



TOP 10 TRENDS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN THE FOOD & CATERING INDUSTRY

Learning to live with Covid 19 is the new normal and India is finally coming to grip with it. The planning to end lockdown in phases has begun, guidelines are being released for economy revival and business are preparing to stand back on their feet.

The hospitality sector has hit rock bottom during the pandemic, especially the restaurant and food service industry. With changing landscape, the restaurant industry is now gearing up to be back in the game.

But it won't be that easy. While the lockdown might end, the industry would need to recontextualize its current business models and revolutionise itself to lure the customers.

Thinking Hats has analysed and unearthed future trends that would redefine the norms of the restaurant and food service industry -

1. GHOST KITCHENS

Also known as cloud kitchens, cloud kitchens **focus exclusively on takeaways and online orders**. Ease of online ordering, low investment cost and higher margins has enabled cloud kitchens to grow rapidly in India, especially in metro cities. With social distancing becoming



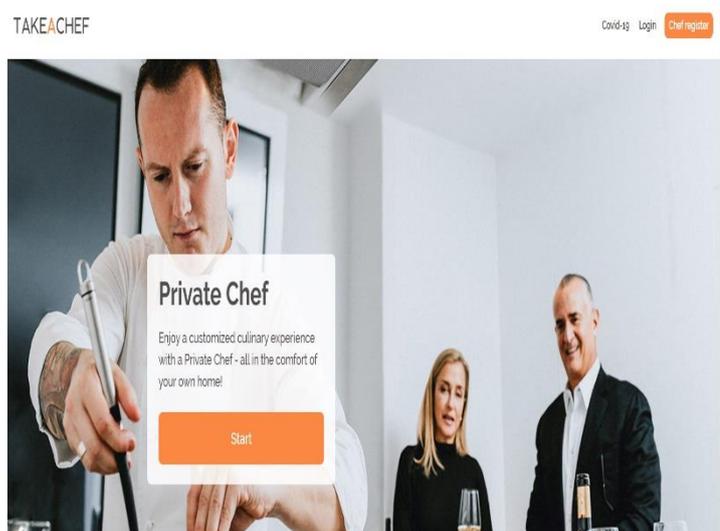
a new customary habit, customers are going to order in much more than before, generating a demand for cloud kitchens.

In picture: Box8, a cloud kitchen is quite popular for its Indian cuisine and quick delivery.

2. 'CHEF-ON-CALL' SERVICES

Companies like 'Take a Chef' has been offering one of its kind gourmet experience to its customers.

One can **hire a private chef** on the basis of their food preferences and turn their dining room into an haute cuisine restaurant. This trend has already been picked up in US, After the contagion, this might soon become the new reality in India as well, especially among Upper class Indians.



3. DIY MEAL KITS

During lockdown, people have been reacquainted with cooking meals at home. To give the budding chefs at homes a satisfaction of preparing gourmet meal, restaurants like Little Italy, Burgundy box, Pumpkin Tales etc. are delivering DIY meal kits. A DIY meal kit usually has the ingredients measured in exact proportion along with the recipe.

In picture: *DIY Pasta Kits launched by Little Italy*



While food delivery apps are still struggling for permit to deliver alcohol. On the positive note, Social, a restaurant chain, has started home **delivering bottled non-alcoholic drink mixers** for anyone to prepare their signature cocktails at home.

4. SHARED KITCHENS

Co-working spaces in the restaurant industry could be the new norm. Multiple brands, each specializing in different cuisines are delivering orders, all working under one roof. Shared kitchens are cost effective with reduced equipment cost. For example, a brand orders could occupy which another brand time.



effective with reduced equipment cost. For delivering late night the same space at night is utilizing during day

In Picture: FoodCoWorks is a co-working space in Mumbai designed for food business operators

5. #VOCAL THE LOCAL

With government putting efforts to empower the Indian economy, catering industry would move towards local produce. It would serve two purposes - benefit the Indian farmers and companies as well as save the cost of transportation and storage. Fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables could be an attraction for eco-conscious diners, leading to seasonal menus in restaurants.

In picture: Brands like Naturals have already introduced seasonal menus. Flavours like jackfruit, black grapes etc. are served only during the seasons.



6. BEST HYGIENE PRACTICES



Online restaurant aggregators apps like Dineout, Swiggy and Zomato have released the guidelines for the restaurant industry on staff management, staff health & safety, restaurant space sanitisation, food safety and measures for takeaway & delivery business models.

Hygiene ratings on online platforms would strongly impact the customer footfalls in coming days.

7. NAKED KITCHENS

In the future, people might only dine in a restaurant if they are confident about hygiene and safety norms are being followed. Sanitizing the area and wearing gloves might not be enough. Uninhibited kitchen view could play a pivotal role in winning over the trust of customers.

In picture: Interestingly, cloud kitchens like Instapizza have started adapting to the new scenario **by live streaming their kitchens** on various social media platforms.



8. RESTAURMART

Imagine grocery store inside a restaurant! Yes, this is happening. Restaurants are planning to sell assortment of goods to attract consumers. This would increase their profits and



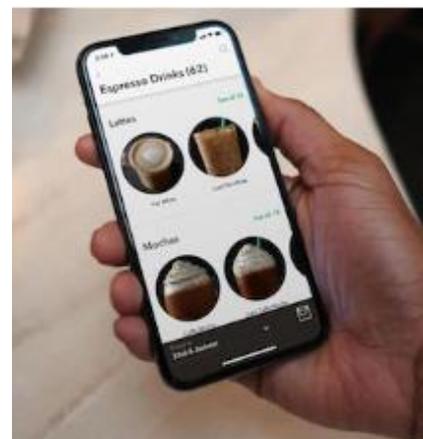
would also benefit the warehouses which are not left with much space due to low sales during Covid 19.

In picture: Sysco Pop up shops in American restaurants are selling essential commodities like eggs, bread, paper towels, condiments etc.

9. CONTACTLESS DINING

Right from online booking, automated tokens, modified seating arrangement, QR code generated menus to non-cash payments, restaurants are taking various steps to ensure the reduced waiting lines and bare minimum human contact.

In picture: Starbucks is planning to launch the "Starbucks Mobile Order Payment App in India. The App enables customers to place order online in advance before visiting the restaurant.



In picture: Penguin Eat Shabu hotpot restaurant in Bangkok has enforced social distancing measures by using plastic sheets to segregate spaces.



In picture: 'Quarantine Greenhouses' has been designed by a restaurant in Amsterdam to maintain social distancing.



10. ROBOT DELIVERIES

In US, Refraction Electric Vehicles (REVs) are being introduced to deliver restaurant orders within 2-mile radius. The demand has accelerated during the pandemic. UV rays set up are



installed to disinfectant the REVs, mitigating the risk of Covid 19.

***In picture:** Autonomous vehicles are delivering orders in Ann Arbor, US*

Amidst layoffs and huge losses, the restaurant industry needs to switch from survival mode and have a positive outlook to explore untapped business opportunities. Digitalisation of services could be one route.

Another path could be building solid and lasting relationships with consumers for accelerating business growth. This could be achieved by adhering to stringent hygiene practices and adapting to changing consumer needs.

In the end, consumer experience is what is most sought after – be it for safety, convenience or taste. Thinking Hats continues to track these new trends in the dining and catering industry.