



14 SMART FOOD TECHNOLOGIES IN 2014

From interactive cooktops and edible QR codes to insect bars and kale iceblocks, the latest dining and food trends will surprise, even shock you!

Toni Krasicki reports.

Whether you want to "tech-out" your kitchen, find novel ways of wining and dining or grab a few ideas for unique healthy snacks, check out this list of useful (maybe), thought-provoking and just plain weird gadgets, concepts and food trends to keep an eye out for.

KITCHEN HAND

1 Egg Minder
Gauging egg freshness is not easy, nor is remembering whether or not you need to replenish your stock when you're at the supermarket. Enter the Egg Minder, which incidentally can do both: keep you informed of how old your eggs are, and tracks the number you have remaining. Using a complementary mobile app, Egg Minder will send you a push notification when it's time to replenish the egg supply. www.quirky.com/shop/619

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SMART FOOD TRENDS

- 2 Interactive Cooktop**
Still just a concept, this interactive cooktop shows the future home kitchen: a huge touchscreen surface that is part-cooking surface, part-computer. It allows easy access to recipes, hooks you up with what ingredients you have in the kitchen, and lets you check your social media – of course. ces.whirlpool.com
- 3 Prep Pad**
Part smart scale, part nutritional guide and part dietician, the Prep Pad takes the digital food scale to a whole new level. Using the Countertop iPad app, you can determine the nutritional content of your meal: the number of calories, protein, fats and carbs. theorangechef.com/products/prep-pad
- 4 Smart Knives**
A knife that does more than slice and dice – it also emits negative ions to help keep food fresh. It can check levels of bacteria and pesticides, and can tell you the nutrients in the food it cuts. Amazing! electroluxdesignlab.com/en/submission/smart-knife/
- 5 Coffee Flour**
It's being promoted as the next superfood, but coffee flour is also a great way of using the coffee cherries left over from coffee production that now go to waste. A Vancouver company has figured out how – to turn them into flour, which comes with a significant benefit: caffeine. coffeeflour.com

DIGITAL DINING AND DRINKING

- 6 Alcohol-Aware Ice Cubes**
If you need help in pacing yourself on a big night out, add some alcohol-aware cubes to your glass. Not only will they flash to the beat of the ambient music, but they change colour depending on how fast you guzzle. vimeo.com/56772409
- 7 Augmented Reality Diet**
The augmented reality diet is a combination of Google Glass and the ultimate diet app. In the never-ending search for a solution to obesity, researchers in Tokyo have found that using headsets to make food look 1.5 times bigger led to a 10 percent decrease in consumption. www.dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2207693
- 8 Superfast Gourmet Burgers**
It's not impossible to get gourmet burgers at fast food prices. Momentum Machines has developed a robot that can make gourmet burgers, fast. Toppings are sliced and prepared just as the burger is ready to roll, so everything is super fresh. This mechanical chef can pump out up to 360 gourmet burgers an hour! momentummachines.com
- 9 Edible QR Code**
A San Diego sushi restaurant, Harney Sushi, has devised an edible QR Code, which is printed on rice paper with water-based ink and stuck onto the sushi. Diners can use smartphones to scan and pull up detailed information about their meal, such as the origin and global stocks of the fish. harneysushi.com
- 10 Egg White Chips**
Swap your next packet of potato chips with IPS (Intelligent Protein Snacks). Made from corn and egg whites,

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- they are pressure puffed rather than fried. With half the fat of regular chips, fewer carbs and 7 grams of protein per serve, they're a good alternative, but watch the added flavours, salt and sugar content. www.ipsallnatural.com
- 11 Healthy Chocolate**
Since when did chocolate bars become so functional? Probiotic Ohso bars are dairy and gluten free and made with Belgian chocolate. But here's the thing – they're loaded with live Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium to ensure you get your daily boost of healthy bacteria. www.ohsolovesyourtummy.com
- 12 Insect Bars**
Forget munching on a bag of spiders or crickets in Cambodia, with the invention of Chapul protein bars, insect-eating is a little less confronting. Containing 15 percent more iron than spinach and as much B12 as salmon, the insects are disguised by other ingredients including chocolate, coffee, coconut and ginger to make it all the more palatable. www.chapul.com
- 13 Kale Iceblocks**
Can't get enough of the green stuff? Kale devotees can now enjoy guilt-free iceblocks that are made from blended whole fruit and greens with no added sugar or preservatives. Who needs a chocolate Magnum anyhow? www.greenwavesmoothies.com/smoothiepops
- 14 The New Jerky**
Paleo diet friendly and highly nutritious to boot, EPIC animal-based snack bars add an interesting spin to protein snacks. The bars are made from vegetarian fed, antibiotic and hormone free animals that have been let to forage and roam. www.epicbar.com