

ON TREND:

SPECIALTY CHILES

EXPERTS HIGHLIGHT OPPORTUNITIES WITH CHILES



For 20 years, Haliburton International Foods has been blending food science and culinary excellence to bring the industry kitchen-crafted IQF Fire-Roasted vegetables, salsas, sauces, hummus and chile pepper products. Strategically located in Southern California, the largest year-round fresh vegetable market in North America, we process over 20 tons of product every hour, all certified to strict standards. By virtue of premium ingredients (more than 90% of our products are made from fresh vegetables), proprietary technology and culinary expertise, Haliburton is the market leader in many of the new flavor trends showing up on menus today, including that of specialty peppers like ancho, chipotle, habanero, guajillo and de arbol.

Haliburton's R&D team knows chiles, and they have a great understanding of the factors driving the interest and growth of chiles from both a consumer and operator perspective, and the ways operators can best benefit.



There are many factors driving the use of specialty chiles, but certainly one major influence is the **explosive demand for regionally specific ethnic foods**. After all, just about every culture uses chiles in some form or another. Whether it's a Black Oaxacan Mole made with chilhuacles negros, mulato, Mexican pasilla and mora chiles or Portuguese chicken with South African peri peri pepper sauce, chefs are keying in on authentically accurate ingredients.

Over the last few years, chef requests for regionally specific peppers like the pasilla de Oaxaca, New Mexican Hatch chile and aji amarillo have also risen. While supply is still limited on many of these niche peppers, the trend underscores the desire on the part of menu developers to have a story to tell about their food and flavors.

Menu differentiation is another factor driving interest in specialty chiles. For example, the chipotle still offers great complexity and dimension, but chefs are almost reluctant to call attention to it for fear of playing the same song over. A great way solution is to use multiple chiles in combination, like a three-chile roasted-tomato salsa made with toasted de arbol, morita (a form of chipotle) and guajillo chiles. Another technique is the use of multiple chiles and cooking techniques, like a Korean BBQ Burger with pickled vegetables using serrano, Fresno and baby sweet bells along with a sriracha- and lime-spiked mayonnaise.

Few ingredients like specialty peppers offer such **high-impact flavor** for a proportionately low cost, while providing menu authenticity and great marketing buzz.

RICH MARASCO, Director of Culinary



Consumers today are exposed to a much broader view of peppers than ever before through media awareness. Often, media attention focuses on the fiery "dare you to eat this" perspective, but now, consumers are becoming more informed about the **flavor impact chiles impart to food**.

All dayparts can be enhanced by the use of peppers and operators can add value and interest by calling out chile varieties on the menu. For breakfast, offer a three-pepper omelet by adding roasted jalapeño and red bell peppers to the omelet and drizzling with a California chile sauce. Transform a cheeseburger into a rajas burger with the addition of pepper-jack cheese and roasted poblano peppers. And grilled shrimp with an agave three-chile lime sauce is a flavorful addition to the entrée menu. The simple addition of a small amount of chiles creates a dramatic impact on the flavor and appeal of any menu item. Customers are looking for bold flavor, and the use of peppers can satisfy that craving.

DON MADERICH, Vice President



As consumers show more interest in and knowledge about a variety of specialty foods, especially global cuisines and flavors, culinarians must continue to be creative and develop menu items with a "Wow!" and a **flavor story**.

The use of specialty peppers like Aleppo, shishito, and Espelette brings character and interest to a familiar dish. Aleppo peppers add a fruity, raisin-like flavor with cumin undertones to a dish like pickled cauliflower and carrots. The Espelette pepper is a culinary icon in the Basque country of France and can add a little spice to a chocolate or mocha-caramel mousse. And a roasted shishito pepper can be a great addition to an edamame hummus, adding color and a little heat.

ROMANNA CLARK, Director of Research & Development

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