

# Dine and dash: The best products to get the attention of the grab-and-go customer

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SUNDAY, JULY 14TH 2019, 11:28

WRITTEN BY: ANNE BRUCE

**Today's consumers are strapped for time but always looking out for something special, so Anne Bruce explains how to adapt your grab-and-go offering to maintain your audience's attention**

Grab-and-go once meant a bag of crisps and a Fanta – not the dim sum or turmeric shots hashtagged #grabandgo to be found on Instagram today.

Picture-perfect food that has a feel-good factor, that is on-trend and served up in environmentally friendly packaging is the brief for 2019. The practicalities of making a profit

could easily get lost in the excitement of this booming sector, but competition is fierce: consumers are spoilt for choice, with pubs, retailers, street food stalls, cafés, restaurants and delivery rivals vying for their money.

So, caterers need to bring their A game with the right mix of standard and aspirational grab-and-go options and the right merchandising and promotional approach to stand out from the competition.

## V is for veg

One word on everyone's lips is, of course, the V word: vegan – or if not that, then certainly vegetarian. Plant-based core components, such as chickpeas, tofu and jackfruit patties, are not only cheaper than meat, but also tend to be lower in fat and higher in fibre than meat options, tapping into a health-conscious audience.

Pastries are a favourite in the grab-and-go market, and it is possible to adapt these options for a veggie crowd – the popularity of Greggs' recently launched vegan sausage roll is testament. Azyta Food Solutions offers a spicy vegan chickpea roll as well as a full range of vegan viennoiserie.

Breakfast has with mileage to target meat-free options, says Laurence Tottingham, development chef at fresh produce supplier Oliver Kay, part of the Bidfresh group. Using vegetables such as beetroot and carrot to create vegan breakfast-style patties will appeal to customers looking for plant-based choices and is a very cost-effective way to make the most of seasonal produce, he recommends.

Developing appealing plant-based options can be a cost-effective, one-size-fits-all solution. Rob Owen, executive business development chef at independent delivered wholesale company Creed Foodservice, says: "It makes sense to use ingredients that appeal to meat eaters and non-meat eaters alike in order to cut down on both preparation time and having to buy in additional ingredients. Plant-based fillings are not only healthy, but will appeal to all kinds of consumer. Vegan grab-and-go options will also give more flexibility."

Creed Foodservice agrees that the sandwich market can benefit from fusion ingredients, and recommends flavours such as citrus, ricotta, maple and lemongrass.

