

What new wonders does 2016 hold for us in the world of food and drink? Rachel Walker offers some predictions.

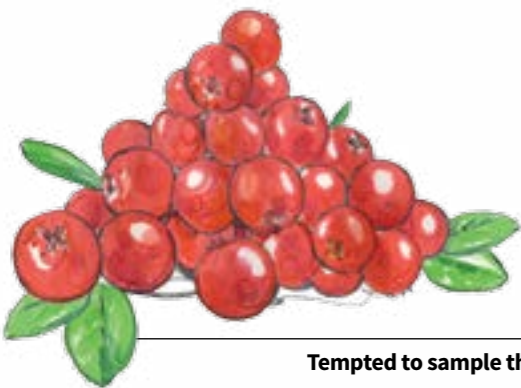
The best of trends



Rachel Walker is a food writer and trends expert. She is food and drinks editor at Reader's Digest and a regular contributor to The Sunday Times food section.

SCANDINAVIAN

Apart from the lucky few who have managed to score a table at Noma or Fäviken, most of us have had to follow the rise of Nordic cuisine from afar. Recent months have seen developments closer to home – the opening of London's new-wave Scandi restaurant Rök Smokehouse, and the release of legendary chef Magnus Nilsson's culinary anthology, The Nordic Cookbook, which will have us all sousing herrings and hunting down British lingonberries before the year is out.



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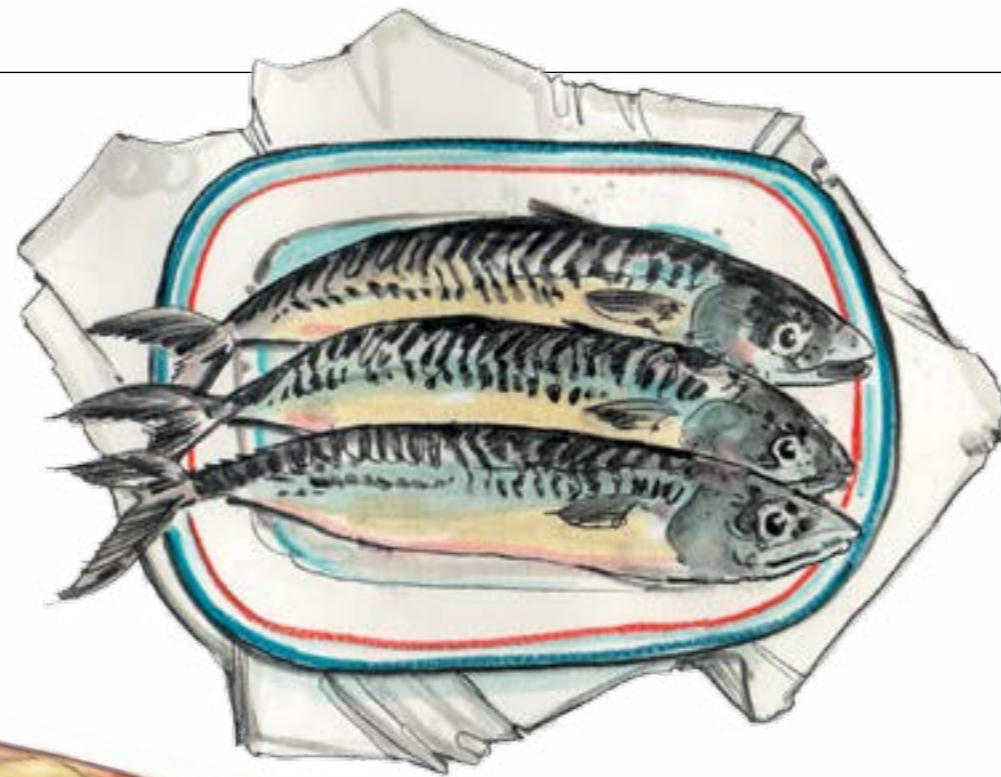


BRITISH CHARCUTERIE

The rise of British charcuterie has seen venison bresaola and game salami make their way onto meat platters, in place of German salamis and Spanish jamón. A wave of British restaurants has started curing their own meat – the bar menu at London's Clove Club features 'house salami' from Tamworth pigs.

SUGAR ALTERNATIVES

If 2014 saw the explosion of free-from eating, then 2015 could be defined by sugar-shaming, with a surge of interest in maple syrup, agave, jaggery and dates as alternatives to refined sugars. As the year came to a close, Deliciously Ella's date and cacao power balls ousted the afternoon Twix on many desks around the country, setting a precedent for this year too.



SMALL FISH

Mackerel, sardines and herring are set to rise to culinary fame after top chefs from around the world pledged to revamp their image as part of action group Oceana's 'Save the Oceans, Feed the World' campaign. Their stocks replenish faster than large fish like turbot and halibut, making them an ethical choice. The timing fits neatly with the buzz surrounding Scandi food and a boom in tapas bars. Look to London restaurant Barrafinna's gourmet sardine on toast for inspiration.

TURKISH

Recent launches have challenged the unfair association of Turkish restaurants with late-night kebabs. Wagamama founder Alan Yau's restaurant Babaji specialises in pide or 'Turkish pizza', while Ottolenghi protégé Selin Kiazim's recent London launch, Oklava, focuses on fresh Turkish-Cypriot flavours and an all-Turkish wine list. The publication of Essential Turkish Cuisine (Engin Akin) will see home cooks making their own pides and rolling vine leaves.

SRI LANKAN

The newest trend from the Indian sub-continent has Sri Lankan cuisine at its heart. It draws most similarities with the light, coconut-enriched dishes of Southern India, but instead of dosas, expect 'hoppers' – edible bowls made from bubbly coconut



batter, containing fragrant curries, fresh herbs and the occasional egg. Street-food joints like Weligama (Druid Street Market, London) are leading the way, along with recently opened Hoppers (Frith Street, London).

TOASTIES

If a Breville Toastie machine conjures images of university halls, then prepare for a wave of nostalgia as the retro comfort food undergoes a makeover. Toastie vans are becoming common at festivals, street-food markets and on high streets. Manchester's Northern Soul features delights such as 'Cuban Pete' (smoked Montgomery Jack cheese, pulled pork, ham, dill pickle and French mustard).

SCOTTISH GIN

'Mother's Ruin' might be associated with Hogarth's London, but the growth in craft distilleries north of the border has triggered a boom in Scottish gins. Many make use of local or traditional botanicals, including Caorunn Gin, which harnesses the flavour of heather, rowan berry and bog myrtle.



Caorunn Gin
70cl £27
(£38.57 per 1L)

Foodie fashion

Easy ways to stay on point with the latest food trends



Woodall's British Smoked Pancetta 100g £3.99
Woodall's have been making British charcuterie in Cumbria for over 200 years.



Noilly Prat Original Dry 75cl £11 (£14.67 per 1L)
A classic dry French Vermouth that's ideal for drinking over ice.



Echiré Unsalted Butter 250g £3 (£12 per kg)
Loved by chefs in many of the world's top restaurants – and we love it too.



Waitrose Frozen Mackerel Fillets Sustainably Sourced 380g £4.59 (£1.21 per 100g)
Mackerel from the North-East Atlantic.



East End Jaggery Goo Unrefined Cane Sugar 450g £1.29 (28.7p per 100g)
Valued for its rich flavour in Indian and Sri Lankan cooking.

ILLUSTRATION: JANE WEBSTER

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