

Get the Most Out of Eggs

Find out how eggs can break out of breakfast into multiple dayparts. As a main course, in a sandwich or on hash, eggs are right morning, noon, and night.



There's more to eggs than scrambling them and serving them with toast and bacon. In fact, there's more to eggs than breakfast. Eggs in all their different guises can and should be used to round out not only breakfast selections, but also brunch, lunch, dinner, and late-night menus. Eggs are nutritious, low in cost, and high in value, and are extremely versatile. They're also widely popular with patrons, and they fit with many vegetarian diets.

According to Datassential's February 2017 issue of Creative Concepts, focusing on the breakfast opportunity, 31% of restaurant operators offer breakfast at dinner, a phenomenon the research company tags "brinner."

Certain types of egg specialties lend themselves particularly well to applications beyond breakfast:

Frittatas and Quiche—These multi-portion baked-egg specialties—originally hailing from Italy and France, respectively—are perfect for situations that call for cook-ahead convenience. Crustless frittatas can be baked in tart or pie pans, or in larger hotel pans or even sheet pans. Quiches, in which the egg mix is baked in a crust, are generally baked in the shape of a pie but can also be made in individual, one- or two-bite molds that are perfect for catering. In either case, the eggs themselves can be mixed with any number of other ingredients, from vegetables to meats and cheeses, which make both the frittata and the quiche a perfect vehicle for cross-utilizing other ingredients. And both can be kept warm in a steamtable or rethermed to order.

For more egg-based ideas, see below.

Benedicts—The poached egg's sophisticated cousin is the second-most popularly menued egg specialty served on restaurant menus (omelets are the first), with 36.3% penetration according to

Datassential. The traditional Benedict may consist of a poached egg and Canadian bacon on an English muffin topped with Hollandaise sauce, but the variations on the meat are many, including:

- Crab cakes
- Lobster or shrimp
- Fried chicken
- Avocado and tomato
- Meatballs or chili
- Creamed spinach or spinach-artichoke dip
- Smoked salmon
- Specialty ham, bacon, or other cured meat

The platform can also be swapped out (such as a biscuit with fried chicken), and so can the sauce (cheese sauce, Alfredo, and Bearnaise are just three of the possible substitutions for Hollandaise). The only constant, in fact, is the egg.

Salads—Not just the deli kind with chopped hardboiled eggs and mayo; there are a number of composed salads that feature eggs, including the chef's salad, Cobb (greens topped with turkey or chicken, avocado, blue cheese, bacon, and hardboiled egg), and Nicoise (a Provencale-French specialty of greens, tuna, string beans, potatoes, anchovies, and olives, garnished with an h-b egg). Another great salad is the French-bistro specialty frisee lardon, curly frisee lettuce greens studded with bacon and topped with a warm poached egg, the yolk of which mixes into the mustardy dressing when the customer cuts it open.

Sandwiches—Egg sandwiches are a natural at breakfast, especially where there's takeout, but more substantial ones also work for other dayparts. For your consideration:

- Croque Madame—This variation on the Croque Monsieur takes the original's base of ham, Gruyere cheese, and mustard, grilled and covered with béchamel sauce, and tops it off with a fried egg
- Torta—Mexican sandwiches on crusty bolillo rolls often include fillings of crumbled chorizo sausage, egg, and avocado
- Potatoes and Eggs—Sliced fried potatoes cooked with loosely scrambled eggs on a soft but crusty roll are a classic Italian-deli favorite

Hash—Traditionally topped with poached or fried eggs, hash has grown almost 10% in menu mentions according to Datassential. While corned beef is the classic, variations from roasted vegetable to duck confit are showing up on menus. The research firm cites the following examples from chain menus around the country:

- Pot Roast Hash, First Watch
- Chicken Bacon Avocado Hash, Village Inn
- Sirloin Tip Steak Hash, Village Inn
- Poached Salmon Hash, Baker's Square
- Smoked Brisket Hash, First Watch
- Andouille Potato Hash, Elephant Bar & Restaurant

Not only are such specialties a good usage for proteins used in other applications, they're also appropriate for lunch, dinner, and late-night dayparts.

