

# Create Craveable Dishes with Sauces and Condiments

Sauces and condiments add oomph to recipes, and to sales! Learn the latest variations on classics, along with new ideas to keep adventurous patrons' palates happy.



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In recent years, flavor has emerged as one of the best strategies an operator has to create craveable signature dishes that will stand out from the competition. Sauces and condiments are among the most effective tools for doing just that. They also represent an easy way to bring menu staples like sandwiches and grilled proteins.

## Second-Gen Sauces and Dips

Chefs have been turning classic mother sauces into signatures for hundreds of years.

- **Compound Butter** – It's an old kitchen trick to mix softened butter with flavorings, then roll or portion, and chill to elevate grilled meats, vegetables, bread service, and more. Try fresh herbs, roasted red pepper, citrus juice, maple syrup.
- **Salsa** – Beyond the tomato-based relish served with chips, salsa has morphed into an infinitely variable sauce/dip that can encompass seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables like peach and corn, different chiles, and even proteins like crab.
- **Vinaigrettes** – These oil-based dressings are for more than just salads, and can be varied with many different ingredients to create a light, signature sauce for a variety of foods: mustard-shallot, black or green olives, Parmesan-peppercorn, bacon, etc, etc, etc.
- **Broth** – More than just a poaching medium or a base for soup or stew, broth can function like a spoonable sauce in which to float a delicious, healthy main course. Consider roasted cod and clams in seafood broth or lamb shank in a vegetable-packed mirepoix broth.
- **BBQ Sauce** – Turn basic 'cue sauce on its ear by adding root beer or cola, hoisin sauce, branded spirits or beer, relish, five spice, and more. Or investigate regional and international variations like Alabama-style white sauce or peanut-and-soy Indonesian.

## C is for Condiments

While ketchup and mustard may be the most well-known condiments, the word refers to anything that is used to season food, from a simple marinade to an elaborate sauce. Ethnic condiments like gochujang and sriracha are still trending big, but there are many more traditional condiments that are worth another look.

- **Pesto Variations** – Originally a flavorful combination of basil, pine nuts, and cheese hailing from Italy, the concept behind pesto has expanded to include a variety of different herbs, nuts, and other ingredients, from pistachio-mint to sun-dried tomato. Pesto can also be made without nuts, if allergies or expense are a concern.
- **Savory Jams** – As a spread for sandwiches or an accompaniment to grilled meats, savory jams combine the best of all possible flavor worlds. Bacon jam has become especially popular, especially on burgers, but the possibilities are limited only by imagination.
- **Asian Fish Sauce** – Not just for Asian food, this group of bottled sauces—generally made with anchovies, salt, and water—has become a favorite of cooks looking to boost umami and set a variety of different foods apart (without tasting fishy).
- **Aioli and Flavored Mayo** – The adaptable flavor of classic French aioli (basically a garlic-flavored mayonnaise) has helped morph the category into a much more wide-ranging group of condiments that embrace many flavors, from horseradish to fresh dill.
- Speaking of ketchup and mustard, use these ever-popular favorites with additions to create everything from Bloody Mary ketchup to Roasted Garlic Mustard.