

# INSPIRATION FOR 2026

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*INSPIRATION FOR 2026, FROM 2025*

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# A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Approachable inspiration, trends and highlights from 2025 that can be easily applied to your own business in 2026. A whitepaper to scroll through when you need ideas (\*).

Since 2007, Horecatrends has been offering daily inspiration and trends for the hospitality industry, including hotels, restaurants, the beverage sector, the fast service sector and leisure. Trends are divided into the categories food, drinks, hospitality, design, sustainability, collaboration, social media and technology. On the last page, you will find the number of articles that have been written on our website since 2007!

Horecatrends.com sends out a weekly trend mail, allowing you to see trends at a glance. We also do trend sessions. If you are interested, please contact [Robin van Spronsen](#).

Horecatrends.com is the business card of [Van Spronsen & Partners hospitality consultancy](#), a hospitality consultancy firm for the hospitality and leisure industry that has been active in this sector since 1987. Our work focuses on optimizing the hospitality and leisure sector for entrepreneurs, project developers and local authorities. Van Spronsen & Partners hospitality consultancy provides monthly insights into a sector within our field of activity in the Netherlands. The most recent “Branche in beeld” studies cover: Ice cream parlours and Italian restaurants. These sector profiles, containing statistical data on the current situation and a vision for the future, as well as the trend booklets, can be downloaded free of charge from our website [www.spronsen.com](http://www.spronsen.com). Unfortunately, these whitepapers are written in Dutch.

\* If you would like more information about one of the articles mentioned, click on the title to find the link to the full article.

# RESTAURANTS

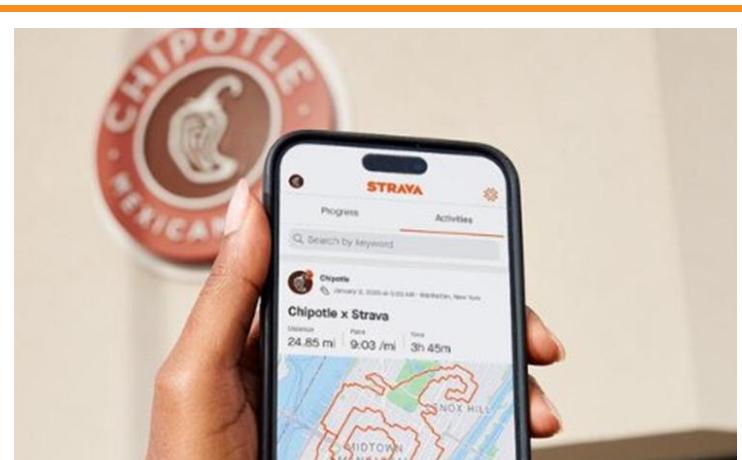
## OZEMPIK Menu

A special menu for people who use GLP-1 (Glucagon-Like Peptide-1), a medication for people with diabetes or people who want to lose weight.

In the US, there are companies that offer a separate Ozempic menu or smaller portions.

In addition, the [ORDERAI app](#) has been available for download since the end of 2025. The app instantly analyses any restaurant or delivery menu and highlights options such as:

- high-protein,
- GLP-1-friendly,
- low-carbohydrate,
- low in Weight Watchers points.



## What is your breakfast strategy?

Our colleague Marjolein van Spronsen was quoted in a 2025 BBC Travel article titled "Is it time to retire the all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet?". In this blog, she gives the following tip: "Create an attractive buffet and a small specialty menu with breakfast dishes." Serving your guests gives them a feeling of luxury. This way, you don't display everything on the buffet, which is also more sustainable!

## A HEALTHY CHALLENGE | CHIPOTLE X STRAVA

Few people shy away from a fun challenge! Chipotle X Strava (a sports app) tried to get people excited about running and, of course, getting a healthy meal at Chipotle. 😊 An example of walks and running routes combined with a healthy meal! This can be implemented by all kinds of restaurants and grand cafés. Even if it's just to create the most original Strava route!

# RESTAURANTS

## **JELLO SHOTS**

Back from way back: jelly puddings, but in the form of jello shots.

Early 2025, we came across the [Jello Negroni](#) at Marian's Restaurant in NYC, and at the end of this year, we wrote about Solid Wiggles from Brooklyn, they make aesthetic jello-o cocktails!

An idea from pastry chef Jena Derman and mixologist Jack Schramm, think jello Margarita or a jello Espresso Martini! Fun and surprising to use in catering!



## **Clubbing in unexpected places**

Loop51 is a unique brunch concept in Amsterdam where you can enjoy a club atmosphere during the day! They combine brunch with vinyl, and if you want to dance... go ahead. It's like being in a club earlier on the day!

We're seeing this more and more internationally, coffee shops, brunch or lunch concepts, bakeries that turn into a club.

## **Conchas / The croissant of 2026?**

Croissants remain popular in all shapes, flavours and colours! However, in the US, Conchas, small breads from Mexico, are becoming increasingly popular. Just like croissants, available in various flavours and colours!

## **'Florentine Wine Window' on Times Square**



In 2025 opened in Times Square in NYC: Buchette del Vino, the city's first "Florentine Wine Window", conceived by the team behind The Lambs Club. From this window, they serve Italian wine, espresso, ice cream and more – all with a nod to Italian tradition.

In the past, we have also seen the sale of items such as broth-to-go through the back door.



# RESTAURANTS



For those who love to eat the popular lobster roll in Maine!

Following its European launch in Milan at the end of 2024, Mason's Famous Lobster Rolls announced in May 2025 that it would open 100 branches in Europe. A new location in Florence will open soon.

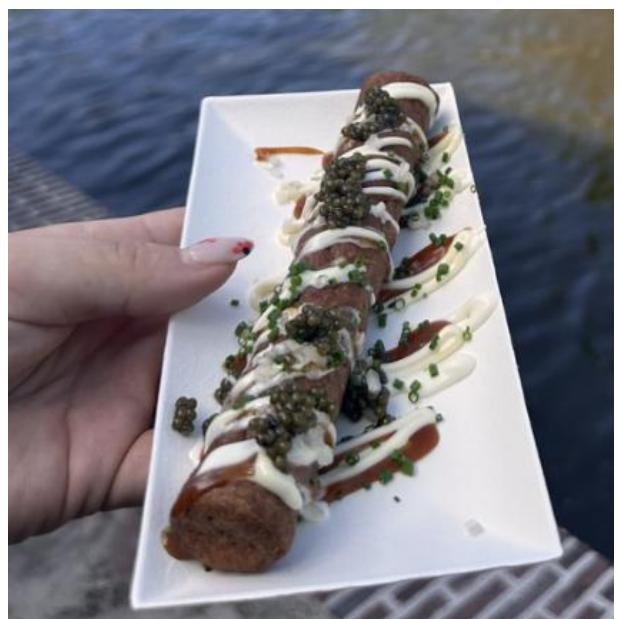
Even in Paris you can now find a lobster roll specialist!



## **Press for Picnic | Great idea for this Spring?**

Spotted on Instagram via the DoNYC account: Blank Street's "Press for Picnic" pop-up in New York! Blank Street is a coffee chain with locations on the east coast of the US and in the UK. At one of their locations, they handed out free picnic baskets every day in April 2025.

Even without free packs, the "Press for Picnic" concept can be applied in many creative ways!



## **'Posh Snacking' at 'De Gaper' in Leiden**

On King's Day and October 3rd (Leiden Liberation Day), you could enjoy "posh snacks" at Café de Gaper in Leiden! Residents of Leiden could walk by for posh snacks, such as a cheese soufflé with truffle, a meatball sandwich with foie gras, brioche with eel and caviar, kibbeling caviar ravigotte, Iberico 'bitterballen' (Dutch snack), an extra special frikandel with caviar, fries with rendang confit de canard or fries with stewed short ribs. A good example to follow?

# RESTAURANTS



## *A few fun, small gestures:*

- The cocktail bar Mr.Fogg's in London served a Scarlet Letter cocktail. The Scarlet Letter comes with a note from the guest who ordered the cocktail for you. Amusing!
- We wrote about caviar bumps several years ago, and now we have come across articles, particularly in the New York restaurant scene, about how caviar is now also being used to elevate desserts with a sweet-salty mix to a higher level. In Amsterdam, restaurant r21 also has a special caviar dessert!
- A great example of HosPETality that could certainly be picked up by dog-friendly hospitality businesses. BARKUTERIE Board on the menu for your guest's dog!
- We are familiar with food festivals and even festivals centred around a particular drink, but in Miami, January is heralded with a 'Mocktail Fest'.
- Spotted on Instagram in NYC, and it's something different for a change! A Singles Anti-Valentine's Day event and a Singles Valentine's Day party.
- Spotted on Rich & Thirsty's Instagram: a "Sauvignon & sea salt". A glass of wine with a mini cone of French fries, held in place with a clip.
- Cool idea, making a wedding cake right there at the wedding! Spotted in Italy.
- A funny little gesture, spotted at Landhaus Feckl (\*), where they serve a telescopic spoon to those who don't order dessert, so they can still get a little bite from their companions!
- Afternoon tea remains hugely popular – Momo Restaurant, Bar & Lounge in Amsterdam is launching a new culinary experience: Momo Cha, an afternoon tea with a distinct Asian character.

# HOTELS

## Padel courts at Hotels

Fletcher Hotels opened its first padel centre in the former aircraft hangar next to Rotterdam The Hague Airport: Padel City Fletcher Rotterdam Airport in October 2025.

Padel is popular and takes up less space than tennis courts! We are spotting Padel more and more often at hotels worldwide.



### 'Vertical storytelling' 'The Go Getters'

Budget hotel brand ibis launched its first ever social mini-series, "The Go Getters", at the end of 2025. These ultra-short, vertical video series are set to captivate hundreds of millions of viewers worldwide via social media. Vertical storytelling is all about creating a binge-worthy mini-series.

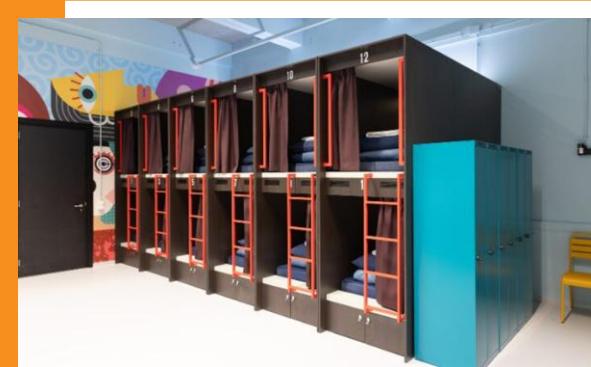
Perhaps it could be used to recruit staff? Or to showcase the guest experience at your hotel?

Fun fact about this mini-series from ibis: it has been made with a phone camera!

### Destination inspired spa experiences

We encountered special treatments and rituals in the Spa Wellness at several hotel chains this year. Fairmont Mumbai, for example, has a hyperbaric oxygen chamber in their Blu Xone and Fairmont Century Plaza in Los Angeles offers a signature package with eleven sessions of red light therapy.

In Paris, "Haute Motherhood", a postnatal wellness program, is offered at the Dior Spa in the Cheval Blanc hotel.



### Pod hotels | Increasingly popular in the Netherlands

Pod hotels are familiar to us from Japan and Asia, but there are now also more and more hotels in the Netherlands where you can sleep in pods.

In 2025, Lola, a pod hotel in the Bluf district of The Hague, opened, and since its renovation, Stayokay in Eindhoven also has some pods, next to their hostel and family rooms.

These types of pod hotels are also regularly used by students who have not yet found rooms in the city where they study.

# HOTELS

## How dog-friendly is your hotel?

Our office dog Jimmy regularly visits hotels, and we are often surprised by animal-friendly gestures such as food bowls, dog biscuits, a cushion, toys, special meals, and so on.

The Fairmont hotel chain put all their hotels with pet-friendly services in the spotlight in 2025. And the dogs that belong to the hotels, like Serene, the “Chief Happiness Officer” at the new Fairmont Tokyo!

#PawfectOfferings #Fairmontlovesdogs



### ‘Set-jetting’

The Mandarin Oriental Bangkok is one of the locations in The White Lotus Season 3, and The Four Seasons Private Jet Experience is also based on the series.

Do you remember all the films in which The Plaza New York by Fairmont appeared?

So, if your hotel has been used as a backdrop in a series, film or book, use it in your marketing!

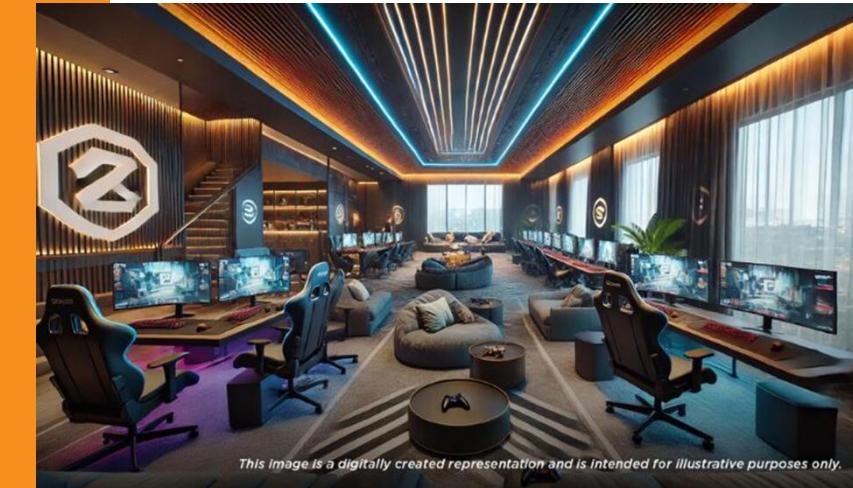


### Esports Ready by Radisson Hotels

Een nieuw hospitality-programma voor esports-teams!

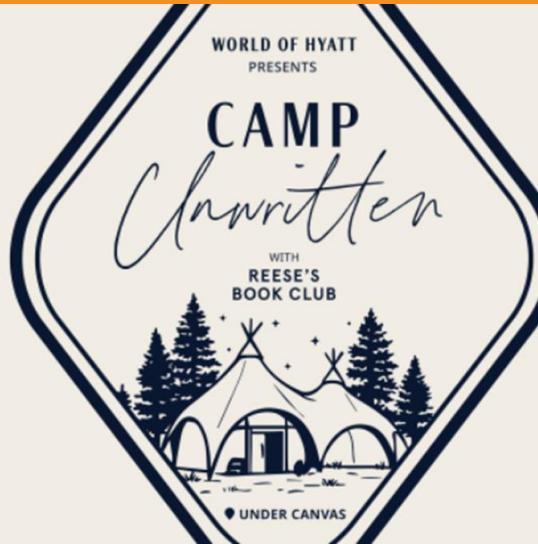
Radisson Hotel Group has launched “Esports Ready by Radisson Hotels”, a programme that provides e-sports teams, players and organisers with specific services and facilities to help them prepare and perform at their best.

These include reliable connectivity, flexible services and team-oriented facilities such as private gaming rooms.



This image is a digitally created representation and is intended for illustrative purposes only.

# HOTELS



## *Just a few great little gestures:*

- A gingerbread house or a photo booth in the lobby during the Christmas period. Or a large chocolate Easter bunny, or a pen with real chickens and chicks during Easter. The rooster might cause a bit too much noise pollution. 😊
- We keep saying it: let a local designer, architect, jewellery, florist or celebrity decorate your Christmas tree in the lobby. Create a "lighting party" and invite guests, local celebrities and the local press! Who knows what kind of free publicity this will generate.
- During weddings, family celebrations, corporate events: set up a mini golf course in your hotel garden!
- A great example of how to capitalise on special days! Stayokay capitalised on Singles Day 2025 on 11 November and came up with special tips for celebrating Singles Day in their hostels.
- There are more and more celebrity book clubs, such as Oprah Winfrey and Reese Witherspoon in the US. Last summer, World of Hyatt joined forces with Reese's Book Club and Under Canvas to launch Camp Unwritten, a unique glamping experience inspired by stories, where guests play the leading role in their own summer story. There are bound to be local celebrities to collaborate with!
- Wellness tourism is on the rise: more and more people are looking for treatments that help them feel healthier, look better and live well, both physically and mentally. 14 June 2025 was Global Wellness Day, and we saw special offers everywhere. In 2026, it falls on Saturday 13 June, a perfect moment for destinations and hospitality brands to put their wellness offerings in the spotlight.
- Bring a piece of another country to your hotel or collaborate with a restaurant from another part of the world. Take, for example, the summer event in London in 2025: "Capri in the City" descended upon the Berkeley Rooftop Bar & Pool.

# FAST SERVICE

## The Firehouse Subs Gravy Extinguishers

On Thursday, November 28 2025, the Firehouse Subs chain came up with a tasty twist for Thanksgiving.

The firefighters at Firehouse Subs launched a limited edition of “Gravy Extinguishers”. Bottles filled with rich, creamy turkey gravy, ready for unexpected Thanksgiving emergencies. How original! The promotion combined humor, taste and a good cause: the proceeds went to the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation.



## The Grinch meal at McDonald's in the US

McDonald's, in collaboration with Dr. Seuss Enterprises, launched a limited edition “The Grinch Meal” in participating restaurants in the US this holiday season.

The meal consisted of Dill Pickle “Grinch Salt” McShaker Fries, which allowed customers to add a spicy, sour dill pickle seasoning mix directly to their fries.

Perhaps inspiration for a yellow Easter menu from the Easter Bunny?

## Gluten-free pastry chefs and sugar-free ice cream

The Polish bakery chain Fit Cake, with more than 80 branches in Poland, has opened its first Canadian shop in Toronto. The opening attracted many visitors eager to sample the gluten-free and sugar-free treats.

At the Sel Gris (\*) restaurant in Knokke-Heist, Belgium, we enjoyed the dessert for diabetics: sugar-free vanilla ice cream served with orange or chocolate sauce. We didn't miss the sugar at all.



## Collaborating with chefs outside your chain | BASK Pepperoni pizza at Otomat

To mark Otomat's tenth anniversary, it is launching “Friends of Otomat”, a series of culinary collaborations.

Sam D'Huyvetter is a hospitality entrepreneur from Ghent (Belgium) and the creative mind behind various concepts. He came up with the BASK Pepperoni: a tribute to the Basque Country, a pizza topped with txistorra, chorizo, Idiazabal and pipara peppers.

“Friends of...” remains a great idea.

# FAST SERVICE

Robotization in the hospitality industry is progressing slowly..

## Donatos Pizza | First fully autonomous restaurant

Donatos Pizza, a premium U.S. pizza chain known for its Edge to Edge® toppings, is launching its first fully autonomous restaurant this month at John Glenn Columbus International Airport (Concourse B). Donatos and its sister company Agápe Automation partnered with Appetronix to create this innovative concept. It's operated by HMSHost and will serve freshly made pizzas 24/7 via robotic technology, offering travelers speed, convenience, and quality.

## Next Robot launches 'Al Dente' | An AI-powered pasta and risotto cooking robot

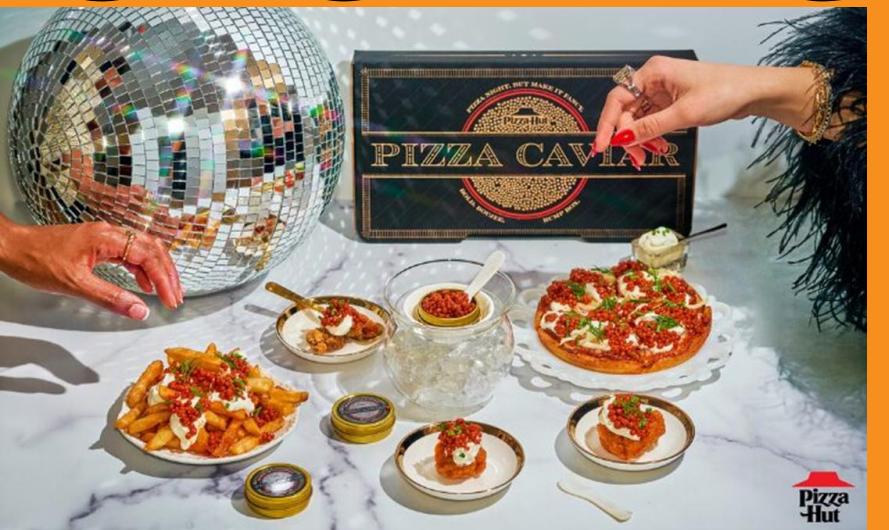
Culinary robotics company Next Robot unveiled its latest innovation, 'Al Dente', at the 2025 National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago. Designed to automate the preparation of pasta and risotto with precision and consistency, Al Dente expands the company's mission to combine technology with culinary tradition.

## 'Salad AI' recipe generator of Just Salad

Just Salad, the fast-casual restaurant chain committed to making everyday health and sustainability possible, announced the launch of its newest ordering feature, 'Salad AI', in January 2025. 'Salad AI' is a cutting-edge personalization tool designed to transform how customers discover and enjoy their perfect meal. Through personalized survey results, Just Salad's AI tool provides mobile app users with tailored ordering recommendations to best match their culinary preferences, setting a new standard for digital customer engagement.



# FAST SERVICE



## *A few great ideas and developments*

- In July 2025, the Kesbeke Bowl was temporarily available at all Poké Perfect locations. This special was the result of a tasty collaboration with Kesbeke. Poké Perfect's Kesbeke Bowl consisted of sushi rice, Thai minced chicken, carrot, corn, Kewpie mayonnaise and sesame seeds. But the star of the dish was Kesbeke's pickle!
- Panda Express®, the largest family-owned Asian fast food restaurant chain in the US, introduced "Pandaoke": a unique and fun karaoke experience in four American cities in May and June 2025, just in time for the celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. An inspiring example of how to create positive "rumour around the brand"!
- #Fricklemania - In April 2025, while stocks lasted, you could enjoy fried pickles (Frickles) at Burger King in Germany! Have you ever tried Frickles? This internationally hyped snack on social media was brought to Germany by Burger King®.
- In 2025, Pizza Hut put a delicious spin on the caviar "trend" that is sweeping foodie culture with the launch of "Pizza Caviar". These bite-sized Pizza Caviar pearls were inspired by the rise of "caviar bumps", taste like pepperoni and are designed for dipping and "bumping".
- In the US, The Peach Cobbler Factory has developed mobile units for its franchisees, enabling them to take their desserts to smaller towns, festivals, weddings and other events. The franchisees decide among themselves which franchisee will use the food truck and when. It's great to work together like this and showcase your brand at festivals and other events!
- KFC combines chicken and sauce in a new concept called "Saucy by KFC", which opened in Orlando in December 2024. The concept combines 11 new dips and crispy chicken tenders alongside a drink menu of 11 items. It is owned by parent company Yum Brands.

## 'Christmas Jumper Parade Walk'

For local councils and park cafés, it's a great idea to organize a special walk for people with dogs around Christmas time. They could dress up in Christmas outfits and, of course, make a donation to the local animal shelter or animal ambulance service!

Inspired by the "Rescue Dogs of London & Friends" 'Christmas Jumper Parade Walk'.



## "Where every bite tells a story"

Experiencing art with all your senses: that's what the new partnership between Museum Villa and Essense Food & Events creates. Essense becomes Villa's permanent partner in high-end hospitality. Together, they create unique experiences where art and gastronomy merge, with culinary storytelling as the guiding thread.

As a restaurant or café, you can tailor your offerings to the exhibitions!



## T-REX Glamping in Dubai Parks™ and Resorts

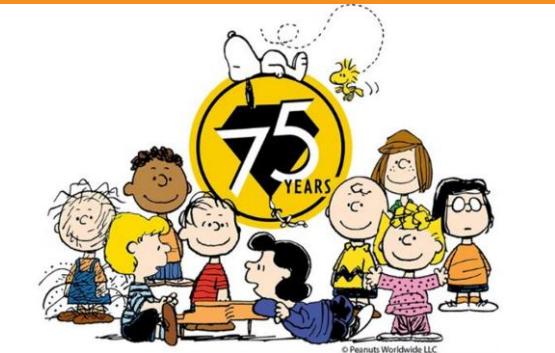
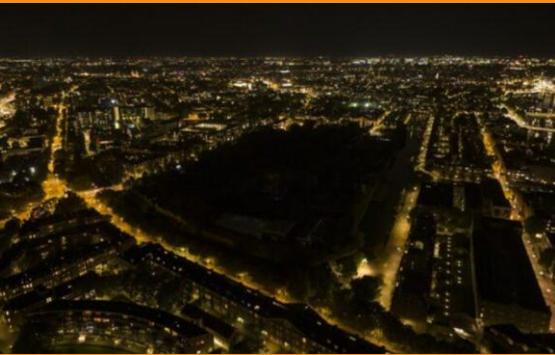
The world's first dinosaur-themed glamping retreat invites families to sleep, dine, and dream among prehistoric giants. Dinosaurs have been spotted stomping through Dubai, and they've taken over Dubai Parks™ and Resorts.

Great idea to choose a dinosaur-theme for your glamping facility!

## Beach Golf | Inspiration for beach clubs

Will beach golf become the new farmer's golf? Mid-2025, we came across the Low Tide Golf Game. It's a fun game variation to offer at a beach club. Create a circuit around your beach club and your guests will have a great time. In 2025, we also organized our own "Indoor Golf Tournament" at the office, and it continues to be fun for all ages.

# LEISURE



## *A few great ideas and developments:*

- Last year, Helsinki launched [The Doggy Route to Happiness](#), believed to be the world's first sightseeing tour designed especially for dogs. The event attracted more than 1,000 dogs and their owners. And you passed the Stickelius Monument. How about a special sightseeing tour for dogs in your municipality?
- The first [NYC Bakery Run](#) took place in September 2025, with 100 lucky runners visiting eight top bakeries and receiving free pastries at each one! Who will make this a Dutch tradition as well?
- Until 16 January 2026, visitors could stroll past twelve unique Snoopy sculptures in the streets of [London's Fleet Street Quarter](#). In 2024, these sculptures featured festive penguins. This is a great way for a shopkeepers' association or local council to make a shopping area more appealing for Christmas shopping! And, of course, local artists can also be involved.
- IKEA organised a food festival in its Stockholm store at the end of 2025 and called it "[SMAKFEST](#)". It featured all kinds of experiences and special dishes, in addition to their iconic meatballs, of course. Like a sofa dessert!
- In Austin (Texas) opened the first holographic zoo in the US: [Zoocade](#) by Axiom Holographics. Zoocade, it's a zoo experience but without animals. This zoo was previously only available in Australia, China and Canada. With 3D glasses you can enjoy Zoocade's 60-foot holographic tunnel, in which guests will meet up with hippos, giraffes, and even long-extinct prehistoric animals.
- ARTIS Zoo in Amsterdam has been recognized as an [Urban Night Sky Place](#) by DarkSky International, the first zoo in the world and the first location in a European capital to receive this designation. Do you have a location where you can reduce light at night? Do it, it's more sustainable, and you can apply to become an Urban Night Sky Place!

# HORECATRENDS.COM

Van Spronsen & Partners

Need someone to help you with your marketing? We are happy to help! Together with you, we will develop a solid marketing and communication plan. Please contact [Leonie van Spronsen](#).

Need inspiration? Take a look at our website. Below you can see how many articles have been written per sector up to the end of 2025.

1.908

2.254

3.873

2.943

1.945

HOTEL

FAST SERVICE

RESTAURANT

BEVERAGES

LEISURE

