Holiday Cheer!

Discover Festive Dishes from Around the World

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Touïtière Turnovers With Cranberry Mustard
Chef Christopher Chabot, Sysco Calgary
Dear Valued Sysco Customers,

Currently, two of the biggest trends in foodservice are local and global—and at Sysco, we don’t see those changing anytime soon. While consumers are more curious than ever about local products and where their food comes from, they are also exploring global flavors and ethnic cuisine types. The holidays, as steeped in tradition as they are, present a chance to explore some of the best ethnic food from around the world. We’ve asked seven of our Sysco chefs to share traditional dishes inspired by faraway places that resonate this time of year with consumers in their local markets.

From Portuguese Fish Stew in Boston to Spiced Potlatch Salmon in Seattle, seafood becomes a front-and-center celebratory protein. Check out the rest of the recipes on pages 28 to 31 for more inspiration for your menu.

We also give you everything you need to know to navigate the new world of subscription meal kits, which is disrupting business as usual for the restaurant industry.

Is there something you would like to see in Foodie? Email us at marketing@corp.sysco.ca. Your feedback is very important to us.

I’d like to wish each and every one of you a happy, prosperous holiday season and a very happy New Year.

Enjoy the issue,

Bill Goetz
Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing
We’ve done the work for you so you can focus on the results.

Liquid eggs add value to your bottom line. They’re farm fresh eggs: just without shells, without waste and without mess.

And because they’re real eggs, they can be used in any recipe that calls for shell eggs - without compromising recipe performance.

Try this light brunch classic.

**Mediterranean Frittata**

**RECIPE**

**Ingredients:**
- 2 cups liquid whole egg*
- 2 cups milk
- 300 g hash brown potatoes
- 150 g black olives, chopped
- 150 g green peppers, diced
- 150 g red peppers, diced
- 130 g shredded cheese
- 1 tsp garlic granules
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper

*Option to use thawed Scrambled Egg Mix instead of liquid egg, milk and salt.

1. In a large bowl, mix together potatoes, green and red peppers and olives.
2. Blend in liquid egg, milk, garlic, salt and pepper.
3. Pour egg mixture into baking dish and sprinkle with cheese.
4. Bake at 350°F for 45–50 mins or until the frittata reaches an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C).
5. Cut into squares and enjoy.

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Satisfyingly familiar yet amped up with spice, Buffalo Style Chicken Dip Stuffed Jalapeños give patrons the exceptional flavor, crunch and heat they crave.

Ask your Sysco Marketing Associate how you can motivate more sales with the bold, signature flavor of stuffed jalapeños.
When It Comes to Beef, We Focus on Freshness

At any given time, more than 14 million head of cattle are on feed for the U.S. and Canadian beef market. North American diners love their beef, and when you’re ordering portions trimmed to perfection from Sysco, you can be sure you’re getting not only the best value, but also the freshest and best-quality meats to suit your customers’ taste.

What sets out beef apart? We focus on quality and freshness every step of the way with our unrivalled quality assurance process. Sysco uses vacuum-packaging technology and a high-tech-controlled “cold chain” delivery system. Combined, these prevent contamination and keep meat at the proper temperature through receiving, storage, processing, shipping and delivery. You can feel confident that every beef product, whether it’s dry-aged steaks, Angus or ground beef, arrives with the care and quality you’d expect.

Once the beef arrives at your restaurant, check the packaging instructions right on the box for proper storage and cooking procedures and temperatures.

SUPPLIER PROFILE
Derma Meat Company

Steve Davidson is on the road a lot. As Director of Sales for Derma Meat Co., he supports his team at customer events and meets directly with his client portfolio of restaurants and caterers looking to fill their menus with quality cuts of meat.

Derma Meat Co. has been supplying Canadians with quality meats for almost 45 years. Owned and operated by Sysco Canada, Derma Meat Co. supplies its parent company with fresh and frozen steaks as well as specialty items. “We are their sourcing arm for meats like Japanese Wagyu or game,” Davidson says.

Special Service, Specialty Products
With its base in the town of Vaughan, Ontario, just north of Toronto, Derma Meat Co. focuses on premium service for the Greater Toronto Area. “We know that square footage isn’t cheap, so if you’re going to open a restaurant and put a big walk-in [fridge] in downtown Toronto and pay $80 per square foot for it, that doesn’t make a lot of sense,” says Davidson. “A lot of restaurants count on us instead to have their lunch steaks in the morning and their dinner steaks show up in the afternoon. That’s a service we provide.”

Delivering fresh product twice daily is one example of how Derma Meats keeps its clients happy in a tight marketplace. “Our sourcing team is continuously looking for who’s got the most consistent high-end product on the market,” Davidson says, and before he meets with clients, he searches for options that “will blow the chef away.”

A Perfect Partnership
“We have been able to leverage Sysco’s relationships with national accounts,” Davidson says. Prestigious restaurants and gourmet grocers all over the Toronto area rely on Derma Meats for USDA prime Wagyu steak and other offerings. Derma Meats’ stuffing, marinating and skewering programs are extremely popular. Davidson points to a line of stuffed chicken “that customers can take right from their freezer to the oven, and then to the lunch,” and to beef, chicken and pork satays and souvlakis: “We’ve had great success with those programs.”

Safety First, Always
Derma Meats places higher priority on quality, transparency and food safety. The company is halal-certified and has its Level 4 SQF certification, which Davidson refers to as “food safety on steroids.” Sysco clients “should be assured that their meats are processed with the same care and attention to detail that all Derma clients have experienced for the last 40 years.”
BRAND SPOTLIGHT
A baked potato basted in butter. Carrot cake topped with cream-cheese frosting. Dairy is both an essential ingredient in favourite recipes and an important nutrient on its own. The best dairy has a creamy flavour and peerless quality. That’s what Sysco’s Wholesome Farms delivers—just like the milkman of yesteryear.

Pure Ingredients
Consumers increasingly want to know where their food comes from. They want clean, simple ingredients, too—and fewer artificial or processed foods. Wholesome Farms products are sourced from a trusted community of farmers. Only products that are “honestly dairy”—with milk, cream or egg as the first ingredient—are offered by Wholesome Farms. That means you can be confident you’re using products of exceptional quality. Wholesome Farms Milk goes from the cow to the carton in 72 hours.

Fresh Deliveries
In decades past, many homes had no refrigeration, so a daily delivery from the milkman ensured the dairy could be used without spoilage. That’s not just nostalgia—that’s the standard of quality Wholesome Farms upholds. Sysco’s team of more than 100 quality assurance professionals (the largest in the industry) and its end-to-end refrigeration system mean you can be sure products are delivered fresh and in perfect condition. And with our delivery schedules, you know your products will arrive at your doorstep—via temperature-controlled truck—at the date and time you requested.

Recipe Staple
With an abundance of essential vitamins and minerals, dairy’s health benefits continue to make it a popular choice for patrons over trendy non-dairy alternatives. In fact, dairy consumption is projected to rise an average annual rate of 1.8 per cent per person through 2022. Serve a scoop of Wholesome Farms Ice Cream, like French Vanilla, with a slice of warm bread pudding, or blend Wholesome Farms Greek Yogurt into guacamole to give it a creamy twist—and an extra shot of protein to boot.

Delicious Flavour
Wholesome Farms’ products, known by customers for their taste and consistent quality, fit right into any recipe that calls for fresh-from-the-dairy goodness. Building on your patrons’ hunger for back-to-basics ingredients, try serving a house-made condiment—one of this year’s hottest food trends. One idea: a specialty mayonnaise using Wholesome Farms Eggs. Whether you’re making ice cream the star of your dish or using sour cream in a marinade, Wholesome Farms offers the high-quality, pure and fresh dairy products to be used as essentials in your recipes.

FRESH new look, SAME great brands
You may notice that our brands look a little different. Driven by our companywide commitment to more sustainable operations, and new regulations on clear and clean labelling, our products’ packaging now features a fresh new look. Rest assured that no matter what changes on the outside, the quality and consistency you’ve come to rely on remain the same.
Your restaurant has the rustic feel of an old country diner, but the menu is very modern. What’s driving your menu?

Years ago, we were driving around looking for somewhere our whole family could eat: a place where Pat could get steak, the kids could get pasta or chicken fingers, and I wanted something vegan and gluten-free. Needless to say, we had a difficult time finding such a restaurant. When Pat and I took over Aunt Gussie’s 12 years ago, we wanted to create a restaurant with a diverse menu to satisfy all appetites. We make almost everything from scratch, and we have added many delicious gluten-free and vegan options to the menu.

What are some of your favourite dishes at the restaurant?

The breakfast smoothie bowl is one of my favourites. It changes weekly; currently, it includes frozen blueberries and bananas, almond milk, avocado, spinach and kale, topped with homemade peanut-butter granola, berries, seeds and more fresh fruit. It is definitely a full meal. I also love the raw vegan tacos, which use ground nuts instead of meat. Pat’s favourite is the stuffed jalapeños; they’re filled with chipotle cream cheese and wrapped with locally sourced bacon. Our kids love the eggs Benedict, barbecue chicken pizza and our maple salmon.

And what’s a must-order item for new customers?

People tell us we make the best burgers around. Our burgers are made in-house and cooked to order. We have a mushroom-and-Swiss burger, a Jackamole burger (with Monterey Jack cheese and guacamole) and Pat’s favourite, the Bacon and Cheddar Burger. Another must-try would be our homemade Gingerbread Pancakes. Our guests tell us the pancakes have become part of their family summer holiday tradition.

“When we took over Aunt Gussie’s 12 years ago, we wanted to create a restaurant with a diverse menu to satisfy all appetites.” – PAT AND LEEANN POWERS, OWNERS

And how has Sysco been integral to your success?

Sysco Canada offers something called STIR Sessions—educational seminars that include instruction and advice on menu development, product selection, server training and social media—and we attend once or twice a year. We always do a new menu leading into spring/summer and sometimes fall, and we love hitting up the STIR Sessions before making menu changes. We find them valuable, a lot of fun—and filling! Our Sysco Marketing Associate, Kris Pageau, has also given us some great ideas, and is always supportive.
Everything You Need to Know to Navigate the Meal Kit Trend

When Chefs Plate launched in 2014, it marked the arrival of the meal kit trend in Canada. Since then, subscription meal kit delivery has boomed, disrupting established foodservice along the way. But restaurants have many options to compete for customers, from beefing up takeout offerings to building a meal kit of your own. Here are the facts and figures you need to join in on this potential revenue source.

**KEEP IT SIMPLE**

For consumers, convenience is king, and one driving force behind meal kits’ popularity is how easy they make enjoying a home-cooked meal. Restaurants can tap into that desire for something convenient, but some dishes make better candidates for meal kits than others.

- Focus on trademark dishes that can be simplified.
- Avoid lengthy lists of ingredients.
- Keep in mind that not all customers are accomplished cooks.
- Sides can also make great meal kits (think at-home guacamole or DIY salsa).

**PACKAGE MAKES PERFECT**

Easy-to-follow instructions are an essential meal-kit inclusion, and illustrations can add clarity for consumers.

- Ensure freshness by carefully considering how each ingredient needs to be packaged.
- Think eco-friendly. Where possible, minimize the amount of packaging required and look into recyclable or compostable packing materials.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

- **2014**
  - Chefs Plate launches in Toronto; Goodfood and HelloFresh follow two years later
- **4%**
  - Percentage of Canadians who purchased a meal kit in 2017, according to a Nielsen report
- **49%**
  - Percentage of consumers who would “buy meal kits to prepare at home if their favourite restaurant offered them,” according to a 2017 National Restaurant Association survey
- **$2.2 BILLION**
  - Value of meal kit industry (in U.S. dollars), as estimated by Time magazine in 2017

**THINK FRESH**

Many consumers are looking for healthy dining options and think of restaurants as serving heavier fare. Counter that impression by emphasizing organic, fresh ingredients in your meal kits.

**TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE**

No matter what dish you plan to pack into a meal kit, remember that customers are looking for something quick. The cooking process, from start to finish, should take about 30 minutes.

**WEIGHT THE COSTS**

Don’t take on too much at once. Consider what will be required to produce meal kits in addition to your regular on-premise work, and don’t be afraid to start small—even with a single dish.

**BE STRATEGIC**

Think local. If your restaurant is close to a park or beach, grab-and-go kits with sandwiches and simple sides can be introduced as perfect picnic options. When it comes to the holidays, meal kits can reduce the amount of chaos in the kitchen, and delivering ready-to-cook turkeys and sides gives consumers one more thing to check off their to-do lists.

**GET INSPIRED**

Toronto-based Freshii launched its health-focused Meal Box program in 2016.

- Chick-fil-A is currently testing meal kits at 150 locations in Atlanta, Georgia.
- During the summer, New York City’s Strip House offers Steaks to Go Kits.

**OTHER OPTIONS TO TRY**

Starting a meal kit service may not be the best fit for all restaurants, but businesses can still take steps to win back meal-kit customers.

- **STREAMLINE**
  - the online ordering process so it’s easy to use.
  - **EMPHASIZE**
  - your restaurant’s food sources to draw attention to fresh, organic ingredients. High-lighting healthy dishes can also go a long way.
  - **ADD**
  - takeaway options and ensure a quick pickup process for consumers.
  - **PARTNER**
  - with delivery services to make your restaurant a viable at-home option.
Heat Up Your Menu With Cold Brew Coffee

The hottest trend in coffee is ice cold—cold brew, that is. This year the chilled beverage appeared on nearly 4 per cent of U.S. menus, according to a recent food trends study, which represents a 44 per cent increase from the previous year. Once the best-kept secret of hard-core coffee nerds, cold brew, with its smooth, even taste and high-octane kick, has clearly made it to the mainstream. While traditional iced coffee is made using the standard drip method, the cold brew process requires steeping ground coffee beans in cold or room-temperature water for an extended period. This time-consuming process makes cold brew more concentrated, giving it a smoother, less acidic taste as well as a higher caffeine content.

Cold brew has made its way from craft coffeehouses to national restaurant chains and even convenience stores, where the drink is quickly becoming a staple. Chefs and restaurateurs are drawn to its versatility, as it can be served black, mixed with milk and sweetener, enhanced with flavoured syrups or infused with spices. Culinary creatives use it as a blank canvas for concocting other beverages, blending it into lattes, frappes and milkshakes or adding liquor to make specialty cocktails.

Thanks to increasing interest and demand, cold brew is now available in shelf-stable, prepackaged units such as bottles or cans. This also offers an easy way for restaurant operators to incorporate cold brew into their menus. The latest twist on the cold brew trend is adding protein or other nutrients to the coffee for a sturdier, more fortified drink.

No matter how you serve it, smooth, satisfying cold brew will be around for many seasons to come.
Embrace Winter Greens Like You Mean It

Diners have fallen in love with delectable, deeply healthy and inexpensive dark leafy greens. From maple-glazed Brussels sprouts to kale and quinoa salad, these greens are staying on the menu. Here are a few new ideas for cooking up green leafies from root to stem.

Make a salad for the season. When making salads in fall and winter, reach for darker, slightly more bitter greens like chard, kohlrabi and dandelion greens, or chicons such as frisée and endive. Enhance the dish with flavors such as dried fruit, candied nuts and fragrant crumbled aged cheese. Then add a little more sustenance and fat by replacing the olive oil in your dressing with bacon fat. Adding chopped bacon brings another taste and texture to the dish.

Save the stems. “I think Swiss chard is going be the next kale,” says Chef Megan Roberts, Culinary Consultant at Sysco Phoenix. If there’s one thing she has learned about greens as a chef, it’s that you always remove the stem to get that nice consistency of texture when chopping—but don’t throw that stem away. “You can take those tender leaves and chop them up in a salad, and then pickle the stalk,” Roberts says. “Leafy greens are so versatile, because you do have two vegetables in one,” she says. “I make a lot of beets, and I love to cook beet greens, too. I sauté them with a little lemon. Instead of throwing away the stem, you’re making another delicious dish out of it.”

Balance out the bitterness. Some winter greens, such as mustard, collard and dandelion, have a pronounced bitterness that tastes best when balanced in some way. With dandelion greens, Roberts suggests marinating them or tossing them with an acidic vinaigrette, such as one that uses anchovies and lemon. You can also mix them in a salad with a more neutral green such as traditional butter lettuce, romaine or curly endive. When using collards, a staple of Southern cooking, “I would use plenty of fat and flavorful braising liquid to cook those down,” Roberts says. “And it can also be turned into a soup.”

Ask your Marketing Associate about Sysco FreshPoint’s assortment of winter greens and frequent delivery schedule for getting the freshest produce directly to your kitchen.

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This year, when seeking inspiration for your holiday menu, be bold. Start by looking around at on-trend international flavours such as Middle-Eastern and Latin-American to add panache to the celebrations. Festive should never mean flavourless. North American chefs are fortunate—we don’t need to travel far to experience a variety of cultures. Both the United States and Canada have become delicious melting pots of global cuisines brought here by newcomers over the course of decades, from the Italian influence on the East Coast to the vast Chinatown offerings of Vancouver. In the festive dishes featured here, we look to other cultures to shake up the holiday menu and bring a cast of fresh ingredients into the mix. In Italian, Austrian and Portuguese dishes, seafood takes centre stage, while in Latin America, mole is standard for celebrations. And in Seattle, a feast isn’t complete without salmon and local vegetables.

**Fish Gets Festive**

“Here in southeastern Massachusetts, we are in the middle of a true melting pot of cuisine and ethnicity,” says Chef Anthony McAssey, Culinary Consultant at Sysco Boston. “This area is highly influenced by Portuguese cuisine. The best scallops in the country are fished right here, the same scallops we sell daily under Sysco’s Portico label.” During the holidays, families here serve beautiful seafood stews, such as the Portuguese Fish Stew, sometimes with lingua sausage, saffron broth and fresh herbs and garlic.

“Because Austrians are mostly Catholic, we eat a lot of seafood during the holidays,” says Chef Klaus Mandl, Culinary Consultant at Sysco Chicago. “Austrians like their schnitzels, dumplings, pork and sauerkraut.” You see that Austrian and German influence all over the Midwest, including Chicago. But during the fall and winter months in Austria, Mandl says, you’ll find a variety of seafood on the menu, such as zander, Dover sole, trout and halibut. For an elegant holiday fish dish, see Chef Klaus’s Halibut With Pumpkin Basil Spaetzle.

“In Italy it is common to eat fish on Christmas Eve. The famed Feast of the Seven Fishes is a flamboyant invention of Italian-American immigrants. The dishes vary, but one constant is baccalà, the Southern Italian dish of salt cod. Chef Nora Galdiano, Culinary Consultant at Sysco Central Florida, is herself an American immigrant—she was born in the Philippines but grew up in Hawaii. Growing up, Galdiano was exposed to lomi-lomi salmon, a cured fish dish similar to ceviche, which also inspired the salt cod portion of her Italian-style recipe for Herb-Crusted Cod Fillet and Poached Salt Cod.

**Southern Comforts**

In the city of El Paso, Texas, “You can stand on one side of the border and throw a rock into another country,” says Chef Armando Pomales, Executive Chef at Sysco New Mexico. Not surprisingly, the cultures and cuisine of El Paso and its neighbouring cities are strongly influenced by Mexico and Latin America. “In a lot of households you’ll find a mix of Mexican cuisines.” Pomales says. The manchamantel sauce is a variation on a mole, which Pomales serves with a crispy pork belly. Traditionally, the festive, brightly coloured sauce can take hours or even days to prepare.

**Find recipes for these dishes on pages 28–29**
“Back of lamb is underutilized and has a wow factor when served,” says Yakelis.

**Northern Exposure**

In the Pacific Northwest, the tradition of feasting goes back a long way. Before there was Thanksgiving, “Native American people of the Salish tribe celebrated the harvest by gathering wild vegetables, blackberries and the local abundance of salmon and shellfish,” says Chef Jeffrey Con, culinary consultant at Sysco Seattle. Not only does this part of the country feature ample coastline, but it’s also fertile land for growing produce, which provided inspiration for Cox’s Salmon With Butternut Squash Casserole. Each Christmas, Quebec is gilded with lights and carpeted in snow. Families gather to celebrate and indulge in holiday foods such as the traditional Quebecois meat pie, the tourtière. “One of my favourite traditions is to gather together on Christmas Eve for my grandmother’s tournée, served with homemade cranberry sauce,” says Chef Christopher Chabot, Culinary Consultant at Sysco Calgary. “When I can’t get home for the holidays, I like to make a simpler, bite-sized version that I call Tourtière Turnovers.” They can be made and frozen weeks in advance, then reheated, making them an easy addition to any holiday menu.

“Holidays are a special time to me. One of my favourite family traditions is to gather together for a Christmas Eve dinner of my grandmother’s tourtière, served with homemade cranberry sauce.” —Chef Christopher Chabot, Sysco Calgary
HAT A DIFFERENCE A PLATE MAKES. Those plain white—usually round—dishes preferred by most chefs are the blank canvases for culinary artistry. In fact, when it comes to plating and presentation, chefs generally approach the plate the way an artist approaches a canvas, keeping in mind specific rules about perception, composition, form and colour. And just like the artists of the last century, chefs should also be prepared to break all those rules when the moment—and the dish—calls for it.

Presentation is not just for fine dining establishments. A little effort can make the difference between a dish that makes our eyes pop and mouths water and one that just passes muster. Even more important, it can make the difference between a $10 and a $15 dish composed of almost identical ingredients. Little things like the size of the plate and proper placement of ingredients affects diners’ perception of how large a portion is. And adding vibrant, creative garnishes is an inexpensive way to add value to any dish.

We’re not saying that you should invest in a set of tweezers and squeeze bottles and start plating like it’s 1999. But if you pay attention to some key elements on the plate, you can add panache to preparations—and even get free publicity on social media.

PLAYFUL PRESENTATION PAYS OFF ONLINE
Those unexpected garnishes. That gorgeous mash-up of colors and textures. Pay attention to them and you’ll be rewarded when customer’s post pictures of your plates on social media. Great presentation is the number one way to get your food shared on Instagram. So pick one dish and go all out. Your customers will gasp with joy, and then reach for their phones.
BE PLAYFUL
The chef has deconstructed the traditional composition of protein, starch and veg and added some air to the plate, making room for more caper-butter sauce and the addition of fried sage.

FRESHEN UP
Bring colour and texture to the dish with seasonal herbs.

SERVED BY DESIGN
Arrange shapes in compositions that attract the diner’s eye.

PLATED BUT DATED
This dish shows a traditional composition with the plate divided into thirds: one-third for the protein, one-third for the starch and one-third for the vegetables. While there’s nothing wrong with this presentation, it looks a little stodgy.

DON’T LET YOUR DESSERTS GO BARE
There is nothing wrong with this plain white plate, but the single raspberry and bare dish do not dress up the cake to the presentation standards customers have come to expect with desserts.

TAKE A STAND
This simple cake stand elevates the cake to the height it deserves.

ICING ON THE CAKE
The chef has topped this bravura cake with hand-shaved white chocolate ribbons—an elegant garnish in proportion with the cake itself.

MAKE IT!
Find the recipe for the Oreo Cookie Crepe Cake by Chef Candace Hilger on page 31.
Get Ready for the Holiday Brunch Rush

The holidays can be a busy time filled with errands and obligations, but they also offer a chance to slow down and indulge with friends and family over brunch. Mixing classic dishes with seasonal flavours and flair, holiday brunch is a great opportunity for restaurants to get creative and surprise clientele with celebratory ambience and special menu offerings.

At this time of year, customers tend to dine out in large, festive groups, and are more open to lingering over a multi-course meal. “It’s a great testing ground for chefs to be as inventive as possible,” says Chef Michael Brown, Culinary Consultant at Sysco Edmonton. Many of the year’s food trends shine during the holidays, though Brown cautions, “It’s a fine balancing act when writing a holiday menu to try and please everyone without going too far out on a limb and losing your identity completely.”

Remember the classics
French toast, waffles, smoked salmon on bagels—these menu items will always have an audience, and they balance well with new dishes. “Most guests do like the traditional brunch favourites, but they also want to see the classics with new on-trend twists,” Brown says. Savoury, ethnic-inspired flavour at breakfast are growing in popularity, according to food-industry research firm Technomic. Winter is an ideal time to try out options like a savoury oatmeal, or shakshuka—a Mediterranean dish of ground lamb topped with fried egg with a pinch of chili.

Play with plants
Plant-based dining is another big trend, for brunch or anytime. “The most talked-about ingredients at the moment are plant-based proteins,” Brown says. He expects holiday menus to offer vegetable equivalents to traditional meat-based items. “For example, jackfruit, lightly smoked, can take the place of Canadian bacon. Present it on a toasted waffle with a soft-poached egg and sun-dried-tomato–infused hollandaise sauce, topped with an arugula salad, for a twist on the classic eggs Benedict.”

Bling the beverages
“Brunch is always a treat, and customers want to relax and enjoy themselves, so operators that have exciting beverages can capture that revenue opportunity,” Brown says. Fresh, fun low-alcohol cocktails are always popular, as are creative mocktails—a major drinks trend for the coming year. Instead of a Bellini, try mixing sparkling water with juices such as orange and berry. And remember seasonal garnishes, like cranberries, pine needles or even candy canes. Brunch is a great opportunity to showcase your kitchen’s creativity, try out interesting food trends and attract a whole new group of customers.

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6 Ways to Improve Employee Well-Being

A happy face is almost a prerequisite in the hospitality business. But you’ll really come out ahead if those smiles are genuine. When employees are truly happy and taking pride in their jobs, they’ll be more productive. And they’ll stick around, keeping labour woes at bay. Here are some steps operators can take to improve workplace well-being and help employees stay healthy, motivated and performing at their peak.

Encourage family meals
At least once a week, and usually more often, schedule time to eat together. “Have each of the cooks take a turn being in charge of the meal. When posed as a challenge, it becomes more exciting,” says Jovan Djokovic, Business Resource Consultant for Sysco Eastern Wisconsin. “Tell them you have all these great ingredients and their task is to do something healthy, like a big salad they can be proud of.”

Get outside
Life in the kitchen can be active, but that activity usually occurs within about four square feet. As weather permits, make time for outdoor fun. “Do morning stretches or charcuterie, ethnic cuisines or food safety. [Rotating your cooks from station to station] doesn’t cost anything and has incredible benefits,” Groeger says. “Encourage staff to drink water. Ask your cooks who can be the most creative with the ingredients you have on hand. Add lemons and cucumbers to water, and keep refilling all day.”

Get on a water kick
“Drinking soda on the line can be a big problem. The calories, the sugar…it dehydrates you and can lead to passing out,” Djokovic says. “Encourage staff to drink water. Ask your cooks who can be the most creative with the ingredients you have on hand. Add lemons and cucumbers to water, and keep refilling all day.”

Say thank you, often
Create and foster a culture of gratitude. “Employees need to feel appreciated,” says Benjamin Groeger, Chef and Culinary Specialist for Sysco Arizona. “When you interview, ask the candidate why that idea appeals to them.” Groeger says. “If you get answers like ‘I’m a college student on Christmas break,’ it makes perfect sense and could be a mutually beneficial relationship.”

Don’t forget the little things
“Employees need to feel valued, they want to come up short. ‘If you’ve already been through a holiday season, go through your historic records to get a gauge,’” Djokovic says. “But if you’re new, always plan for more than you think you’ll need. Better safe than sorry.”

Tis the Season for Temporary Hiring

It’s the most wonderful time of the year. And the most hectic. To take the holidays in stride—and make serving those private parties and tables of 17 look effortless—many restaurants will hire seasonal help. Here are some practical tips for doing so.

Put the word out
Here are some tips to put that word out:

DO:

• Hire people that need tons of training
• Use social media to recruit
• Be transparent
• Do: Give everyone time off

DON’T:

• Underestimate your need
• Don’t: Hit your need

Holidays are meant to be spent with people you love. Give everyone—temporary and permanent employees alike—a day off on the holiday or close to it. “If that’s just not possible,” Groeger says, “offer to invite your employee’s family in for dinner and let them enjoy a meal together.”

Know when you truly need to intervene
If you get the feeling (or hear from a coworker) that one of your team members is struggling with a serious issue, such as alcohol, drugs or depression, don’t waste time. Take him or her aside. “There has to be open communication,” Groeger says. “Say you are concerned and offer help. Refer your employees to counselling if you see that they are clearly having problems. It’s not an innuendo, it’s real care for another human being.”

DO:

• Say you are concerned and offer help.
• Do: Give everyone time off
SySCO CHICAGO

FOR THE HERB-CRUSTED COD

Herb-Crusted Cod Fillet and Lemon—Olive Oil Poached Salt Cod
CHEF NORA GALDANO
SYSCO CENTRAL FLORIDA
SERVES 4

HERB CRUST
3 cup cracked corn
6 large basil leaves
1 Tbsp. white and garlic clove
2 Tbsp. Sysco Imperial grated Parmesan cheese
Pinch salt and pepper
TOMATO Coulis
3 tomatoes, diced and minced
1 cup olive oil
1 tsp. sugar
Salt and pepper to taste

GARLISH
Roasted potatoes, corn
Chayote squash, sliced and
steamed
Plantsain, sliced and fried until
crisp
1 cup fresh pineapple, diced

HUK POTATO PUREE
1 lb. Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch slices
1 Tbsp. Sysco Imperial Parmesan butter
1 cup Wholesome Farms heavy cream
Warm Koster salt to taste

FOR THE CRISPY PORK
In a large bowl, coat pork belly
with the cure spices and the
turmeric for 24 hours. Rinse the
pork belly and pat dry with paper
kitchen towels. Preheat the oven
to 350 degrees. Place chilies in a
cast-iron skillet. Heat until almost
dry. Place chilies in a cast-iron
skillet. Heat until almost
dry. Place chilies, garlic, and
cumin seeds for 5 seconds
Purple ones separately to prevent
coloration. Blanch Brussel
sprout leaves for 5 seconds
and immediately set in ice bath.
Drain all vegetables. When ready
to serve, warm the sauce and
Top with pork belly. Garnish
with corn, chayote squash,
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LAMB RACK

Cut lamb rack into two portions of four bones each. Then reheat about a quarter-inch thick. Bone about a quarter-inch thick.

Ingredients:
- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 cup sugar

FOR THE CRANBERRY MUSTARD

In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, bring the cranberry mixture to a boil. Let cool, then refrigerate until needed.

FOR THE OIL AND識破

Heat the oil in a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add salt, pepper and white pepper to taste. Add the chicken in batches until the pan is not overcrowded.

FOR THE CRANBERRY FILLING

Place the chicken in a baking dish, cover with the cranberry filling and bake until firm and golden brown, about 20 minutes. Serve hot.

FOR THE BUTTER and GARLIC

Heat the oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the chicken in batches until the pan is not overcrowded.

TO GARNISH

Place the chicken in the oven to cool completely. Whip the cream mixture slowly; once eggs are set, allow the creme mixture to cool completely. Place the mixture in a piping bag with a medium-sized tip and pipe around the oyster dressing. Let chill.

For the dressing, place all the ingredients except the oysters in a food processor. Process until smooth. Taste and adjust seasonings if desired. Let chill.

FOR THE FILLING

Place the chicken in a baking dish, cover with the cranberry filling and bake until firm and golden brown, about 20 minutes. Serve hot.
Q: What do you like most about working for Sysco?
A: This job can be tough, but the people I’ve worked with at Sysco Vancouver over the years have made it very enjoyable.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?
It feels great when my customers and supervisors recognize the extra effort and hard work I put in every day.

Describe how you help customers solve problems.
I always approach customer problems as a challenge. I like taking things that can negatively impact a customer’s day or experience and helping to turn them into a positive.

Describe the relationship you have with your customers.
I would describe it as friendly and professional. It always makes me feel great when I come back from vacation and my customers tell me how much they missed me.

Of your Sysco customers, do you have a favourite dish or meal that they make?
There’s a great place called The Keg Steakhouse and Bar, which has locations all over British Columbia. My favourite dish is the prime rib dinner.

Tell us something fun, weird or funny that has happened to you while working as a driver.
One time I was making a delivery to an account that had a reputation for being haunted. It was a key-drop delivery in the dark, and it spooked me pretty good. I remember trying to be tough and not afraid, but by the end, I just wanted to get the heck out of there.

What kind of obstacles do you encounter that affect your job during an average day?
Traffic, weather and the way my skids and loads are built can all be challenging. It takes extra effort to provide the highest service level possible when so many things are outside of your control.

While driving in your truck, what radio station, music, podcast, etc… are you usually listening to?
I like sports talk radio the most.

If you weren’t driving for Sysco, what would you be doing?
I would be flying planes.

Do you have any driver quirks?
Are there certain roads you won’t drive on, for example?
Do you have superstitions about driving or certain rituals you practice?
Not sure about quirks, but I have a mentality of getting the job done safely, efficiently and professionally.

Are Canadians good drivers?
Depends on the day of the week and what town you’re in.

Francis Duncan
23 Years Driving for Sysco Vancouver

Consumers crave quality – premium breads are the highest in demand among Canadian consumers, and the majority (77%) are willing to pay more for premium, high-quality ingredients¹. As your Artisan bakery partner, we follow traditional European methods of baking bread to help you offer the best buns, sandwich carriers, table breads and more.

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