

We know what you'll be eating this summer

Ever wondered why we're all snacking on street food and spiralizing our veg – and what we might be cooking in a year or so? Four trendspotters tell us how they predict what will end up on our plates and in our kitchens

interviews LIZZIE POOK *photographs* ALICIA TAYLOR
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The **meat** expert

Marks & Spencer Product developer Nicola Swift travels the world discovering and sampling new ways to cook and serve meat, with the aim of getting new products into an M&S store near you.

'Our trends team has eyes and ears all over the globe – chefs, writers, bloggers and retailers. But it's up to me to interpret what's going on in the world of meat. One of the most exciting parts of my job is the initial research. Once we've been given a brief – such as 'Deep South barbecue', or 'the Middle East', we'll start with a cuttings day, where we trawl through our trends library, a vast collection of new and old books covering every sort of cuisine, to pick out interesting recipes. We'll then make and taste dozens of recipes to see what works and what doesn't.

'Then, the travel starts. My big focus over the last year has been the States; the UK just can't compete with the southern barbecue belt, where the people are passionate and the techniques simple – just a little salt, pepper, smoke and slow cooking. When we're travelling, our days are full-on, so we'll be eating at a barbecue joint by 8.30am and will visit another eight to 10 restaurants throughout the day, sampling what's new in barbecued meats, fried chicken and fish. We've just brought out 20 new products in my area, including our Texas-inspired Smokehouse range.

Top summer trend Smoking remains huge. Thompson's restaurant, on the Isle of Wight, has a beautiful starter of pigeon carpaccio. It's smoked on the serving plate on the way to the table beneath a glass cloche, which is removed in front of the customer with the faintest wisp of smoke. Pure magic. I have also been seeing pokē, a Hawaiian raw fish & rice salad, absolutely everywhere recently.

What we'll be eating in the next six months A lot of artisan honey and honeycomb, boozy British stone fruits such as damsons and sloes, and truffles: on chips, in mash, in terrines – everywhere!

Who influences you?

@pidginlondon, a restaurant in Hackney offering a single set menu per week. It's innovative, deft, slightly bonkers-but-beautiful food.

Andrew Clarke (@fleurdelysldn), Chef director of Brunswick House Café. Gloriously intricate food made by the man with the best beard in London!

@TheFoodLab from Serious Eats on Twitter – a brilliant mix of trends and techniques.

🐦 @shedlikesfood

'When we're travelling, our days are full-on, so we'll be eating at a barbecue joint by 8.30am'



The man who sold us spiralizers

As Director of buying for Lakeland (lakeland.co.uk), Matthew Canwell finds inspiration for the company's best-selling ranges everywhere from the Olympics to *Star Wars* and *The Great British Bake Off*.

'South Korea, Japan and the US are almost sci-fi in what they use to prepare their food. So to stay ahead of the curve, we spend a lot of time at global ingredient and kitchenware fairs, such as the Summer and Winter Fancy Food Shows in New York and San Francisco and Ambiente in Germany, soaking up what's new or exciting.

'We build on this by partnering with a trends forecasting company every six months, looking at what colours and textures are being driven by events around the world. We're inevitably inspired by sporting fixtures like the Olympics or the World Cup, and cultural trends such as *Star Wars* or *The Great British Bake Off*, both of which inspired hugely popular Lakeland lines last year.

'We also rely on an enormous amount of ethnographic research – we visit customers in their homes to see how they cook and identify any problems that they're having – such as food splashing on the hob – so we can develop products to address those needs.

'It can take years for trends to trickle down to shoppers. We identified the trend for silicone bakeware about 10 years ago, but it took five or six years for people to trust and understand it. 'The spiralizer is undoubtedly the biggest product we have ever brought to the mass market, but we initially launched it too early. When we first put them in our stores in early 2014 they were left on the shelves – consumers just didn't really get it. However, as soon as Ella Woodward and the Hemsley Sisters started blogging about them at the end of 2014, people started to understand their potential. This saw sales take off and by the beginning of 2015, we sold a spiralizer every six minutes and even now they show no signs of slowing.

Top summer trend Rio will be front of mind, of course, which means we'll see a growth in Brazilian barbecue and plenty of green, yellow and blue kitchenware.

What we'll be eating in the next six months We're going to be seeing a lot of alcohol-based treats coming through, such as cupcakes that come with a pipette full of liqueur to inject into it before you eat it. People are starting to introduce more balance in their lives, so we'll be seeing healthier alternatives to our Christmas dinners.

Who do you follow on social media?

BuzzFeed is a great source of inspiration, and we're following new talent Joe Wicks (@[thebodycoach](https://twitter.com/thebodycoach)) and Lucy Bee (@[lucybeecoconut](https://twitter.com/lucybeecoconut)). Their knowledge and passion for creating healthy, great-tasting food is incredible. [@lakelanduk](https://twitter.com/lakelanduk)

'We launched spiralizers too early, but now sales show no signs of stopping'



The cookbook queen

Sarah Lavelle is Publishing director at Quadrille, one of the UK's key players in the cookery book market, whose current list includes books on posh burgers, 'nourish bowls' and coconut oil.

'It takes anything up to two years to get a cookbook off the ground, so we have to work hard to stay ahead of the game. I wish I had time to travel the UK, visiting farmers, chefs and artisans at their lovely smallholdings, but I don't. So I use my time wisely and focus on places like Bristol, which boasts an incredible food scene right now, and Wales.

'The Abergavenny Food Festival (17-18 September) is a key date. There are hundreds of street food traders there, so sometimes it's a case of seeing whose stall has the longest queue and heading in that direction. I adopt a similar approach at Street Feast in London. You can easily tell what's going to be popular in the next year or so by following the crowds.

That's how I came across the Hang Fire Smokehouse girls two years ago. I met them again at the BBC Food and Farming awards last year, where they won the award for Best Street Food. Now, we've just published their first cookbook and they've opened a restaurant – their lives have changed so much in a year.

'It's a case of seeing whose street food stall has the longest queue'

'Another huge influence for us is chefs' word of mouth. It's important to keep your eyes and ears open to know who people are talking about, and who might have a new enterprise that you can spin a book out of. It's extraordinary how easy it is to be in the know now. When I was first working in cookbook publishing in the early 2000s, there was only one online forum – *egullet.org*. Social media has, of course, changed all that.

Top summer trend Tacos. I met the Breddos Tacos guys at Street Feast and signed them up for a book soon after. Tacos are neat and portable – almost edible plates – the perfect summer festival food.

What we'll be eating in the next six months If my Instagram is anything to go by, porridge will be huge, topped with beautiful fruits and edible flowers.

Who influences you?

@munchies and @eater to get the insider knowledge on US food trends.

@marinagpoloughlin, restaurant critic and food writer par excellence. Her food knowledge is second to none, and I've followed her recommendations for years (turn to p132 for her feature on Berlin's foodie scene).

@boroughmarket, because it's around the corner from my office and if I see interesting produce or ingredients on their timeline, I nip round and buy them for dinner.

🐦 @InnatlyN8

The restaurant guru

Oliver Peyton is the founder of Peyton and Byrne (peytonandbyrne.co.uk), which runs cafés and restaurants at top London attractions including Kew Gardens and the National Gallery. He is also a judge on BBC Two's *Great British Menu* – look out for the new series at the end of August

'We constantly experiment and evolve our menus. What we're trying to identify is the way people eat. It's not just about fads – the fact that more and more people are choosing to eat gluten free – it's more about overriding behaviours and a way of life.

Specifically, we've noticed that no one eats red meat at lunch anymore – sitting down to a feast of cholesterol is a thing of the past. So we've put a lot more fish on our menus. It's a joy to have barbecued mackerel on offer and for people to actually order it!

'I travel less than I used to because I don't see the need – Britain is where it's at in terms of food right now, but I continue to be interested in Japan. If you want to see what's going to be happening with food packaging in 20 years' time, go to Japan. I remember being stopped at customs once with two suitcases heaving with packets of all shapes, sizes and colours, cans of beer and fizzy drinks.

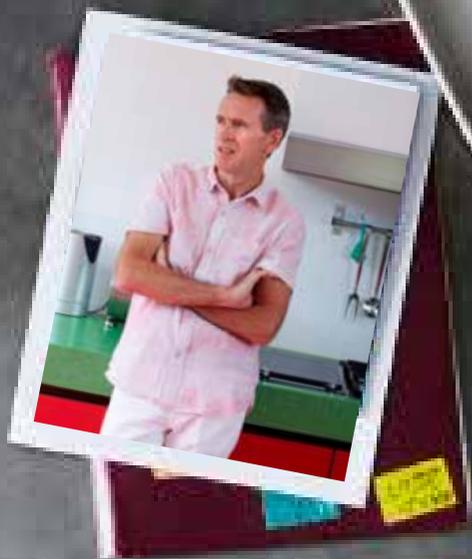
'A restaurant needs constant attention, and paying heed to what consumers want is crucial, so we keep our eyes open. You can't keep serving mozzarella if everyone wants burrata.'

Top summer trend It's all about social eating. We've changed our menu at Inn the Park from offering starters and mains to serving sharing plates, so people have more of a chance to graze.

What we'll be eating in the next six months It will become a more healthy celebration – the idea of turkey and a tin of chocolates is waning. We'll be using capon and goose in our restaurants, as well as barley risotto with fresh chestnuts and spelt.

Who influences you? I chop and change on social media, especially Instagram. But I always keep an eye out for [@TheNigelSlater](https://www.instagram.com/TheNigelSlater/), [@Food52](https://www.instagram.com/Food52/) and [@alifewortheating](https://www.instagram.com/alifewortheating/).

[@oliverpeyton](https://www.instagram.com/oliverpeyton/)



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