

# Trends to watch

McCormick's second global Flavour Forecast reveals the international flavour trends the food manufacturer expects to emerge in years to come, discovers Ylla Wright.

McCormick & Company has unveiled its McCormick Flavour Forecast 2013 to an audience of industry insiders at an event at the Sydney Opera House.

Now in its thirteenth year, the report is an annual spotlight on the food trends that the company expects to see emerge over the next few years. In its second year as a global report, the Flavour Forecast was developed through a year-long consultation process with food experts including chefs, dieticians, sensory scientists, food technologists and trend trackers from 100 countries around the globe.

Alan Wilson, chairman, president and chief executive of McCormick, believes the forecast allows McCormick's to lead the way in "identifying flavour trends that serve as catalysts for innovation in many favourite retail brands and restaurant menus, including our own products".

Michelle Thrift, a senior home economist with McCormick Foods Australia, has been involved in putting the forecast together from the

start, travelling to London early last year for a "global summit" which saw experts from around the world come together to discuss local and regional themes, and those which transcended borders.

"For Australia we had some key regional influences to consider; health and wellness, brand heritage, an ageing population and technology," she said. "We also discovered some key trends; indulgence, elaborate products and services, elaborate ingredients, and personalisation.

"Key flavours were boutique spirits, salted caramel, cider apples and charcoal wood smoke, and you'll notice some of these did get through to the forecast this year."

With the broad themes identified, a series of flavour combinations and recipes illustrating them were developed and fine-tuned over the course of the year. The result is five trends that McCormick's believes will drive new product development and innovative menu additions over the coming years,

and 10 accompanying flavour combinations that illustrate how these trends come to life.

According to McCormick executive chef Kevan Vetter the results showed a "fascinating collision of tradition and innovation".

"Authentic, real ingredients are still at the core – though now they're being enjoyed in unique, updated ways that reflect a much more personalised approach to cooking and eating," he said.

Amongst the featured trends is "Global My Way," which describes how people are discovering formerly "ethnic" ingredients beyond their traditional uses and incorporating those flavours into everyday eating.

"Don't be surprised if in the next few years Japanese Katsu, a tangy cross between barbecue and steak sauce, and cajeta, a Mexican caramel, gain the broad appeal that once-regional tastes like Asian hot chilli sauce have achieved," said Vetter.

Other trends identified were "No Apologies Necessary" which pairs sumptuous flavours such as



bitter chocolate, sweet basil and passionfruit for the "gratification of a momentary escape"; "Personally Handcrafted", which favours a rustic hands-on approach combining ingredients such as smoked tomato, rosemary, chilli and sweet onion to energise handcrafted ketchup,

saucy, jams and more; "Empowered Eating", which creates health and wellness through mixing unexpected ingredients, flavours and textures such as broccoli and Middle Eastern dukkah; and "Hidden Potential", which looks for new combinations of familiar ingredients such as

artichoke, paprika and hazelnut.

Don't expect to see these combinations on menus immediately though; Thrift says there is a "flavour acceptance curve", which means that emerging trends identified now will start appearing in the next couple of years and becoming mainstream within five.

Certainly many of the unfamiliar ingredients identified in past reports have now entered the mainstream. When chipotle (smoke dried jalepeno chillies) was featured in the Flavour Forecast 2003, it was virtually unknown amongst consumers, however since then, the number of dishes on US menus mentioning chipotle have increased by 214 per cent, according to a Mintel Menu Insights report. Sweet potato, which was mentioned in the 2008 forecast, has also taken off, with McCain's recently releasing sweet potato wedges.

"Already with the 2012 [predictions], we're noticing a lot of eggplant and harissa dips, and more vanilla butter products coming out," says Thrift.

With the McCormick's team looking forward to seeing how their predictions play out over the years to come, Thrift believes the forecast highlights the importance of "elevating authentic ingredients through individualised inspirations, a modern sensibility and innovative techniques".

The report can be found at [www.mccormick.com.au/flavourforecast](http://www.mccormick.com.au/flavourforecast).

## 'Empowered eating': Dukkah crusted fish with broccoli & red lentils

Makes: 6 servings



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Dukkah enhances white fish with Middle Eastern spice and texture. Served on a bed of Chinese broccoli and red lentils, this dish is high in fibre and flavour.

### 250g red lentils

250g Chinese broccoli, broccoli rabe, broccolini or other broccoli variety

6 firm white fish fillets (125g each)

½ cup Dukkah Spice Blend

3 tbsp olive oil, divided

1 cup finely chopped shallots

2 tsp grated lemon peel

½ tsp McCormick Mint Flakes

2 cups quartered grape or cherry tomatoes

½ cup (125ml) unsalted vegetable or

### chicken stock

¼ cup lemon juice

¼ teaspoon McCormick Sea Salt

Soak lentils in cold water 20 to 30 minutes. Drain. Bring 1 litre of water to boil in a medium saucepan. Add lentils and cook for 5 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water. Set aside.

Trim tough bottom stems of Chinese broccoli. Coarsely chop stems and leaves. Set aside.

Moisten fish fillets lightly with water. Coat 1 side of each fillet generously with 2 teaspoons of the Dukkah Spice Blend. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in large nonstick frying pan on medium heat. Add fish, spice blend-side down, and

cook 3 to 5 minutes per side or until golden brown and fish flakes easily with a fork. Remove fish to serving platter. Keep warm.

Heat remaining 1 tablespoon of oil in same frying pan on medium heat. Add shallots; cook and stir for 3 minutes or until softened. Add Chinese broccoli, lemon peel and mint; cook and stir for 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, lentils, stock, lemon juice and salt; cook and stir 1 to 2 minutes or until most of liquid has been absorbed and Chinese broccoli is tender yet still crisp. Stir in 2 tablespoons of the remaining Dukkah.

To serve, spoon Chinese broccoli mixture onto each plate. Top with fish fillet. Serve with remaining Dukkah for sprinkling, if desired.

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