



>> **Street food is immensely popular, eaten by an estimated 2.5 billion people every day across the world. In the UK the most popular street food vendors are now publishing cookbooks and becoming permanent restaurants, with queues for a table out the door.**

According to Allegra Strategies, street food establishments are expected to continue to grow over the next 3-5 years, and consumers are demanding accessible, authentic foods from around the globe.

In response, large contract catering companies are now looking to street food operators for inspiration and insight, and are looking for tasty street food ideas to roll out to their sites. Even fast food establishments are coming round to the street food way of thinking, with KFC launching a 'Streetwise' range.

So with the street food trend set to stay for some time, how can you adapt your menu and be "streets ahead" of your competitors? Here, five street food experts share their tips and advice.

The Road to Success

– embracing the street food trend

Gareth Kyle organises pop-up restaurants and supper clubs (www.garethkyle.co.uk)



I didn't take the traditional route of working through the ranks as a restaurant chef – I'm a self-taught cook who arranges and runs pop-up restaurant events in the North East. I started off entering

amateur competitions, such as Masterchef Live! at the BBC Good Food show which I won, ITV's Britain's Best Dish and EAT! Festival Trail Shift Competition which I also won – the prize being to work with Kenny Atkinson at Rockliffe Hall. From there I arranged my first pop-up restaurant in summer 2013 – I initially had a theme of local food/North East inspired dishes (Ham Hock & Thyme infused pease pudding, Singing Hinnies etc). The interesting progression for me is that I am launching a street food concept based on the same dishes from the pop-ups. I have got trading dates booked in for a pop-up Street Food lunch at the Toffee Factory (Newcastle) and Boiler Shop Steamer events [at Stephenson Works, Newcastle] this year.

The items that will be on offer have all been served at my previous pop up events 'plated/restaurant style', and now form the basis of my street food offering:

- Newcastle Eggs – my version of a Scotch egg. The egg is encased in black pudding and white pudding (black and white like Newcastle United!)
- Ham and thyme infused pease pudding stottie with pickled shallots
- 'Gateshead Floddies' with homemade ketchup
- Hand-raised game pies with sloe gin liquor
- Whitley Goose Toastie (vegetarian – cheese, onion and cream melted in toasted sourdough bread)
- Singing Hinnies with Chain Bridge Honey Ice Cream

Jenny Scott and Corrie Thomas, of Seasons Plenty Catering (www.seasonsplentycatering.co.uk)



Having travelled and been chefs in Spain, Vietnam and Britain, with a love for all things food and drink, we're big fans of great, honest street food.

We incorporate Corrie's South East Asian background in many of our menus including a range of canapés. We do an amazing zesty, spicy chicken and peanut salad that's a real treat for the tastebuds.

The warming hearty Spanish tones and small plates add a sharing element to our menus – we generally like to do sharing style events to get people interacting over food. We have also taken inspiration from what many would consider English street food. Due to our weather street food does not always stay on the street and often ends up in the good old British institution – the pub. We do a range of scotch eggs, from smoked haddock to haggis and neeps, and good old fashioned bar snacks.

The great pull of street food for us is the noise, aroma and colour of the streets and food as well as the charisma of the vendors. We aim to replicate this within our menus by creating fresh, colourful dishes that will excite people and get those at the table enthused over the food. A top tip to create a vibrant atmosphere to go with any menu is to complement the food with music and decor that will enhance the mood.

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Large contract catering companies are now looking to street food operators for inspiration and insight

Cyrus Todiwala, chef and restaurateur, whose latest venture Assado opened in Waterloo, London, last month (March)



Adapting dishes for my menus from ideas I have seen on the street is not as easy as it might look for people eating our food. A bit of deep thinking takes place. Something I might have seen and want to use but has never been cooked in an Asian or Indian angle needs some thinking and then to build on that and, finally to see if it menu-worthy. Nine times out of ten it is. I have to look at taste profiles, make sure there are no conflicting flavours and so on. Café Spice is a living example of street food adapted to suit a restaurant and fine dining service.

At Assado, my signature dish is Pulled Pork Assado with flavoursome ingredients influenced by Portuguese Goan style cooking. I drew inspiration from my travels from various cultures including Portuguese, Indian, Goan and Brazilian. The secret to a great assado is in the marinating and slow cooking process of the pork and it is seasoned with chillies, cloves, turmeric, ginger and served in a bun. It showcases an entirely new concept in Asian cuisine using the influence of Portuguese Goa.



Eimear Owens, foodservice marketing manager UK & Ireland for Santa Maria

Customers are seeking out more sophisticated and healthier adult fast food. The phenomenal rise in street food and hand-held snacks

have seen tortillas tripling in use within full service restaurants. With the average lunch break only 27 minutes long, convenience is imperative when it comes to menu options. Customers are now looking for a wider range of hot and cold wraps that they can enjoy while on the go.

One of the main advantages of hand-held snacks such as wraps is that the list of filling and flavour options is endless, meaning there is something for everyone.

Chicken is always popular in a wrap and Thai Wok Chicken and Chicken and Prawn Lime Wok Melt go down well, as does the Steakhouse Hot Dog Wrap and BBQ Beef and Tomato Wrap from our American selection. The Saag Aloo Wrap and Vegetable Tikka Masala Wrap are fantastic vegetarian fillings. Once you start experimenting with the sauces and spices you really do have a world of flavours in your hands.



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Dan Grimshaw, head chef of the Kings Arms Hotel, Keswick (www.lakedistricthotels.net)

Street food trends are big in London right now. Trends tend to come and go but there seems to be one trend beating them all... burgers! Slow cooking is also really popular with our customers giving them plenty of flavours and that melt in your mouth texture. Taking this into account I've adapted various dishes on the menu to tie in to these current street food trends, one of the main dishes being Pulled Pork Burgers.



Method

Place the pork in a deep baking tray, pour the cider over the pork. Cut the garlic bulb in half smash the cloves and add into the tray. Cook for 6-8 hours at 140°C until the flesh falls apart.

Strain the juices from the pork into a pan, then add the chilli, sugar, salt, pepper, and sugar then heat until the sugar is dissolved.

Pull the meat with a fork (try not to mash it) and place in a bowl. Pour over the juices from the pan and mix thoroughly. Once the mixture has cooled (it retains its shape better), mould into individual patties and warm through in the oven.

Serve on a toasted brioche bun with a spoonful of the Scrumpy apple relish.

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Pulled Pork Burger with Scrumpy Apple Relish in a Brioche Bun

>> Makes 10-12 burgers

Ingredients

3-4 kg pork shoulder	1/2 tsp dried chilli flakes
2 pints cider	1 jar Hawkshead Relish Scrumpy apple chutney
One bulb garlic	Good quality brioche burger buns
300g soft brown sugar	
1 tsp cracked black pepper	
1 tsp salt	