

ON FUTURIST CUISINE

WHAT IS A FUTURIST MENU?

Introduction

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Futurist dining explores how food evolves as the world around us shifts ecologically, technologically, and emotionally. It is not simply about new ingredients or culinary innovation; it is about imagining how humans will nourish themselves in futures shaped by uncertainty, adaptation, and possibility.

At its core, futurist dining rests on three principles:

Enduring — Food systems that can survive shifting climates, fragile ecosystems, and evolving biological needs.

Functional — Food designed with purpose, supporting energy, mood, resilience, and overall wellbeing.

Beautiful — Food that inspires. In a future shaped by technology, beauty ensures food remains sensorial, human, and emotionally meaningful.

Together, these ideas create a vision of eating that is forward-looking yet deeply connected to what food has always been: nourishment for both body and mind.

1) Endurance: Food Systems Built for Uncertain Worlds

Food shapes civilisations, cultures, and the rhythms of everyday life. Yet the world we know is shifting. Climate instability, biodiversity collapse, technological acceleration, and new culinary frontiers are forcing us to rethink what is edible, what is sustainable, and what is even possible. At 17 Little Portland Street, our dining concept imagines this world not with pessimism, but with curiosity. We explore how people may eat in futures near and far, and how food might continue to nourish the body, the imagination, and the communities gathered around a table.

The future of food will not be shaped by a single trend but by the collision of climate, biotechnology, shifting ecosystems, and the cultural desire to preserve meaning in what we eat. As the planet becomes more unpredictable, food will increasingly need to endure nutritionally and ecologically.

Climate as the Architect of Diets

By mid-century, extreme weather, water scarcity, soil degradation, and collapsing fisheries are expected to reshape the global palate. Crops that once defined regions may no longer thrive where they were born. Staple grains will retreat from some climates and others will emerge from obscurity. Diets become both more regionally distinct (because climate dictates what grows) and more diverse (because biotechnology expands what is possible).

Ancient grains, algae, mushrooms, cacti, resilient tubers, and nitrogen-fixing legumes are among the foods expected to rise in importance. These are nutrient-dense, climate-adapted, and far less reliant on fragile supply chains.

A New Era of Engineered and Emergent Foods

Technology will fill the gaps left by failing systems. Precision fermentation, microbial proteins, AI-designed nutrients, and cultivated foods will form the backbone of future diets. These innovations allow for nutrition without land, meat without livestock, and dairy without animals.

But they also introduce ingredients our bodies have never encountered. This creates a tension that will define eating in the future: innovation versus biological intuition.

2) Functional: Food with Purpose in an Age of Bio-Intelligence

As food systems evolve, so does our understanding of what nourishment can achieve. The future of food is not only about survival—it's about optimisation. We are entering a period where food becomes intelligent, targeted, and deeply intertwined with human physiology.

The Rise of Food as Preventative Medicine

Personalised nutrition is moving from concept to reality. Advances in genomics, metabolomics, and microbiome science will make it possible to design meals that support hormonal balance, cognitive clarity, immune resilience, gut health, and even emotional state.

Food will increasingly act as a first-line intervention, addressing issues long before pharmaceuticals are needed. This reflects a growing recognition that wellbeing begins with what we regularly consume, not what we treat episodically.

Precision Meets Natural Wisdom

The future will not be defined by a binary choice between natural and engineered. It will require a hybrid approach:

- Engineered proteins and cultivated foods will provide efficiency, stability, and climate resilience.
- Ferments, plants, ancient grains, algae, mushrooms, and polyphenol-rich ingredients will provide biological familiarity and the complexity the human body relies upon.

In practice, this means combining high-tech innovation with low-tech wisdom. For example:

- Precision-fermented ingredients enriched with bioactive compounds
- Ancient grains adapted for nutrient density and digestibility
- Functional fibres and prebiotics maintaining microbiome diversity
- Adaptogenic and nootropic botanicals supporting stress resilience and cognitive function

Future diets will balance engineering for performance with nature for coherence.

The Microbiome as the New Frontier of Nutrition

One of the most radical shifts in nutrition science is the recognition that our health depends on the ecosystem inside us.

As a result:

- Fermented foods will become indispensable.
- Fibre diversity will gain priority over macronutrient numbers.
- Polyphenol-rich, colourful plants will be valued for their microbial effects, not just their vitamins.

Engineered foods that lack complexity may struggle to support this internal ecosystem. This is where low-tech foods (sprouts, roots, seaweeds, legumes, functional mushrooms) retain a crucial role.

Function as an Experience

Function will no longer be hidden in pills or powders. It will be sensorial, culinary, and experiential.

Meals may be designed to:

- lift energy without overstimulation
- deepen calm without sedation
- support liver detoxification
- stabilise blood sugar
- sharpen focus
- restore after nightlife or overstimulation
- adapt to circadian rhythms

Function becomes a seamless part of the eating ritual, elevating the dining experience rather than interrupting it.

Purpose-Driven Eating

Ultimately, functional food is about supporting resilience in a world that demands a great deal from the human body and mind. Function is the bridge between nourishment and performance, biology and technology, tradition and future.

3) Beautiful: Food That Restores Wonder in a Technological World

The future will be saturated with information and constant demands on attention. In this landscape, people will seek immersive, sensory experiences as a release from the pressure of daily life.

Colour, texture, aroma, plating, and narrative (as well as other sensory elements) will combine to create deeper experiences. Beautiful food isn't mere decoration; it becomes an art form—a theatre that allows us to step out of reality.

As humans, we seek beauty instinctively. We look for it in architecture, in nature, in music, and increasingly, in what we eat. Beauty in food provides emotional uplift, sparks curiosity, enhances digestion through sensory priming, and strengthens our connection to the act of nourishment itself.

The Beauty of Future Ingredients

The ingredients poised to shape the future—algae, roots, cacti, ancient grains, fungi, legumes—contain their own quiet aesthetics. Their colours, shapes, and structures lend themselves to sculptural expression, even as the world becomes more engineered around them.

Beauty emerges not from extravagance but from:

- geometric patterns in grains
- deep oceanic greens of algae
- iridescent surfaces of fungi
- mineral-rich tones of roots
- crystalline textures of ferments

This is beauty that feels elemental and grounded, reminding us that even in technologically mediated futures, nature still offers its own visual poetry.

The Bio-Bricks embody this ideal: modular forms that are functional, nutrient-specific, and yet visually striking. They are examples of how future foods can merge purpose with artistry.

A Ritual of Connection

Beautiful food has always connected people. A shared gaze over a plate, the momentary pause before the first bite, the conversation sparked by a surprising colour or texture. These are subtle but powerful forms of communion.

In futures where life becomes faster and more fragmented, these rituals matter even more. Beauty slows us down and invites presence. It creates micro-moments of togetherness that are increasingly rare.

Beautiful food doesn't just feed us; it enriches us, reminding us that nourishment can also be cultural, emotional, and communal.

4) Sci-Fi Futures as Ecological Predictions

Our approach is built around three principles: Enduring, Functional, Beautiful.

And within each, we layer a speculative lens: what happens if climate, biology, or entire ecosystems evolve in unexpected directions? What if the future is stranger—and more wondrous—than anything we have seen?

These speculative scenarios illuminate how future food systems may need to endure, function, and remain beautiful in worlds shaped by ecological and technological change. Several plausible scenarios mirror real scientific trajectories:

The Fungal Earth:

As soils degrade, fungi flourish. Mycelial networks spread across regions where plants fail, making mushrooms and mycelium-based proteins central to human diets. This world makes functionality essential as mycelial foods become both protein and medicine.

The Algal Oceans:

With fish populations collapsing, algae and seaweeds dominate marine ecosystems. Human diets shift toward ocean plants—dense, adaptable, and infinitely renewable. Beauty emerges in new forms here; in pigments, textures, and ocean-grown diversity.

The Rise of New Ocean Giants:

As ecosystems rebalance, unexpected species thrive. Intelligent cephalopods or resilient engineered eels may become symbolic of the future ocean—creatures to be protected, cultivated, or recreated through biotechnology. Endurance and ethics intertwine, shaping how humans choose to eat—or not eat—the new species that dominate the seas

The Underground Cities & New Ice Age:

If extreme heat or cold alters landscapes, humans move downward or indoors. Hydroponics, fermentation, sprouting, and controlled-environment agriculture become the foundation of food production. Beauty and ritual become lifelines when food systems move indoors and light becomes scarce.

None of these scenarios are fantasy. They echo current scientific models and ecological trends. They illustrate a world where food must be adaptive, modular, resilient, and imaginative.

Conclusion

The Future of Food is Both Strange and Familiar

We are entering an era unlike any before. Some foods will vanish and others will be invented. Some meals will come from labs and others will return to ancient wisdom. And our bodies will need to navigate ingredients they have never known alongside those they have relied on for millennia.

At **17 Little Portland Street**, the future of food is not dystopian. It is imaginative, adaptive, and alive.

- It is enduring, because the ingredients chosen can survive what our world is becoming.
- It is functional, because every element supports human resilience.
- It is beautiful, because beauty keeps us human—even in the far future.

It is a way of eating that accepts uncertainty, embraces innovation, and still honours the idea that food connects us across time, worlds, and whatever comes next.