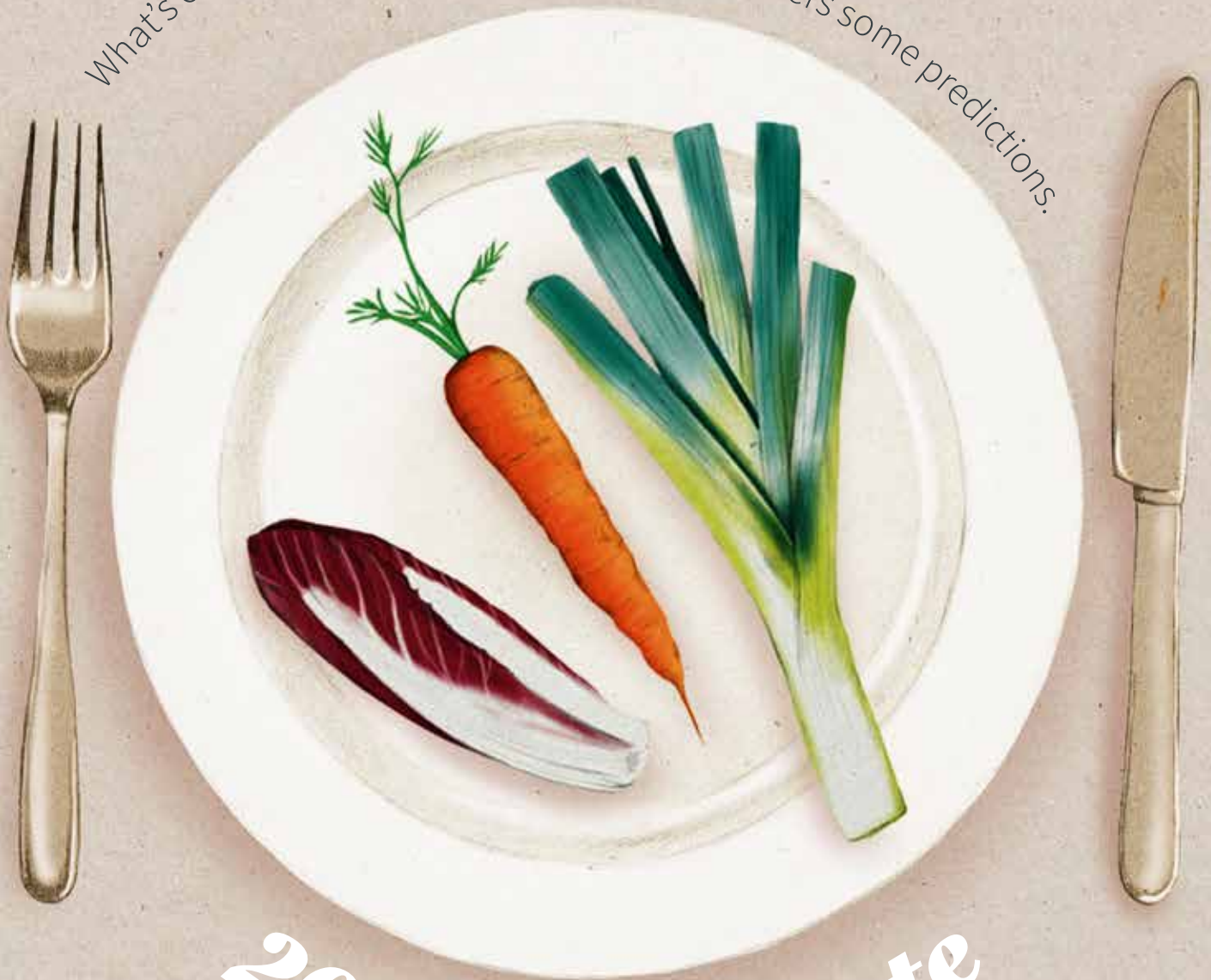


What's on the menu for the coming year  
in the world of food and drink?  
**Rachel Walker** offers some predictions.



# 2017 on a plate

ILLUSTRATION: KELLY THOMPSON

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**TURMERIC**

Bright yellow turmeric teas, smoothies, ice cream and even lattes have been popping up on social media feeds, as the frenzy grows around the Indian spice. Its bold health claims and culinary potential have made it a hit among food fashionistas, with Google search terms of ‘turmeric’ increasing a whopping 56% from November 2015 to January 2016. In fresh form, the unremarkable root resembles its cousin, ginger. But it grinds into a vivid yellow powder thanks to a compound called curcumin, which is responsible for both colour and also many of the health claims. It is increasingly available in capsule form, but keen cooks will prefer experimenting with fresh turmeric, pastes and powders, instead – using it to add colour to jewelled rice, in turmeric-tahini dressing, traditional semolina cake (sfouf) and teas. **Lucy Bee Organic Raw Fair Trade Turmeric Powder** 250g **£5.75** (£2.30 per 100g)

**LOW-TO-NO ALCOHOL**

If the past few years have been dominated by artisanal spirits and cocktail connoisseurship, then this is the year that we start to rein it back in. Not necessarily by drinking less, but by cutting down on alcohol. Launches like **Seedlip** – the world’s first non-alcoholic spirit – suggest that there’s a thirst for products that protect against pounding heads the next morning. The craft spirit is distilled like gin and has distinctive botanical notes, but 0% ABV. Sceptics were quickly quietened when bottles cropped up in some of the best bars in the country and Seedlip Martinis started appearing on menus. It’s part of a broader movement of falling alcohol consumption (down 19% from 2004) which is behind other low-to-no alcohol launches, like **Botonique** – an alcohol-free fizz. Companies like Gallo, First Cape and Torres have recently brought out low-alcohol wines, which coincides with a revival of naturally low-alcohol wines – we may well see in the next year with a glass of Lambrusco or sparkling Moscato.



**CELERIAC**

Who would’ve thought that vegetables would fall in and out of fashion so quickly? First it was avocado, then kale and cauliflower – but this season, celeriac is a hot spot on menus. Mussels are cooked in ‘celeriac milk’ at Poco in East London, and Sat Bains has sneaked the traditionally savoury root vegetable into a sweet bread-and-butter pudding at his Michelin-starred Nottingham restaurant. The root is low in calories, it’s easy to use and has a complex flavour, which peeps up plain mash or soup – making it a cheap way to bring a gourmet twist to everyday dishes. Look out for celeriac in just-launched cookbooks for ever-inventive uses, from the celeriac fritters in Trine Hahnemann’s Scandinavian Comfort Food, to the cobnut and celeriac soup in Gather by Gill Meller, and the whole-baked celeriac in Food From the Fire by Niklas Ekstedt. **Waitrose Celeriac & Potato Dauphinoise** 420g **£2.99** (71.2p per 100g)



**VENISON**

Gone are the days when venison was the preserve of game lodges and country clubs. Last year, sales of deer meat soared 400%, with supermarket ranges making it a viable midweek meal. The health benefits of eating venison have helped heighten its appeal – it’s a lean meat, loaded with vitamins and rich in iron. British game restaurants have undergone a makeover too, and their fusty reputation is being revamped thanks to chains like The Jugged Hare and Mac & Wild, whose venison scotch eggs and award-winning ‘veni-moo’ burger pull in the crowds. Braised muntjac shoulder is on the menu at Pot Kiln (Berkshire) as an alternative Sunday roast, and the plates of venison with squash, spelt and blackcurrants served at Cail Bruich in Glasgow demonstrate how elegant game can be. At Michelin-starred Indian restaurant Gymkhana (London), venison is used in the keema naan – showing how it holds its own in spiced dishes, and proving that this versatile meat really is in vogue. **Hampshire Game Venison Steak** 250g **£6.12** (£24.48 per kg)



**JEWISH DELIS**

Salt beef is hardly the ‘new kid on the block’ – but this is the year that we’ll find ourselves going gaga over gherkins and getting schmaltzy about schnitzel, with a new flurry of Jewish delis and Israeli-inspired offerings. Both Cure & Cut and Tongue & Brisket are new to Soho. They join a group of modern Jewish delis – including Aaron’s Deli in Bristol and Ira B’s in Leeds – that are taking classics to a new level. There’s the Reuben at Cure & Cut (smoked pastrami, melted Emmental and sauerkraut, grilled on soft rye) and the Sunday Breakfast Special at Ira B’s – which consists of six bagels, ¼ lb tub of cream cheese and ½ lb smoked salmon. The trend also broadens out to chefs who are innovating with Jewish deli-style dishes – such as The Good Egg (London), whose hogget shawarma, za’atar fried chicken and house bourekas demonstrate the potential for fantastic fusion food. L’chaim! **Waitrose British Salt Beef** 100g **£3.49** (£3.49 per 100g)



**PASTA**

When clean-eating guru Gwyneth Paltrow included a carbonara recipe in her latest cookbook, it was a sure sign that this once-exiled carb had been invited back in from the cold. Paltrow’s U-turn on spaghetti left her musing about how it was, “cosy, comforting and shockingly easy to make”, and she’s not alone in rethinking pasta. A new wave of specialist pasta bars suggests an insatiable appetite for anelli to ziti and everything in between. Queues snake down the road outside Padella (Borough Market) – which has quickly racked up awards since launching in 2016, including the ‘Best Dish’ at the London Restaurant Award for Pici Cacio e Pepe (parmesan, black pepper and garlic). Salford launch Vero Moderno has also set hearts aflutter with its fettuccine that is “creamed at your table in a whole wheel of parmesan”, and crowds flock to Bristol newcomer Pasta Loco for negronis and gnocchi – showing that pasta is firmly back on the menu. **Garofalo Organic Casarecce Pasta** 500g **£2.09** (41.8p per 100g)



**‘VEG-CURIOUS’**

First it was Meat Free Mondays, then root-to-shoot eating was all the rage... and now ‘veg-curious’ is the latest buzzword in the drive to get us eating more vegetables. The campaign, founded by the Eating Better Alliance, explains that veg-curiosity is “the proclivity to experimentation and trying new eating choices (particularly where it comes to eating vegetables in new ways).” It’s fronted by chef Bruno Loubet, whose sustainable London restaurant Grain Store is known for dishes in which meat or fish often play second fiddle to a vegetable lead (think: grilled leeks with lovage pesto and lardo, or chickpea ‘crêpe’ topped with fennel purée, herb salad and anchovies). The campaign falls into a wider trend of veg-focused cooking on the rise – from 2010 to 2015 there was a whopping 257% rise in global food and drink launches with vegan claims. Whether it’s ‘chilli con veggie’ or wild mushroom choux buns, the key – aside from seasonality and sustainability – is, undoubtedly, creativity. **For more inspiration visit our recipes section at ocado.com and select ‘vegetables’ as the main ingredient.**

**What’s hot?**

Keep up to date with the latest food trends



**Botonique Dry White: The Botanical Soft Drink for Wine Lovers** 75cl **£5.99** Has a light fizz, with hints of gin and vermouth.



**Wholegood Organic Fresh Turmeric** 90g **£2.25** (£2.50 per 100g) Grate into smoothies or thinly slice and add to salads.



**Gilbert’s Kosher Salt Beef Brisket** Typically 1.6kg (£14.50 per kg) Brined salt beef brisket boiling joint.



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.

ILLUSTRATION: KELLY THOMPSON

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