



The Journal



Las Vegas marks triumphant return as global entertainment hotspot; Illuminarium AREA15

Las Vegas; May 21, 2022 ; Illuminarium Las Vegas celebrated the grand opening of the flagship destination at AREA15. As guests made their way into the venue, they were greeted by Founder and CEO of Illuminarium Experiences, Alan Greenberg, and General Manager of Illuminarium Las Vegas, Calum Pearson. Over 900 guests enjoyed a uniquely curated montage of the Illuminarium experiences including WILD: A Safari Experience, O'KEEFFE: One Hundred Flowers, and SPACE: A Journey to the Moon & Beyond. To complete the evening, Illuminarium gave grand opening guests a sneak peek into their never-before-seen Illuminarium After Dark immersive ultra-lounge experience, featuring stunning visuals synced to the DJ's music in real-time.

“People who haven’t been here ask us, what is Illuminarium, and our usual answer is — it’s a place that can take you any place. But it’s really a place that can take you to your dreams,” said Greenberg. “Perhaps that dream is a once-in-a-lifetime safari experience, seeing one of the rarest animal sightings in the world, walking on the surface of the moon, kicking up moondust and leaving your own footprints like Armstrong, or an eye-popping journey inside the paintings of an American icon. Using a never-before-assembled combination of technologies, scale and content, we create the feeling that you are actually living your dream.”



Illuminarium Las Vegas



illuminarium
EXPERIENCES

Oscartek new cases and counters

One Hundred Flowers, Illuminarium Experiences' newest experience released on April 28 at Las Vegas' sister location in Atlanta, Georgia. O'KEEFFE: One Hundred Flowers will take guests on an immersive experience of color, texture, scent and interactivity through the iconic floral paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe, who is known as the 'Mother of American Modernism.' Inspired by the best-selling art book, the show brings the beauty of these works to life by amplifying the images on an unprecedented scale, to create a stimulating art experience that transports audiences directly into living paintings. The treasured floral stills are synced with a powerful all-female soundtrack creating a multisensory artistic vision available exclusively via Illuminarium's unique platform.

"Georgia O'Keeffe is one of the most admired Modernist painters and a celebrated icon for her crusade in creating a space for female artists," said Greenberg, CEO, Illuminarium Experiences. "We are inviting the public to experience her work like never before — a showcase of living-and-breathing virtual gardens of her most acclaimed pieces. For fans of O'Keeffe and the book Georgia O'Keeffe: One Hundred Flowers, this is the only opportunity for viewers to interact directly with her work, some of which is not on public display. For those not familiar with her art, this is a fantastic introduction, and we hope guests will continue their education well after their visit to Illuminarium."

In partnership with Illuminarium partner RadicalMedia, Illuminarium combines and amplifies techniques used in traditional motion picture production and virtual reality that allows visitors to experience real-world, filmed content and authentic, re-created worlds in an immersive environment, all without the use of glasses or wearable hardware. From the savannas of Africa to a journey through space, to an immersive art experience into Georgia O'Keeffe's most iconic work, guests are immersed in the story as it unfolds around them. The entertainment venue offers experiences including WILD: A Safari Experience and O'KEEFFE: One Hundred Flowers with SPACE: A Journey to the Moon & Beyond (launching soon).

Illuminarium Las Vegas also transforms to a nightly immersive 21 and over experience for Illuminarium After Dark. After Dark provides a new experience each night where the beauty of Illuminarium's daytime shows transforms into an adults-only escape. This reimagined nightlife environment transports guests to ever-changing, immersive settings including the night markets of Tokyo to the beautiful floral gardens of France, to a mysterious crystal cavern and beyond as they enjoy thematic drinks and perfectly paired bites.

Illuminarium Las Vegas is now open daily at 11 a.m. with the last entry at 7 p.m. for daytime admission. Evening programming at Illuminarium begins nightly at 8 p.m. for adults 21 and up.

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NRA 2022 – The trends driving the restaurant industry’s recovery.

By Donna Berry

CHICAGO – Foodservice food and beverage suppliers showcased the latest innovations at the National Restaurant Show held in Chicago May 21-24. Scattered among long-established Windy City brands, such as Vienna Beef, Eli’s Cheesecake and Grecian Delight, were restaurant operators from around the world sampling products that speak to consumer trends and at the same time ease the struggles the industry is facing in terms of labor and economics.



“There’s amazing food all over the world and we have barely scratched the surface,” said Zia Ahmed, senior director-dining services, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, during a session on food trends.

In terms of menu innovation, Dave Henkes, senior principal, and Lizzy Freier, menu research and insights, both with Chicago-based Technomic, discussed how to “drive business and delight guests” using their five “Ps.” The first “p” is to pivot. This involves rethinking the menu without adding too many new ingredients. One approach is to infuse dishes with new flavors or creating mashups that “combine the known and the unknown,” Ms. Freier said.

The average number of items on restaurant menus has been declining for the past several years, with COVID forcing restaurants to streamline offerings to focus on items that drive revenue and work best for takeout and delivery, Mr. Henkes said. At the same time, limited-time-offerings have been growing.

“Restaurants are trying to do more with less,” Mr. Henkes added. “This gives consumers something to be excited about.”

Technomic research shows 42% of consumers are more likely to try a new or unique flavor from a restaurant than when cooking at home. The data shows consumers order new or unique items from restaurants more than 25% of the time.

For operators, this may be accomplished by adding new flavors to a basic recipe. Suppliers on the expo floor showcased shortcuts to assist.

MegaMex Foods, a business of Hormel Foods Corp., Austin., Minn., for example, debuted Tres Cocinas pepper pastes. The concentrated pastes come in three profiles and are formulated to assist chefs with adding authentic flavor to Mexican cuisine. The ancho and pasilla variety features hints of dark



Oscartek booth at the NRA 2022

chocolate and dried fruit. The chipotle pepper paste includes adobo sauce for a balance of smoke and heat. The third offering is made with guajillo peppers and spices and provides a balanced, slightly sweet flavor with hints of berries.

The second “p,” according to Technomic, is preparation. Persistent supply chain woes are forcing operators to innovate with unique and varied preparations of ingredients on hand, Mr. Henkes said. This includes everything from freezing a cocktail that’s usually served on the rocks to give it a slushy texture to charring vegetables to give them a deeper flavor.

“Sixty-six percent of consumers rate preparation styles, such as grilled, roasted or braised an appealing method of imparting flavor,” Mr. Henkes said.

Labor savers also assist with preparation. Operators looking for ways to offer flavorful and innovative menus with reduced staff may turn to products such as fully-cooked chorizo crumbles and individually butcher paper-wrapped breaded spicy chicken breast Belgian-style waffle sandwiches from Tyson Foods, Springdale, Ark.

Numerous suppliers displayed labor savers in the beverage space, such as premium mixers for adult cocktails and the growing non-alcoholic mocktail category. Robots that make blended alcoholic drinks have become more sophisticated, with companies such as J&J Snack Foods Corp., Pennsauken, NJ, building on its Iced and Slush Puppie machines now offering a stream of spirits along with the fruity base mix.

Plant proteins are part of the third “p.” And, it was no surprise that plant-based meat manufacturers were out in full force on the expo floor. Three first-time exhibitors came from abroad.

Yo egg products Yo! is a plant-based egg concept.

Israel-based Yo Foods Ltd. featured Yo!, a plant-based egg concept for operators that comes in two parts — white and yolk — enabling the preparation of sunny-side-up and poached concepts. The white is formulated with peas while the yolk is based on chickpeas and colored with carrot powder.

Next Gen Foods offers Tindle plant-based chicken created for chefs. With global headquarters in Singapore, the company has aggressive expansion plans in the United States. Tindle is a versatile, uncooked product that chefs may form into everything from patties to balls to strips. It gets its flavor from an ingredient called lipi, which is a combination of sunflower oil and natural flavors formulated to simulate chicken fat.

SavorEat, an Israeli food technology company, introduced its robot chef platform that creates a personalized plant-based burger. Using an app, the robot chef allows diners to customize their patty — protein source and fat content — and cook it in minutes.

Speaking on food trends, John Li, vice president of culinary innovation, Wendy’s, Dublin, Ohio, said health and wellness of people and the planet will continue to fuel innovation in foodservice. He cited the acronym FARM, which stands for fresh, authentic, real and minimally processed, as a mantra to follow in product development.

“If you don’t have a product from a culinary standpoint, you’re going to fail,” Mr. Li said.

When it comes to the new plant-based protein offerings on the expo floor, “every evolution is getting better,” he said.

On the plant-based dairy side, the big news was ice cream mix products from several companies, including Ripple Foods, Emeryville, Calif. The liquid product comes in plastic gallon milk jugs in original and vanilla flavors. Operators may use it in soft-serve machines or freeze it in a churn.

The fourth “p” is personalization, which is what you get with many of the robot concepts introduced at the show. Such robots also assist operators with labor shortages, enabling them to better focus on the dining experience.

Self-serve menu boards and sophisticated apps put the consumer in the kitchen. Such customized dishes allow diners to order something tailored to their tastes.

Technomic’s fifth “p” was its predictions going forward. Technomic predicts that a very basic ingredient — salt — will be the focal point of menu innovations. It will go beyond being a basic taste to taking center stage in cocktails and foods.

Ms. Freier said 27% of consumers are eating more unique types of global foods and beverages now than they did pre-pandemic. She cited global flavors to watch are now coming from Mesoamerica, Western Africa and Western Asia, with new peppers adding spice and nuance to dishes.



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