The Spotted Cheetah

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Cheetos, the Frito-Lay-owned cheesy snack brand, unveiled plans this week for its very first popup restaurant in New York. The restaurant, dubbed The Spotted Cheetah, is offering a string of gourmet twists on the snack in partnership with celebrity chef Anne Burrell. The pop-up, which is being staged at 211 W. Broadway, will last just three days: August 15-17. For those who can’t make a reservation, the brand is also launching a partnering digital cook book. The experience was created by marketing and PR company Ketchum.

Branded PR experiences are being embraced by brands of all levels, from mass market to luxury, as a key engagement tool. The Museum of Ice Cream, a touring testament to the cold dessert, is sponsored by brands like American Express and Tinder, and features Instagram-optimized stage sets like dive-in pools of sprinkles, oversized popsicles and a wall of hot pink phones. Beyonce and Jay-Z, Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin, and the Kardashians have stopped by the Los Angeles venue. There are now 37,000 Instagram posts tagged #museumoficecream. In July, Perrier set up a giant, Instagram-friendly ball pit in Soho to promote the brand’s newest flavors.

Most branded experiences are designed squarely for video and Instagram sharing, and all attempt to elevate the brand to more sophisticated territory through multi-sensory experiences, food, or compelling theatrical design. They also tap into the broader trend among millennials who are increasingly experience-driven, devoting sizable chunks of their disposable income to food, events, travel, and wellbeing.

Cheetos’ endeavor, it says, is a response recent wave of viral social media fan recipes using the cult snack. Cheetos’ chef partner Anne Burrell is a Food Network personality whose most recent restaurant endeavor is Phil & Anne's Good Time Lounge, in Brooklyn. Her twists include Cheetos Crusted Fried...
Pickles and Cheetos Mix-ups Crusted Chicken Milanese. Sweet dishes are also on the menu, like the Cheetos Sweetos Crusted Cheesecake.

The Spotted Cheetah’s three-course menu ranges from $8 to $22 and features a total of eleven signature Cheetos-inspired dishes. Guests can reserve a spot starting August 8 by visiting The Spotted Cheetah’s website and making a reservation using the OpenTable app on the homepage.

Let the social media barrage begin.

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