauderdale, he has harnessed this passion to bring people together while raising awareness for local and global causes "one sip at a time".

Since 2018, his Circle House Coffee shop, in partnership with The Stephen Tulloch Foundation, has been giving back to the community, generating substantial funds for various South Florida-based non-profits, including the Pink Angels Memorial Foundation,

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 8

Correction

The contributor of last month's article from Brian Duncan on Restaurants' Menu Prices on the Rise Amid Inflation & Staff Shortages should have been credited to Eric Seymour. Here is the link to the article - <https://trnusa.com/things-are-looking-up-for-the-restaurant-industry-in-2024>.

Tai Tong Food & Beverage Group, one of Taiwan's most noted restaurant groups, is expanding to Los Angeles in 2024. [Thai Town Cuisine](#) — the restaurant group's most popular chain — is opening in Century City, summer 2024 with



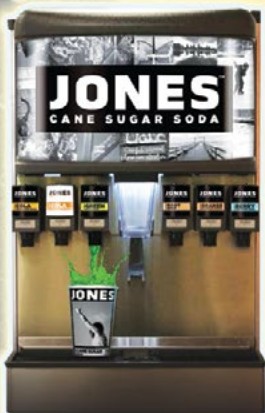
Eric Seymour

plans to expand to five additional locations in Southern California by the end of next year and 100 U.S. locations by 2030. Founded in 1990 by Charles Hsu, the restaurant

group currently operates 145 restaurants in Taiwan under various names including Very Thai Restaurant, 1010 Hunan Cuisine, Very Thai Noodles, Ten Ten Hunan Bistro, and Shann Rice Bar.

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Early-stage investment and development is daunting for entrepreneurial restaurateurs

The restaurant industry is being challenged by rising food costs, labor shortages and energy/utility costs, just to name a few. Furthermore, with less than 10% of startups getting any funding at all, undercapitalization continues to be the greatest challenge females and minorities face as entrepreneurs.

Lauren Fernandez, Founder and CEO of [Full Course](#), has a distinctly different way of viewing this challenge and is making an impact in the food service industry helping

restaurants who want to grow from one to two units, to 10, and then to 20 and beyond.

Named one of Georgia's 50 Most Influential Latinos in September 2023 by the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Fernandez strives to go beyond just funding. Rather, she stands shoulder-to-shoulder with partners to offer education, mentorship and investment. Additionally, she's ultimately creating a legacy for the industry by building the next generation of restaurant leaders.

As a thought leader in the restaurant space, Fernandez is available to share her strategies and input on how budding restaurant operators can thrive and find success. Here is how Full Course is reshaping the future of the restaurant industry:

1. Committing to investment partnerships

Full Course specializes in the fast casual space and is dedicated to creating fair access to capital, supporting partners' operations, managing development and championing multi-channel growth. What makes Full Course's approach unique is that it's the nation's first and only incubator and accelerator enabling emerging restaurant and food brands to achieve growth while still maintaining majority control of their company equity. The first two investment partners under this unique model include Atlanta-based brands NaanStop and Fripper's Meats + Goods. Full Course guides owners and their brands through rapid growth.

2. Providing education from a team who have boots-on-the-ground restaurant experience

Fernandez helps restaurants scale for growth through industry-specific education. Full Course is the first company of its type to have a charitable arm dedicated to creating training resources for the restaurant industry. The company's centralized Learning Center library is a rich knowledge base designed with a 360-degree perspective of operating a restaurant. With 70% of restaurants being independently owned, the Learning Center's options range from free video content to low-cost, bite-sized webinars and more focused, deep-dive training. By providing affordable training to leaders, Fernandez believes restaurant operators and employees can find growth and success earlier in their careers by shortening the learning curve. The company's educational mission is tied to national statistics that support the need for this type of training in the hospitality industry. Approximately 50% of Americans' first jobs are in the restaurant industry, with 90% of managers beginning their careers as entry-level employees.



Lauren Fernandez

3. Recognizing the power of business mentorship

Fernandez believes that external support from industry leaders can make a huge difference in success so Full Course conducts complimentary Rising Tide webinars each month. For these one-hour webinars, Full Course invites all restaurant, food business and guest service professionals to learn from subject matter experts about the latest trends, tools and best practices in the industry today. The seminars are designed to help restaurant industry professionals grow and scale their businesses because a rising tide lifts all boats. Recent topics have included "Positioning Your Brand for Success," "A Chef's Journey: Empowering Lives and Creating Connections" and "A Founder's Journey: From Food Truck to Multi-Unit Concept."

About the Author: Ms. Fernandez is a frequent speaker in the areas of licensing, organic business growth and franchise operations around the country, sought after for her ease with audiences, humor and candor. An active leader amongst her peers, Ms. Fernandez was awarded the Section Award of Achievement as the 2015-16 Chair of the State Bar of Georgia Intellectual Property Section. A passionate advocate in the fight against hunger, she also serves as an Advisory Board Member for the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Ms. Fernandez was honored as the 2015 Woman of the Year for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Atlanta. She is an alumna of the Emory University School of Law, where she served as an Adjunct Professor of Trademarks. Ms. Fernandez obtained her MBA from Emory's Goizueta Business School, with a focus on Marketing and Entrepreneurship.

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Potbelly announces 40 unit agreement in Ohio and Florida with Royal Restaurant Group

Chicago, IL - Potbelly Corporation, the iconic neighborhood sandwich shop, has announced the completion of a 40-unit agreement with Royal Restaurant Group, a national franchise group that successfully operates restaurant locations for global brands.

The agreement will involve the future development of 36 Potbelly shops in markets across both Ohio and Florida. As part of the deal, Potbelly will also rebrand four locations in the greater Columbus, Ohio region.

"We're delighted to have Royal Restaurant Group join the Potbelly system and further our growth in several key areas of the U.S.," said Bob Wright, President and CEO of Potbelly. "The Royal Restaurant Group team knows what it takes to successfully develop and operate franchise locations for large-scale restaurant brands, and they share our values of leading with respect and integrity while prioritizing high-quality and great customer service. I have no doubt their expertise will benefit our company and help support our long-term goals."

The co-founders of Royal Restaurant Group collectively have over 60 years of combined experience in the restaurant, hospitality and multi-unit franchise industries, and they previously served as the CEO and Chief Operating Officer of Wendy's



largest franchisees with over 230 units throughout the United States. Their stated mission – to be a compelling place to work and dine by consistently serving customers with high quality, great tasting and affordable food in clean, family-friendly restaurants – resonates with the Potbelly executive team. Founded in early 2023, the group currently operates 24 Burger King restaurants in the greater Jacksonville, Florida metropolitan area and has dramatically improved their units' sales and operating performance since acquiring the restaurants earlier this year.

"We've always been fans of Potbelly, and we're thrilled to be formally working

together with the team as we bring the brand to new areas of the country," said Randy Pianin, Co-founder and CEO of Royal Restaurant Group. "Our first priority at any of our restaurants is to establish a strong foundation centered around quality, taste and value. We look forward to serving up Potbelly's iconic toasted sandwiches, soups and cookies to more diners and continuing the brand's tradition of providing excellent service and atmosphere in the years ahead."

As part of Potbelly's ongoing Franchise Growth Acceleration Initiative, the company has a long-term goal of reaching 2,000 shops, with at least 85% of those locations being franchised.



Potbelly Corporation is a neighborhood sandwich concept that has been feeding customers' smiles with warm, toasty sandwiches, signature salads, hand-dipped shakes and other fresh menu items, customized just the way customers want them, for more than 40 years. Potbelly promises Fresh, Fast & Friendly service in an environment that reflects the local neighborhood. Since opening its first shop in Chicago in 1977, Potbelly - www.potbelly.com - has expanded to neighborhoods across the country – with more than 430 shops in the United States including approximately 69 franchised shops in the United States. 



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What's Going On from page 3

Women In Distress, and Heart Gallery of Broward County.

When you think of whiskey, regions like Kentucky and Scotland might immediately come to mind. However, in recent years, **Texas has emerged as a surprising and dynamic player in the world of Whiskey production.** One of producers is **Milam & Greene Whiskey**, which is made by some of the world's most experienced whiskey professionals, including CEO, master blender, and author, Heather Greene and 30-year whiskey veteran and master distiller, Marlene Holmes. The Milam & Greene team distills in Blanco, Texas on copper pot stills as well as in Kentucky on classic column stills, using its proprietary yeast recipe and mash bill. Aging takes place in rickhouses located across four states in casks with an assortment of char levels for a variety of flavors resulting in the most thorough array of casks made and collected by any craft distiller. You can reach them at milamandgreenewhiskey.com.



D.C., shared new details on its expansion into eastern North Carolina during its double-header Community Partnership Events. Wawa's initial phase of expansion into North Carolina includes plans to open approximately 80 stores across the eastern region of the state over the next 10+ years with the first eight stores opening in 2024. In addition to the stores set to open in 2024, Wawa

has more than 30 sites under contract currently going through local approval processes. Wawa expects to open up to 15 stores in 2025 and 10 stores in 2026, with plans to open a total of 80 stores over the next 10+ years in the eastern part of the state. Wawa Real Estate teams continue to look for sites throughout North Carolina. They are also expanding in Ohio and Indiana and Tennessee.

With an impressive 43-year history of success, **Florida-based Woody's Bar-B-Q** clearly knows a thing or two about good food and good business. To keep its legacy growing, the classic **Southern BBQ chain has tapped Joseph Becker, a new franchisee in Raleigh, NC to lead its franchise development efforts.**



Joseph Becker

Having launched a company and owned a franchise over the course of nearly eight years, Becker understands first-hand what it's like to be a small business owner. He believes this unique perspective will make him a natural ally to prospective franchisees. Becker and Woody's Bar-B-Q co-founders, Woody Mills and Yolanda Mills-Mawman, have their sights set on the national expansion of the brand taking Woody's signature menu of slow-smoked meats, comfort food sides, and decadent desserts beyond the borders of the Sunshine State.

Chicken chain Zaxby's® has introduced its newest restaurant design to Georgia with its first to-go-only concept in its home state. The new Zaxby's owned and operated by High Adventure Chicken, Inc. for to-go-only service is located at 925 W. Taylor St. in Griffin. "Our team and I cannot wait to bring Zaxby's delicious chicken to the West Taylor Street neighborhood while at the same time pioneering Zaxby's new to-go-only concept in Georgia," said Richard Schott, one of the owners and operators of

High Adventure Chicken, Inc. Zaxby's location offers expedited service with a double drive-thru layout, new digital menu boards, a payment window, as



well as a drive-thru delivery door for faster pay and pickup. The new design also includes a walk-up window for guests to place take-out orders. The restaurant does not offer indoor seating, catering to the heightened consumer demand for food-to-go, which is expected to increase in the coming years.

Kichi Taiyaki Japanese dessert café has just opened late last month in Brandon. Located at 2020 W Brandon Blvd. This dessert hub offers taro, brown sugar, custard, pandan coconut, and Nutella. Kichi will offer fillings such as pork floss and cream cheese, pepperoni and marinara, and egg and cheddar cheese. The dessert shop mainly has souffle pancakes and traditional Japanese desserts and drinks. Kim Nguyen is the owner and operator.

Keurig Dr Pepper-owned brand **Green Mountain Coffee Roasters** and American sports movies and Westerns actor Kevin Costner have teamed up to **launch a new coffee blend**, called **Horizon Blend by Kevin Costner.** While launching sales of the coffee, the partners donated \$100,000 to the non-profit **Root Capital.**

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 14

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Mondelēz International Foodservice shares six trends expected to impact industry in 2024

Mondelēz International (Nasdaq: MDLZ), through its Foodservice business, tapped its network of Brand Ambassadors—a group of notable and celebrity chefs—along with industry insights and data to identify key foodservice trends and actionable takeaways for the coming year in the U.S. From novelty to nostalgia, mocktails to shareables and so much more, culinary eclecticism is trending in a big way, bringing ever-greater innovation and creativity to restaurant kitchens and convenience stores selections.

[Here](#) is a look at the top trends expected to impact foodservice in 2024:

Social Media Influences Menus: From “FoodTok” fads to user-generated Instagram content, social media trends are influencing consumers’ food and beverage choices.

Nonalcoholic Beverages Bring a New Kind of Buzz: A growing desire to #treatyoself with a fun drink and a Gen Z-driven penchant for low/no alcohol are just a few of the reasons there’s a growing demand for everything from mocktails to creative iced coffee concepts.

Regional Cuisine Brings Authenticity: With the expansion of Southern cuisine in the last decade, other U.S. regional

styles, flavors and dishes are following suit. Regional preparations, such as Neapolitan style, Detroit style, Kansas City style and Alabama style, are quickly becoming mainstream.



The Retro Revival Lives on: The “what’s old is new again” trend isn’t going away anytime soon. In fact, retro ingredients and dishes continue to be elevated and modernized in new ways, especially when it comes to dessert. From bananas Foster to baked Alaska, nostalgic desserts are being reimaged in new and exciting ways.

Snacification and Shareables: The growth in all-day snacking post-pandemic is still going strong, with daily snacking habits now a way of life as more people replace meals with snacks. Showcasing on-the-go portable treats

like pastries, muffins, cookies and bars in a highly visible area can encourage snack sales throughout the day.

LTOs Are Looking Up: Innovation is back on the menu, and limited-time offers are once again a strategy for promoting seasonal items, incorporating trends and testing new ideas. Dessert LTOs have climbed back to pre-pandemic levels, meaning operators will need to craft the perfect limited-time offer to stand out.

“Incorporating limited-time offerings is a must for helping sales in those low months or when there are no holidays. It also gives us the ability to test something out or pivot on a recipe if needed. If it’s a hit, then we can always continue doing it,” Chef Maeve Rochford, Mondelēz Foodservice Brand Ambassador, owner of Sugar and Scribe in La Jolla, California.

With 51% of Gen Z and 45% of millennials noting they look forward to getting a specific LTO beverage from a specific restaurant each year, it’s never been a better time to add some creative new twists to your drink menu. Consumers want mocktails that are just as fun and over the top as the cocktails they would order out. To bring some cheer to your bottom line, try leveraging seasonal

trends or offer LTO beverages that tie into faux holidays like Dry January.

“Mocktails are such a big trend right now! Months like Sober October and Dry January are growing in popularity, when consumers want to be more mindful and cut back on their alcohol consumption,” according to Chef Keegan Gerhard, Mondelēz Foodservice Brand Ambassador and chef & owner of DBar Denver.

Each year, Mondelēz International Foodservice identifies trends relevant to the snack and dessert industry, pulling insights from chefs and industry experts. In addition to forecasting industry trends, this year’s report also provides insights and recommendations on how to turn these trends into action to encourage consumer engagement and to stand out from the competition.

To learn more about these trends, visit them online. To stay up to date on trends and insights all year, sign up for [Snack & Desserts Solutions](#).

About Mondelēz International: Mondelēz International, Inc. empowers people to snack right in over 150 countries around the world. With 2022 net revenues of approximately \$31 billion, MDLZ is leading the future of snacking with iconic global and local brands such as Oreo, Ritz, LU, Clif Bar and Tate’s Bake Shop biscuits and baked snacks, as well as Cadbury Dairy Milk, Milka and Toblerone chocolate. Mondelēz International is a proud member of the Standard and Poor’s 500, Nasdaq 100 and Dow Jones Sustainability Index. Visit www.mondelezinternational.com or follow the company on X, formerly Twitter, at www.twitter.com/MDLZ.



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The 23rd Annual Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival set for February 22-25, 2024

Miami Beach, FL – It's live! The website for the 23rd annual [Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival presented by Capital One](#) (SOBEWFF®) is ready for perusal as the Festival prepares to return in the new year to **EAT. DRINK. EDUCATE.** February 22-25, 2024. All proceeds from the Festival benefit the Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management at Florida International University (FIU) and has successfully raised more than \$37 million to date.

Widely recognized as America's favorite gourmet gathering on the sand, the four-day Festival will gather Food Network personalities, Grammy-winning musicians, and more than 500+ chefs and wine and spirit producers for an unforgettable celebration; comprised of both new and beloved walk-around tastings, intimate dinners, late-night parties, brunches, lunches, master classes, wine seminars and more!



Thursday, February 22, 2024

- ◆ **Burger Bash presented by Schweid & Sons® hosted by Rachael Ray**
7:30PM-10:30PM
American Airlines North Venue
- ◆ **A Taste of Italy hosted by Dario Cecchini, Alex Guarnaschelli and Gabriele Bertaccini part of the Miami Design District Event Series**
8PM-11PM
Miami Design District – Jungle Plaza

Friday, February 23, 2024

- ◆ **Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives LIVE hosted by Guy Fieri**
7:30PM-10:30PM
American Airlines North Venue
- ◆ **The Art of Punch Room presented by MATADOR Bar and EDITION (NEW)**
6PM-7:30PM (Session 1)
8PM-9:30PM (Session 2)
The Miami Beach EDITION

- ◆ **Noche Cubana hosted by Michelle Bernstein, David Martinez and Gio Gutierrez (NEW)**
10PM-1AM
National Hotel

Saturday, February 24, 2024

- ◆ **Goya Foods' Grand Tasting Village featuring Publix Culinary Demonstrations sponsored by Sub-Zero Group Southeast**
12PM-5PM
Grand Tasting Village
- ◆ **The Cookout hosted by JJ Johnson**
4PM-7PM
Eden Roc Miami Beach
- ◆ **Tribute Dinner honoring Massimo Bottura and Luca Garavoglia hosted by Master of Ceremonies Rachael Ray part of The New York Times Dinner Series**
7PM-11PM
Loews Miami Beach Hotel
- ◆ **Tacos & Tequila presented by Tequila Cazadores hosted by Aarón Sánchez**
7:30PM-10:30PM
American Airlines North Venue

- ◆ **Bobby's Triple Threat hosted by Bobby Flay, Tiffany Derry, Brooke Williamson and Michael Voltaggio (NEW)**
8PM-11PM
Kimpton Surfcomber Hotel

Sunday, February 25, 2024

- ◆ **Goya Foods' Grand Tasting Village featuring Publix Culinary Demonstrations sponsored by Sub-Zero Group Southeast**
12PM-5PM
Grand Tasting Village
- ◆ **Overtown EatUp! hosted by Marcus Samuelsson**
3PM-7PM
Overtown Ninth Street Pedestrian Mall
- ◆ **Goya Foods' Heritage Fire: Grand Finalè part of The Hangar Event Series presented by Capital One (NEW)**
5PM-8PM
The Hangar
- ◆ **BACARDI presents The Block Party hosted by Andrew Zimmern with special performance by Rev Run (NEW)**
6PM-9PM
American Airlines North Venue

For additional ticket info and the complete line-up of events for the Festival visit www.sobewff.org

Beyond the plate from page 1

hours and unpredictable shifts. Offering flexible scheduling, where employees can request preferred shifts or days off, helps improve work-life balance. Implementing scheduling software can make it easier to accommodate these requests while ensuring smooth operations.

Recognition and rewards

Recognizing and rewarding hard work and dedication is a key to supporting employee morale and retention. Implement an employee recognition program that acknowledges outstanding performance, teamwork, and customer service.

Work-life balance

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance in a fast-paced restaurant environment can be challenging. Encourage employees to use paid time off and create a culture that values time spent with family and friends. Providing additional time off during slow seasons can also contribute to a more balanced life for your team.

Staff meals and discounts

Employees in the restaurant industry often have a deep passion for food and beverages. Offer staff meals during shifts and discounts on menu items when off-duty. This provides tangible benefits and creates a sense of belonging and pride in the workplace.

Career progression paths

Outline clear career progression paths for your employees, from line cooks to sous chefs and servers to managers. Offering opportunities for advancement within your restaurant can motivate your team and reduce turnover by giving employees a sense

of purpose and a long-term vision for their careers.

Employee input and involvement

Involve your employees in decision-making processes and problem-solving. They often have invaluable insights on improving operations, streamlining processes, and enhancing the overall work environment. By actively seeking their input, you empower them to take ownership of their roles and the restaurant's success.

The pandemic has brought a renewed focus on employee wellness. [Providing resources](#) for mental and physical well-being is crucial in the restaurant industry, where high-stress situations and long hours are standard. Telemedicine, behavioral services, and EAPs are increasingly important. They allow employees to access care solutions whenever and wherever they need them.

Attracting and retaining top talent in the restaurant industry requires a proactive approach that addresses the unique challenges and opportunities within the field. You can create a workplace that [stands out](#) by offering competitive compensation, prioritizing wellness, fostering transparent communication, providing training and development, offering flexible scheduling, and recognizing employee contributions.

Restaurant business owners who understand the shifting workforce expectations and emphasize the importance of employee well-being will attract the best talent and ensure that their team remains committed and engaged.

Submitted by: Food & Beverage/Hospitality Industry Leader at Marsh McLennan Agency Richard Hartman

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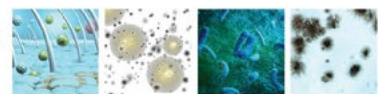
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The story and recipe of a professional Irish chef

By Paul Watters

I grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and looking back, it really amazes me to say that I have been involved in the Chef's industry for nearly 30 years now. Cooking has always been the biggest passion of mine, and having discovered it at the age of 16 I've never really considered any other professional path for myself.

Needless to say, I have been incredibly fortunate to have worked in most desirable places such as the Savoy in London and Sydney Opera House in Australia. It's also a true gift to be able to have gathered so much irreplaceable knowledge and precious experience during these years, since being a Chef also allowed me to travel the world, discover new exciting cultures and meet a whole bunch of fantastic individuals. Therefore, I sincerely hope that you will get to appreciate the food and all the aspects connected to it the way I do.

The name of the soup is an Irish classic seafood chowder which is served in many Irish restaurants but this is my own version which I have used in many restaurants and hotels of my 30 years in the culinary world. This is also served with traditional Irish home-made wheaten bread which is a classic combination.



Irish Classic Seafood Chowder

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp butter
- 4 potatoes (peeled and diced into chunks)
- 2 carrots (peeled and diced into chunks)
- 1 onion (peeled and chopped fine)
- 500mls (chicken stock) fish and chicken work excellent together
- 2 tbsp dried dill
- 200g seafood mix
- 2 salmon filets (cut into chunks)
- 2 smoked haddock filets (cut into chunks)
- 250mls cream
- 100ml milk
- 4 tbsp flat leaf parsley coarsely chopped

Cooking Instructions

Heat up the oil and butter in a saucepan. Pop in the onion, carrot, potato and dill. Stir continuously for about 5 mins.

Pour over the stock, bring to a

simmer, pop on the lid and cook for 15mins.

Remove the lid, add in the fish, cream and milk. Allow to simmer (NOT BOIL) for 5/8 mins until the fish is cooked.

Add in the chopped parsley

“Serve in bowls with the delicious wheaten bread smothered in Irish butter”

Irish Homeade Wheaten Bread

- 250g Wholemeal Flour
- 200g Plain White Flour
- 1 Teaspoon Baking Soda Powder
- 1 Teaspoon Salt

- 1 Tablespoon Brown Sugar
- 2 Tablespoons Butter
- 1 Egg
- 350ml Buttermilk
- 1 Teaspoon maple syrup
- 1 Tablespoon seeds or porridge oats (Optional)

Baking Instructions

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees centigrade (fan)

2. In a large mixing bowl, add the wholemeal flour, plain flour, baking soda, and salt, then mix these together.

3. In a separate bowl, add the buttermilk, brown sugar, butter, maple syrup and one egg. Whisk together until smooth.

4. Gradually pour the wet mixture into the dry mixture, then use a wooden spoon to combine together. The

mixture should be quite thick.

5. Line a bread/loaf tin with grease-proof paper, and then slowly pour the batter in and smooth until evened out.

6. Sprinkle some seeds or porridge oats over the top and bake for 45-50 minutes or until brown. (Tip! If you can insert a fork into the loaf and it comes out clean, it is ready!)

Let's get cooking everyone!

You can reach Paul Watters by email at paulwatters35@gmail.com



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Ziggi's from page 1

daily routines. Ziggi's takes pride in supporting local schools, individuals, and various nonprofits and organizations; whether it's donating gift cards or hosting fundraisers, Ziggi's is always willing to help out when they can.

Ziggi's Coffee has dedicated itself to delivering superior product service in a unique and convenient way.

"We are so thrilled to welcome this amazing group to the Ziggi's family," said Justin Livingston, VP of Franchise Development for Ziggi's. "The Ziggi's brand has experienced monumental growth, but with a focus on finding only the perfect franchisees to join the opportunity. Signing an agreement for 50 units with such an experienced group is tremendous validation to the systems and brand experience Ziggi's brings to markets. Closing a market to a single franchisee to develop is a decision we take very seriously and this team is the perfect fit. We look forward to seeing them grow the Atlanta market and continuing our pursuit of finding more incredible franchisees

with an unwavering commitment to creating long-term mutually beneficial relationships."

Since its founding in 2004, Ziggi's Coffee has dedicated itself to delivering superior product service in a unique and convenient way. The brand continues to innovate its menu creating novelty beverage and food items each season to spark joy and satisfy customer demand. Now with a proven model, Ziggi's has developed a strong process and system. The brand has built a strong local business presence that focuses on community, product, and profitability while looking for franchisees that want to be a part of the Ziggi's family and are committed to the success and future of Ziggi's Coffee. Today, Ziggi's has grown to 75 drive-thru and coffee shop locations throughout the country, bringing a warm and welcoming place where neighborhoods can connect over familiar flavors and new favorites. **TR**

About Ziggi's Coffee: Founded in 2004 and franchising since 2016, Ziggi's Coffee opened its first location in Longmont, Colorado where it became known for its innovative food and beverage menu and dedication to the communities it serves. Recently ranked on the 2023 Entrepreneur Magazine Franchise 500®, the brand is known for its ever-evolving menu and inviting ambiance where customers are invited to unwind and connect with one another. The brand currently has 75 locations open across 16 states, and over 200 locations in various stages of development, with 50 set to open within the next year.

What's Going On from page 8

SoundHound AI, Inc., a global leader in voice artificial intelligence, has announced that it is now offering [Employee Assist](#), a new state-of-the-art conversational AI product that supports restaurant employees by allowing them to instantly learn critical information about food, tasks, and other operations without having to reach for a manual or distract another busy member of staff. Employee Assist is a category-defining voice AI technology that enables restaurant employees from both the front and back-of-house to ask a custom-trained voice assistant critical questions – and get immediate responses – completely hands-free. "Employee Assist offers a first class solution to support busy employees and remove any friction and confusion from the equation. It's an AI-powered expert in their ear that delivers the right information every time," said James Hom, Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer at SoundHound AI. "Both restaurant operators and customers are now embracing cutting-edge technology like this because they understand that it's capable of creating a more efficient and productive ordering experience." To learn more about restaurant solutions from SoundHound AI, visit www.soundhound.com.

Efficiency and flexibility are paramount in delivering exceptional dining experiences and restaurant profitability. Duke Manufacturing, a privately held, global foodservice equipment manufacturer, announced its latest innovation, the **ReadyFlex Full Size**



Hot Holding Cabinet. The ReadyFlex Full Size cabinet empowers restaurants with maximized holding capacity, with minimized impact on equipment footprint. The new Full-Size unit offers a higher capacity holding solution, ensuring more product is available during high-volume serving times. This allows restaurant operators to strategically cook less frequently and hold more, optimizing their operations based on store demand and needs. In addition, the ReadyFlex Full Size unit has been intelligently designed to save space and reduce operational steps. By maximizing holding capacity within fewer linear feet restaurants can streamline their kitchen setups. Visit dukemfg.com for all details.

Today's Restaurant invites you to submit information for the What's Going On column. Email your company, product or event information to tr@trnusa.com and try to keep the word count at 50-75 words. **TR**

TR Today's Restaurant

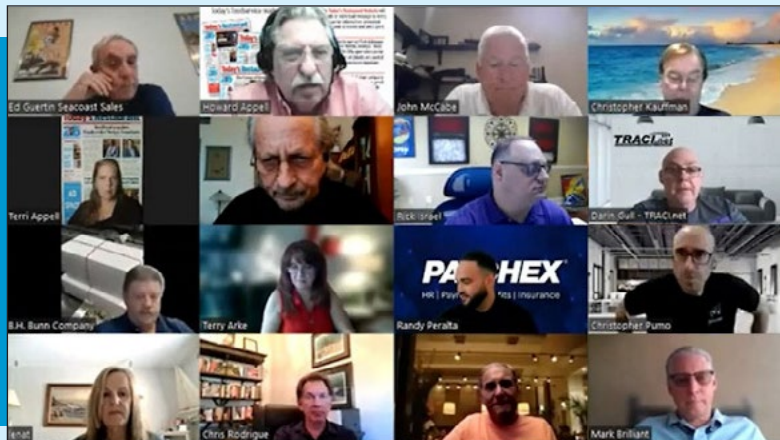
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Removable Bowl**
440 lbs dough Capacity

PLANETARY MIXERS

10, 20, 30, 40, 60, 80, 140, 200 QTS



Vertical Cutter Mixer
15 hp, 90 min. Digital Timer
Two Speeds



**TDR-36 Semi-auto Dough
Rounder/Divider**
Optional Dividing Units for
Choice (14.30.36.52)

CE

ISO 9000



Call us Today!

THUNDERBIRD FOOD MACHINERY, INC.

(PIZZA HUT OFFICAL VENDOR)

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