

They Work All Day Long



I had an epiphany the other day. I was rereading the 2015 edition of the Andrew Freeman & Company's (AF&Co) annual trend report when my worldview was suddenly changed forever. I will explain, but all in good time.

First, some backstory. In the event you've been hiding out in an impenetrable jungle or perhaps under the Earth's crust, let me bring you up to speed: every important foodservice publication, research firm and industry group makes predictions at the end of each calendar year about the coming year's dining trends. Some forecasts are obvious and some turn out to be amazingly insightful, while still others fail to hit the mark. One of the reports I look forward to reading is the one from the AF&Co because it offers proof of each trend in the guise of examples already being menued. One of their 2015 predicted trends is, quite simply, eggs for dinner. And I quote: "First it was poached then deviled; now the new 'it' egg

is scrambled. And we're talking way beyond breakfast. Scrambled eggs are what's for dinner."

I was shocked and amazed, but not for the reason you're thinking. I'd seen scrambled eggs on menus outside breakfast hours, of course. What so surprised me was this: I was looking at eggs as a breakfast food that was periodically finding its way into other dayparts – a visitor in alien places. But in fact, without me noticing, the egg had been morphing into a food that actually was at home in other dayparts.

Beyond the ubiquity of egg-topped burgers, consider soft-cooked eggs on salads like the Farro Cobb Salad with bacon, tomato, blue cheese, arugula, avocado and slow cooked egg at Iris café in NYC. Appetizer menus are comfy places for eggs, with items like Smoked Mackerel, Pumpernickel, Soft Egg and Aioli at Balena in Chicago, and the Hen Egg appetizer made with celery root, watercress, and vin jaune at Canlis in Seattle. And bar food? Just look to the Poutine with marinated cheese curds, duck gravy and fried egg at One Mile House in NYC, or Crispy Deviled Eggs at Rustico in DC. Acorn in Denver menus a Shaved Porchetta & Kimchi Sandwich with fried egg, house-made beer mustard and cucumber; and Poached Egg, Brussels Sprouts, Tasso Ham, Delicata Squash and Salsa Verde is offered at Nopa in San Francisco.

Yes, I know the Kale and Wild Mushroom Paella with crispy artichokes and egg served at Gato in NYC won't migrate to family restaurants' dinner menus any time soon, but you should keep an eye open for other dinner items. And if AF&Co is correct, they'll be scrambled.