

# Six food trends taking centre stage in 2018

By [Chef Junelle Germishuizen](#)

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The hospitality industry is always in search of new flavour profiles and presentations owing to the generally well-travelled and discerning market that they cater for. Here are some of the taste and concept trends set to take centre stage this year, many of which have been seen bubbling up in 2017, and this year, are poised to make their entrance into the mainstream.



Chef Junelle Germishuizen

## Taste trend #1: Mushrooms

Whole Foods calls them 'functional mushrooms', as the world's favourite fungi make an entrance in a variety of drinks from smoothies to hot chocolate, and are introduced into skincare and haircare ranges. I also see meaty mushrooms play a central role in vegetarian dishes, as more conscious carnivores begin to take stock of their consumption.

## Taste trend #2: Spices

Spices go even more exotic this year, with a focus on Middle Eastern spices, like cardamom and turmeric, and spice mixes, like harissa and za'atar. This spice trend lends itself firmly towards the meat-free movement and people look for more interesting ways to flavour their vegetables. I predict that towards the end of 2018, the interest in the Middle Eastern flavours will pan across the Red Sea and culinary attention will move to Africa, Ethiopia in particular, in terms of food taste and presentation.



Turmeric and cumin infused shortbread

## Taste trend #3: Flowers

I have been doing floral flavours in my food offerings for years, but in 2018 this comes back as a firm favourite. Look for sweet (marshmallows and nougat) and savoury (teas and lattes) opportunities for your roses, lavenders, and violets, which enter as main actors much more than supporting roles. The variety goes from English garden all the way to South-East Asian orchid flavours.

## Concept #1: Collaboration

I see collaboration as a huge trend in 2018. 2017 was a difficult year, both socio-politically and economically and in 2018 South African businesses will band together in order to boost the economy, for the sake of themselves and for the greater good. Positive stories will be critical to our healing as a nation, and working together is what it takes to get our country back on track. I believe that we will see a rise of brand mashups which should yield some very interesting results.

## Concept #2: Responsibility

Responsibility is a huge topic that touches every part of the catering and hospitality industry. From food waste to water waste (think Cape Town Day Zero) all the way through to packaging and people – 2018 is no place for waste and abuse. Consumers and creators alike will demand, and come up with, new ways of making do with less, and do it better. Transparency and information add value to products that give customers what they are looking for.



## Concept 3: Clean eating

This trend has two aspects to it, first the health of the body. Fresh, raw, natural ingredients are key with a strong swing away from preservatives and colourants. Second, the health of the environment, which also ties into the plastic-free ethos. Good-for-nature packaging like corn-starch wrappers and plantable papers replace no good plastics. Big brands get on board, making strong “no plastic” statements which impact the industry as a whole.



Over and above these six trends, food presentation remains a strong over-arching theme in 2018 with every chef aiming to create that perfect picture-friendly dish.

Look out for an interesting array of mushrooms and flowers in menus across the country, with new and enticing spices flavouring cleaner, vegetable-based meals. On the whole, the industry moves towards becoming more ethical in its food choices and waste management.

*For more information, go to [www.lardierefinefoods.com](http://www.lardierefinefoods.com) or follow Lardiere Fine Food on Instagram [@Lardierefoods](https://www.instagram.com/Lardierefoods).*

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