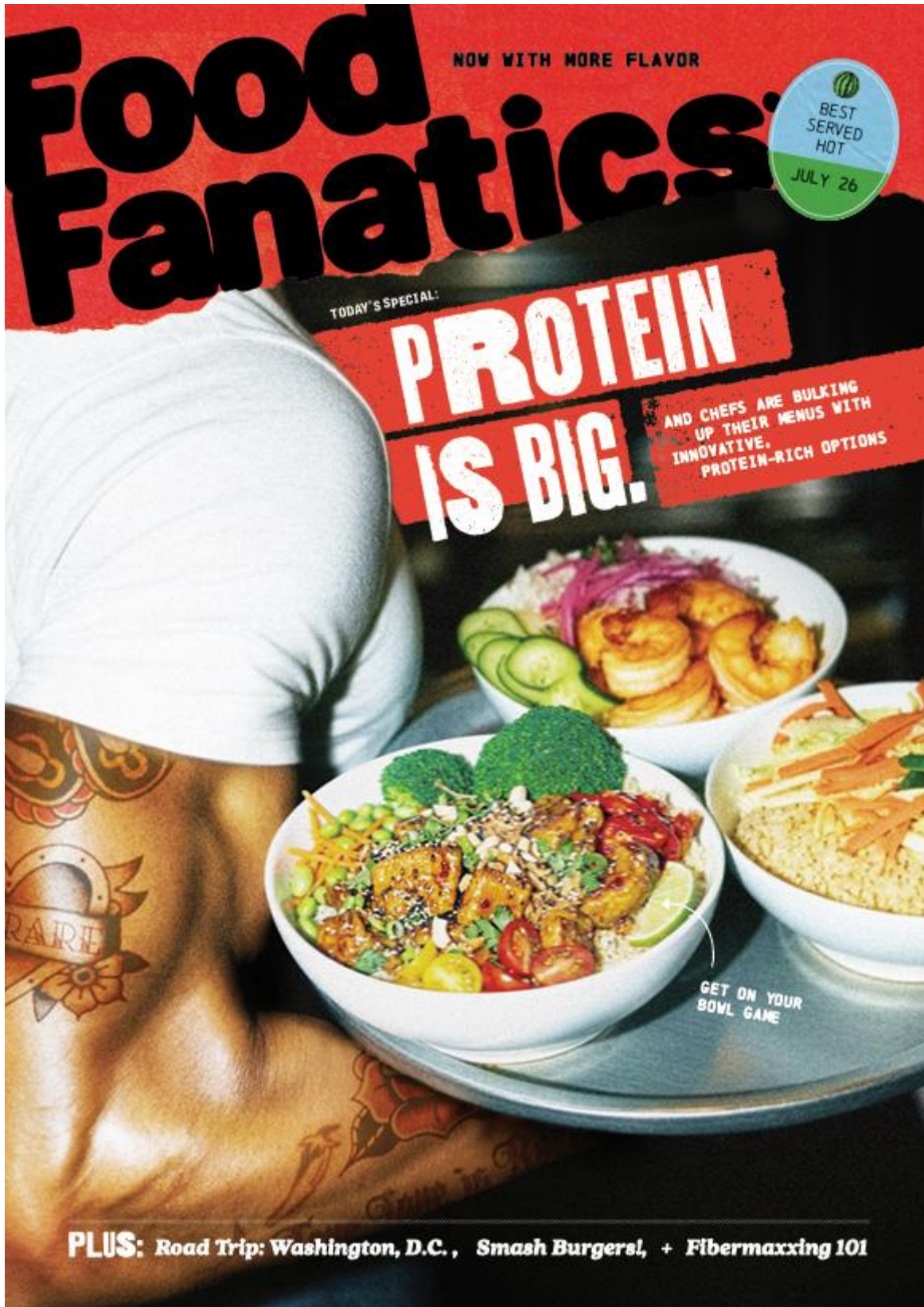




OPERATOR TAKEAWAY:
HOW TO MAKE
PROTEINS &
SMALLER PORTIONS
PROFITABLE

1.
**SHRINK THE CUT,
NOT THE VALUE**

Go smaller on portion size, but bigger on protein quality and flavor.

2.
MONETIZE SHARING

Guests are splitting anyway—charge for it, build it into the price or offer small, medium and larger size options.

3.
**SELL THE
SMALL PLATES**

Size down entrees and turn sides into smaller mains, leaving more room for another drink, side or add-on protein bite.

4.
BUILD MORE BOWLS

Cross-utilize proteins, grains and veggies you already have for high-margin, fork-eating formats.

5.
**MAKE PROTEINS
BOLDER**

With smaller portions, flavors need to be bolder and more craveable.

Source: Datassential, 2026



BETTER BAR BITES

PROTEIN-FORWARD MENU INNOVATION
IS ALSO SHOWING UP AT THE BAR.

At Dirty Habit in San Francisco, the bar menu features Smoked Bourbon Maple Glazed Chicken Wings and Surf & Turf Lumpia. The wings pair with the bar's collection of more than 640 whiskeys, while the lumpia—crispy rolls filled with wagyu beef and lobster—are served with sweet chili garlic vinegar for dipping.

"We use both dishes to lean into protein in a fun, snackable way while still fitting into the elevated vibe we're trying to create," says Chef Ruby Oliveros.