

# Trend & Taste

THE WORLD OF NEW FOOD & EATERTAINMENT



## Small is beautiful!

**Small Portions, great Potential**

**T**he concept of the 'proper meal' as a classic three-course menu comprising starter, a main course and dessert remains embedded within us as a gut instinct. Its long tradition has also leant it justification. But what does our stomach actually tell us? Doesn't such a menu often include something we're not that fond of, or something we'd like to have had a little more of? Or perhaps you spot something on your dinner partner's plate that you'd rather like to try? And in any case, haven't we all yet again ended up eating too much? But what would happen if we freed ourselves completely from the three-course idea? After all, it's important what the dishes contain rather than the order in which they are eaten. Shouldn't the **sensory pleasure of food** be our primary concern? So let's get away from the idea of food as simply a source of nourishment, away from the tried and tested menu whose changeless structure can, after a while, become boring.

### The Best of all Worlds

The movement towards the creation of a new dining culture has already prompted changes in countries such as the USA and England that should soon be winning plaudits from

food-lovers in Europe too. The buzz expression among the fine dining community, notably in London, is 'small plates'. This concept is based on the philosophy of the classical starter, but presents a number of smaller dishes as a substitute for the traditional main course. As the food on the plates changes, a new focus for communication emerges. The talk turns from the weather to the small delicacies on a friend's or business partner's plate. The mood lightens and a tasty and enjoyable experience is guaranteed for all as conversation circulates easily between mouthfuls of food. Instead of a single heaped plate, our hunger is satisfied by a succession of dishes that are modest in scale but high on taste and huge on variety. The forerunners of the concept were the Spanish with their Tapas, the Middle East with their Mezze and the Japanese with their Sushi. But while they each focus on a single, ethnically homogeneous cuisine, the small plates experience is characterized by its **creative mix**. Crossover cuisine is the name of the game, creating heady combinations from the best that a range of culinary cultures have to offer. For the caterer that means **providing a wide variety of choice from among a large number of smaller dishes**.

Continued page 2

**"Small Plate – Big Taste!"**

IN THIS EDITION

- **Anpuff für den Champion Burger**
- **Asiatische Innovationen**
- **Die Zukunft des Foodservice**
- **Fast Food im All**
- **Neue Sushi-Creationen**
- **Der neue Trend im Bio-Markt**
- **HITBurger® Plus – größer, schneller, besser**

## FOREWORD

Dear Reader!

Allow me to ask a provocative question: Are we and our industry still heading towards the kind of goals that will enable us to build a successful future? What do we really know about our customers? We can certainly access reams of quantitative data. But these only show us where needs either have or haven't been met. Is that actually all we need?

■ What do we know about our guests whose hunger and thirst it is our job to satisfy? The main culprits for the long-standing sales downturn in Germany's restaurant trade are generally viewed as being the sometimes huge price rises implemented since the introduction of the euro and the generally poor state of the country's economy. The simple response to this trend has been for the trade to demand ever lower prices from wholesalers, and wholesalers to seek the same from food producers. Rising raw material prices and other factors mean these demands often remain unmet. But since price has become the determining factor for all players in the industry, they then find themselves forced to 'optimise quality' – i.e. cut costs – and have learnt to sell the results as 'innovations'.

■ In consequence, each segment in the market machinery has fixed its own screws according to the principle: 'the main thing is that my part is running'. The demands the industry faces grow ever greater, while profits shrink. Only a few participants ever ask themselves whether the end product is still up to scratch. However, people's lifestyles, their attitude towards food and free time, their requirements and the economic environment in which they operate have all changed dramatically. And so, of course, has the way in which people's needs are met.

(→ Continued last page)

**SALOMON®**