



RAISING THE BAR

A Guide to Modernizing Salad Bars



INTRODUCTION

Every food service venue would love to expand its reach by bringing new customers to the cafeteria. By incorporating consumer trends into practice, cafeterias can secure a place in the competitive lunch market.

Baum + Whiteman, a food and restaurant consulting firm, predicts that building meals centered around vegetables will remain a top trend in 2017. They attribute this to innovations in vegetable preparations among chefs and the upswing of fast-casual salad chains that feature photogenic bowls of grains and seasonal greens.

Plant-based proteins are taking centerstage as they become increasingly mainstream. Chefs are at the forefront, bringing traditionally meat-based preparations to the plant world.

This toolkit will break down steps to leverage the power of these trends and fold them into institutional practice through the salad bar. The methods in this kit can be implemented in steps and modified as you learn which products your customers prefer, and which are most cost-effective. We will review elements that meet the modern customer's expectations, and transform the flavors on your salad bar.

Join us on the pursuit of the perfect salad!



I. UPGRADE YOUR INGREDIENTS

Change starts with the food you buy.

Buy better and varied produce.

Cook more in-house, from scratch.

We eat first with our eyes.

Your salad bar sells based on how it looks.

Make it beautiful.

FRUIT

Fresh fruit brings sweetness, acidity and color to salads.

Dried fruit can also be delicious salad bar toppings, but try to source products without added sugar.

- Grapefruit
- Oranges
- Strawberries
- Blueberries
- Raspberries
- Grapes
- Apples
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Mangoes
- Kiwi
- Watermelon
- Cherry Tomatoes

VEGETABLES

Sourcing quality fresh vegetables signals to your customers that your cafeteria is on the cutting edge. Feature seasonal produce to take your selection to another level.

- Edamame
- Artichokes
- Beets
- Jicama
- Baby Bok Choy
- Asparagus
- Yellow Squash
- Cucumber
- Celery
- Green Onions
- Cauliflower
- Zucchini
- Kohlrabi
- Baby Potatoes
- Pumpkin
- Fennel





II. ELEVATE FLAVOR

Now that you have high quality produce- use freshly ground spices, fresh herbs, and spice mixes to transform them. Treat your vegetables like meat by applying a dry rub and roasting them. Or keep it fresh by turning raw ingredients into a readymade salad. Here are examples of simple dishes that take on new dimensions when dressed up.

PREPARED VEGETABLE DISHES:

- ❖ Roasted Beets with Lemon Peel & Thyme
- ❖ Turmeric & Coriander Cauliflower
- ❖ Berbere Sweet Potatoes
- ❖ Red Curried Carrots
- ❖ Mint & Dill Cucumbers
- ❖ Acorn Squash with Garam Masala

Up the appeal of your salad bar by giving the ingredients fresh and creative knife cuts. Cuts should be delicate and bite-size to make food more appetizing and easier to eat.

III. CUT ABOVE THE REST

RADISH

Use a mandoline to shave the radish into thin coins. Store in water to preserve crunch.



GREEN ONION

Rotate knife to a 45° angle from usual position and cut onions on a bias.



ZUCCHINI

Use a box grater [or mandoline with teeth fixture] to shave zucchini into noodles.



CELERY

Trim celery and cut rib into thirds. Slide the pieces over a mandoline with the flat side of the rib against your palm. Store in ice water until celery curls.



CARROT

Shave carrot ribbons with your peeler by holding one end by the tip and rotating, then hold the other tip and repeat.



FENNEL

Halve fennel and core if desired. Run bulb over the mandoline blade. Store in water to preserve crunch and color.



IV. ROTATE YOUR GRAINS

Ancient grains that were once underutilized are becoming household names. Grain-based bowls and salads have been widely embraced as healthy and delicious options. They add fiber to the salad bar, benefiting your customers' waistlines by filling them up faster.

Many grains carry distinct nutty flavors that add depth to salads. Try out new grains from the list below on your salad bar weekly.

ANCIENT GRAINS

- Millet
- Amaranth
- Black Rice
- Farro
- Barley
- Quinoa
- Kamut
- Wheat Berries
- Buckwheat
- Spelt
- Bulgar
- Freekeh
- Sorghum
- Rye Berries



V. PUSH PLANT PROTEINS

Seeds, nuts, and legumes add a delicious bite to your salad bar. They bring texture and crunch into the mix while providing hearty plant-based protein. Create a custom seed mix to top salads. Bring out the natural earthy flavor of nuts by roasting them. Use spices and vinegars for heat and acid to brighten legumes.

SEEDS

- Sunflower
- Pumpkin
- Sesame
- Chia
- Flax
- Poppy
- Hemp

NUTS

- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Pistachios
- Cashews
- Pecans
- Hazelnuts
- Macadamia

LEGUMES

- Kidney Beans
- Lima Beans
- Green Lentils
- Edamame
- Tofu
- Chickpeas
- Snap Peas

Recipes

Grains

QUINOA TABOULI

Mix cooked quinoa with cherry tomatoes, cucumber, chopped parsley, mint, and scallions. Add minced garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, and season to taste.

Seeds

SEED MIXES

- ❖ Flax, sunflower, and pumpkin seeds
- ❖ Chia, sesame, and hemp seeds

Legumes

SPICY ROASTED CHICKPEAS

Heat the oven to 400° and tossing dry chickpeas with a light coat of olive oil, chili pepper, paprika, and cumin to taste in a bowl. Spread the chickpeas evenly on a baking sheet and cook for 30 minutes.

Recipes

KALE MASSAGE

Bitter greens like kale and turnip greens benefit from a short massage using olive oil. This softens the greens and can make them more palatable to customers trying them for the first time.

CRUCIFEROUS MIX

Shredded Kale +
Shredded Brussels Sprouts +
Shredded Broccoli

FURIKAKE BLEND

Use 4 sheets of unseasoned roasted nori. Cut into small strips with scissors. Add 1/2 cup of freshly ground toasted sesame seeds. Mix with 1/2 teaspoon each of sea salt and sugar.

VI. MODERNIZE YOUR GREENS

It's time to innovate past iceberg lettuce. Your customers expect to see colorful, exciting salad blends. Sourcing dark and cruciferous greens will give your customers an extra dose of crunch. Try adding these to the salad bar, or get creative and make a lettuce mix of your own.

- Arugula
- Brussels Sprouts, shredded
- Red, Green Cabbage, shredded
- Curly Kale
- Lacinato Kale
- Carrots Tops
- Turnip Greens
- Mustard Greens
- Beet Greens
- Broccoli, shredded
- Swiss Chard
- Mesclun
- Spinach
- Collard Greens



VII. SPICE IT UP!

Global spices can change the profile of your salad bar by making comforting flavors into accessible toppings. Develop your own house spice blend or fill up shakers with these old favorites.

ZA'ATAR [zah-tahr] is the Arabic name for an ancient herb blend that is still used in the Middle East, and typically includes dried herbs, sesame seeds, and salt.

NORI [nor-ee] is an edible seaweed commonly used as a garnish or sushi wrapper in Japanese cuisine.

PIMENTON [pim-en-tôn] is a foundational spice of Spanish cuisine, and is made from peppers that are dried and ground.

SHICHIMI TOGARASHI [shi-chim-ee tōg-ar-ashee] is Japanese for “7-flavor chile pepper” and often includes Sichuan pepper, shiso, garlic, hemp seed, poppy seed, sesame seed, ginger, citrus peel, and nori.

VIII. DRESS IT FROM SCRATCH

Offer a homemade dressing option to get your customers dreaming about their daily salad. With just a handful of ingredients, take your salad dressings from processed to pro. Using vegetables in your dressings is the perfect way to bring color and a boost of fiber into the mix. Here are some ideas to bring bold new dressings to the table.

For each recipe combine the following ingredients in a blender, emulsify the vinaigrettes by adding the oil last, and season with salt and pepper to taste. The recipes listed below will be sufficient for your staff to taste and modify for your operations.

TAHINI & MISO DRESSING



- 1/3 cup Tahini
- 1 tablespoon Miso Paste
- 2 Garlic Cloves
- 2 tablespoons Lemon Juice
- 1/3 cup Water as needed

BEETS & BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

- 1 cup Roasted Beets
- 1 tablespoon Lemon Juice
- 2 tablespoons Balsamic Vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon Mustard
- 1/4 cup Olive Oil

CARROT & GINGER VINAIGRETTE

- 1 cup Shredded Carrots
- 1" peeled Ginger, chopped
- 3 tablespoons Rice Vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Honey
- 1 tablespoon Miso Paste
- 1/4 cup Olive Oil









CHIPOTLE BUTTERMILK RANCH



- 1/2 cup Greek Yogurt
- 1 tablespoon Roasted Chipotles
- 1/2 cup low-fat Buttermilk
- 3 tablespoons Lime Juice
- 1/2 teaspoon Garlic Powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Onion Powder
- 1 teaspoon Dried Dill
- 1 teaspoon Dried Chives

IX. COMPOSE YOUR SALADS

Now you have all the tools you need to create a delicious and visually striking salad bar. Dedicate a portion of your salad bar to promoting your new ingredients, and include instructions teaching your customers how to assemble them. Be sure to include a display salad or specify the quantity of each ingredient in your instructions.

Salad Builder			
	Green		Fruit
	Grain/ Legume		Seed/ Nut
	Vegetable		Dressing
	Vegetable		Optional Spice

The Salad Builder Template will help you conceptualize new recipes. Below are recipes created with the template to get you started.

BEET & BERRY SALAD

- Arugula
- Green Lentils
- Roasted Beets
- Shaved Fennel
- Strawberries
- Toasted Walnuts
- Beets & Balsamic Vinaigrette

1

SPINACH & CHICKPEA SALAD

- Spinach
- Chickpeas
- Curried Cauliflower
- Roasted Zucchini
- Dried Currants
- Sunflower Seeds
- Tahini Miso Dressing
- Za'atar

2

RED CURRIED CARROTS & MANGO SALAD

- Shaved Cabbage Mix
- Black Rice
- Red Curried Roasted Carrots
- Edamame
- Mango
- Green Onion
- Carrot Ginger Vinaigrette
- Togarashi

3

SOUTHWEST CHOPPED SALAD

- Curly Kale
- Low-Sodium Black Beans
- Roasted Butternut Squash
- Cucumber
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Pumpkin Seeds
- Chipotle Buttermilk Ranch
- Pimenton

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XI. DESIGN YOUR LAYOUT

Use a layout grid as a visualization tool to help plan and cost the salad bar. Integrate the new options at your own pace.

The first layout has been partially integrated with ingredients for one new salad. The second layout has been fully integrated with two new salad options. The new additions are starred.



1st

★ Spinach	Romaine Lettuce	★ Curried Cauliflower	★ Roasted Zucchini	★ Chickpeas	Cucumber	Jicama	Snap Peas	Grapes	★ Sunflower Seeds	Balsamic Vinaigrette
					Cherry Tomatoes	Radish	Red Bell Pepper	Pineapple	★ Currants	★ Tahini Dressing


2nd

★ Spinach	★ Kale	★ Curried Cauliflower	★ Roasted Zucchini	★ Chickpeas	★ Low-Sodium Black Beans	★ Cherry Tomato	★ Butternut Squash	Strawberry	★ Sunflower Seed	★ Chipotle Ranch
			★ Currants	★ Cucumber	★ Grapes	★ Pineapple	★ Pumpkin Seed	★ Tahini Dressing		

XII. CRAFT YOUR MENU

Help your customers visualize details about the ingredients including how they were sourced, their color, texture, and preparation. The menus below describe the same dishes, but which would you rather eat?

In a study by Cornell's Food Psychology Lab, products with descriptive labels sold 27% more and were seen by customers as both a *better value* and of *higher quality* than the same products without descriptive labels.

origin 	texture	method	sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Homemade ❖ Local ❖ Seasonal ❖ Fresh ❖ Imported ❖ Traditional ❖ Ancient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Crispy ❖ Creamy ❖ Crunchy ❖ Tender ❖ Waxy ❖ Wilted ❖ Flaky 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Marinated ❖ Roasted ❖ Grilled ❖ Pickled ❖ Shaved ❖ Braised ❖ Toasted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Crisp ❖ Juicy ❖ Spicy ❖ Rich ❖ Umami ❖ Bitter ❖ Tart

Lunch Menu

Cauliflower salad with dried fruit and a mustard dressing

Grilled mushroom, chickpeas, artichoke and lemon dressing

Lunch Menu

Shaved cauliflower, creamy mustard seed vinaigrette, pickled cucumber, edamame, golden raisins

Grilled Portobello, crispy chickpeas, marinated artichokes, roasted lemon vinaigrette and fresh herbs





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1] Baum + Whiteman. 13 Hottest Food & Beverage Trends in Restaurant & Hotel Dining for 2017.

2] Wansink, Brian, James Painter, and Koert van Ittersum (2001), "Descriptive Menu Labels' Effect on Sales," Cornell hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, December 42: 4, 68-72.