Flavour Trends 2021

Comprehensive overview

NovoTaste
Contents

INTRODUCTION 3

GENERAL TRENDS 5

FUSION/PAIRING 6

INDULGENCE, TWISTS ON CLASSICS, FEEL-GOOD NOSTALGIA/COMFORT & PARTY 8

ESSENTIAL OILS, EXTRACTS, BOTANICALS, ADDED VALUE (FUNCTIONALITY) 10

GLOBALLY-INSPIRED, INTERNATIONAL, ETHNIC 12

MULTISENSORY, SPICY, UMAMI & SMOKE 15

CLEAN LABEL OPTIONS - MOCKTAILS, ALLERGEN-FREE, VEGAN 18

FLAVOUR MARKETING, SMOKE & MIRRORS, EMOTIONAL 20

FRUITS & VEGETABLES 22


“With endless information at their fingertips, it’s no surprise that consumers are constantly evolving”
Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to review Novotaste’s 2021 flavour trends. Use this information to get a better appreciation for current global flavour trends from various levels & segments of the F&B industry.

Our annual publication is unique, as it includes flavour trends from a variety of geographical locations, and it covers the full spectrum of NPD. Trends usually originate from individuals, small businesses & restaurants, not from multi-nationals. As a result, we have focused on presenting trends from about anyone who is utilizing flavours to sell food & beverages, from over 100 global locations. The information we have compiled is a true reflection of what is currently going on with regards to flavour trends, at all levels. It is not biased, opiniated, recycled or over simplified information. It is a distillation of flavour information from thousands of different sources from 2021. Unlike many established flavour houses, we will not predict the “flavour of the year” or the “5 top flavours for 2021". We prefer to categorize & showcase all the worlds trends, since they are in constant evolution & mutation.

“Trends are ever-changing; quite literally, it’s in their definition. What’s down at the moment may suddenly rise in popularity, and likewise, what’s hot right now may soon cool off. It’s important to stay on top of trends, especially in the food industry. Customers have an expectation of satisfaction. If that can’t be met, they’ll soon go elsewhere.” — Bakemag

Our annual review of flavour trends stands out because it is free. Detailed flavour trend information is usually very expensive, so many other companies simply recycle each others’ material. All flavour information outlined in the exclusive NPD edition is referenced & linked to original content, letting you further investigate each trend.

As a flavourist, I have always felt that it is necessary to be constantly immersed with current flavour trends, to be able to develop great tasting & successful products for our clients. However, I also believe that our clients should also be well versed with trends too. They are the ones that have the pulse of their clientele. So, take the time to browse through all the flavour trends information & get inspired. If you need additional ideas for your products, just ask us, our flavour team routinely provides our clients with customized reports. Our goal is to both inform & inspire you to create trendy & great tasting food & beverage products.

The development of winning products usually involves a partnership between flavour professionals. So, contact us for your flavour needs today. We have a passionate & experienced flavour team that is up to the challenge.

Dr. Luke J.W. Haffenden
Chief flavourist at Novotaste
Clarification:

Two versions of “Novotaste’s 2021 Flavour Trends, a comprehensive review” are available for your review:

1. A regular, condensed version intended for general R&D, sales & marketing departments of the F&B industry. It is a condensed version of the Exclusive NPD edition, described below.

2. The **Exclusive NPD edition** was specifically created for product developers, R&D, sales & marketing departments from the F&B industries as well as for culinary professionals. The information we present in this document consists of a distillation of relevant flavour trend information from 1973 publications. Considering the amount of information presented, we have colour coded the most relevant portions in the following way:

   - **General flavour trends** - General information describing trends & industries
   - **Specific flavour trends** – Specific examples of trendy flavours
   - **Key flavour trends** – Key information, summarizing specific trends

   This document is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of 8 flavour trends, including links to original content, so the context of the trends & specific flavours mentioned can properly be appreciated. Over 1000 flavour ideas are mentioned.

Flavour resources:

- Useful flavour information
- International flavour trends
- Novotaste’s Selection of 534 Flavour Descriptors
- Recent flavour, beverage & food trends
- Essential oil solutions
- Useful essential oil information
- Recent food science trends
General Trends

- With endless information at their fingertips, it’s no surprise that consumers are constantly evolving.
- There’s a lot of curiosity about flavor profiles.
- A trend toward classic indulgent flavors in combination with healthy and holistic well-being concepts.
- Consumers are hungrier than ever for global flavors.
- More detailed flavor descriptors and an emphasis on the flavor’s origin reflect major trend.
- The wall between the kitchen and the bar seems to slowly merge as bartenders search for new, magnetic flavours and combinations to take classic cocktails to the next level in terms of taste, texture and complexity. Culinary cocktails have now become prevalent in restaurants and bars, leading to newer and more innovative ways of collaborations.
- Consumers are most concerned about how trendy foods taste, what they cost and how good they are for their health.
- ‘Hybrids’ as another major popular theme, represented by flavors familiar in one category crossing over into others.
- Special-edition and seasonal flavors can help invigorate brands and serve as a good way to test new tastes on the public.
- Consumers are drawn to flavors which have a “health halo.”
- Key global regions of discovery include South America, West Africa, Eastern Mediterranean and Southeast Asia. When incorporating emerging flavours from these hotspots, it’s important to overlay macro trends, like veg-centricity, functional wellness and global comfort.
- While there are many traditional candies and candy flavors, people can want some different. Without going too far outside of their comfort zone, the new flavors need to balance the familiar with the new.
- Consumers are taking a proactive approach to nourishing their bodies and minds, and flavor will continue to support the growth of better-for-you offerings.
- Consumers are seeking more natural ingredients for their well-being.
- The next big flavours include those which combine traditional sweets along with savoury to play with our palates.
- While the flavor preferences might have changed, consumers have wanted the indulgence.
- 47 percent of consumers will be seeking a twist on traditional festive offerings.
- Botanical and fruit flavor pairings have taken the spotlight in recent months.
- Customers could be open to the idea of ‘borrowed nostalgia’ – taking a nostalgic flavour from a different region as a comfort food.
- “Customers are still looking for new flavors to bring new experiences and differentiate in the market. There is an increased interest in premium indulgent flavours and cross category inspired concepts.
- Five key beverage trends to watch over the next 12 months. (1) Close to home, (2) New takes on tropica ls, (3) Keep it light, (4) New acidities, (5) Good for you tastes.
Fusion/Pairing

Combinations of fruits, spices, vegetables, culturally or geographically inspired ingredients, inspired by nostalgia, intrigue &/or international cuisines/customs are on trend.

Trend highlights

- Classic and international fruits always will have a place in beverage formulation. Lesser known fruit flavors often are paired with more familiar ones to encourage trial. Combination flavors continue to gain traction across all beverage categories.
- Sweet and seasonal satisfaction highlights flavor combinations that change with the seasons.
- Unique sensory experiences are increasingly popular amongst consumers, which is giving way to more spice and earthy ingredients like seaweed and traditional West African flavours.....“Exciting hybrid concepts that mix taste profiles exemplify this trend further, combining subtle natural flavours with extravagant sweet, savoury and spicy flavours.
- The coming year is full of uncertainty, so well-established tastes along with all-time favorites will continue to grow as consumers seek comfort in tried and tested flavors. For beverages specifically, the notion of functional ingredients will also be at an all-time high “Hybrid taste profiles will be created through this pairing of functionality with traditional flavors.”
- Clean singular flavours in desserts are going to find favour with the audience. People are tired of multiple flavours in a single dish, which most of the time might not taste right if not researched properly. Hence the inclination towards food that has a clear-cut flavour profile.
- The next big flavours include those which combine traditional sweets along with savoury to play with our palates.
- New flavors meet consumers’ needs for excitement and novelty during the pandemic’s disruptive lockdowns. Consumers willing to push their boundaries further will be able to try intriguing new flavors that offer sensory and visual disruptions such as sweet and savory mixtures with vegetables, potato chips or other savory snacks.
Flavour examples

African rooibos orange & white peach
Almond praline & brown butter
Ancho chili & hibiscus
Apple & green tea
Apple pie & pina colada
Bacon cinnamon whiskey
Banana marshmallow
Basil Berry
Blackberry Teriyaki
Blackberry thyme
Blackcurrant anise
Blood orange & ginger
Blueberry acai
Cactus Rose & lemon
Cardamom cream
Champagne punch with rosemary & citrus
Cherry & rose
Cherry, strawberry guava
Chili lime
Chocolate bitters
Chocolate blood orange
Chocolate hazelnut passionfruit
Coconut passionfruit
Elderflower lime
Honey lavender
Japanese matcha peach
Lavender Cucumber

Lavender lemonade
Lavender, ginger crème brulee & pistachio
Lemon & jasmine
Lemon & rosemary cake
Lemon balm & elderflower
Lemon coconut
Lemongrass Coconut
Lime, raspberry balsamic
Lush key lime cherry
Lychee & raspberry
Mango jalapeno
Miso caramel
Orange blossom matcha
Peanut butter marshmallow
Pear gin
Raspberry vanilla bean & caramel
Rhubarb & ginger gin
Smoked cardamom
Smoked pumpkin pie spice with coconut
Star anise, cumin, fennel seeds, saffron, coriander
Strawberry & pink peppercorn
Strawberry rhubarb & ginger
Summer berry, pink grapefruit & rosemary
Sweet potato cinnamon
Watermelon, lime & basil
White peach & lavender
Wine + spirits
Yuzu honey

In the spotlight:
Indulgence, twists on classics, feel-good nostalgia/comfort & party

Trend highlights

- Consumers associate taste with different holidays and celebrations. This year, well-known and established tastes will provide consumers with a feeling of security as they escape into their comfort zone. Latest market and consumer research shows that consumers tend to buy well-known products – the same applies to the choice of flavor.

- A trend toward classic indulgent winter flavors in combination with healthy and holistic well-being concepts. Their “Taste- A Path to Well-being” creations offer unique flavors for good-tasting moments.

- Delivering on consumer cravings for nostalgia and indulgence, 2021 will also see the return of classic favorites but in unexpected, more sophisticated forms. “When you think about childhood flavors re-imagined for premium applications.

- While the flavor preferences might have changed, consumers have wanted the indulgence. Although vanilla might be the most popular flavor, consumers want more mix-ins. From Caramel Cone to White Chocolate Raspberry Truffle, that classic flavor is getting an upgrade.

- The pandemic has created a need for flavors that bring comfort during chaotic and uncertain times.

- “Not only are we continuing to see people looking for wider variety in regard to flavors and textures, but we also know they are gravitating toward familiar brands they trust.

- Consumers could be open to the idea of ‘borrowed nostalgia’ – taking a nostalgic flavour from a different region as a comfort food.

- With more than 1 in 3 Americans looking to add pumpkin treats to their pantries, it isn’t surprising that the seasonal flavor was everywhere.

- Get that economy-sized package of toothbrushes from Costco ready, because we’re heading full force into 2021. Ivory chompers ready and willing. Creative twists on classics, brand new flavors, and imaginatively innovative candy fillings are imminent.

- 47 percent of consumers will be seeking a twist on traditional festive offerings.
“In the indulgent flavor space, childhood-inspired flavors are trending, as these profiles are associated with happiness, positive taste memories and childhood bliss.

Certain flavors can provide comfort, not just because they might taste good, but because they can bring back childhood or other fond memories. The idea of “comfort food” exists in every type of cuisine, often characterized by simplicity and indulgence. Flavor manufacturers work hard to accurately replicate nostalgic flavors, and consumers are all too happy to put them into their grocery cart, particularly now. “Consumers want to connect to simpler, happier times through comfort foods and indulgent, nostalgic flavors.” Reinventing classics and nostalgic favorites are ways to bring newness to products, but still keep them accessible and familiar. Through everything that’s going on in the world right now, consumers find comfort and even an emotional connection with nostalgic flavors across product categories.”

Flavour examples

- Browned butter
- Burnt caramel
- Creamy hot chocolate
- Créme caramel
- Dulce de leche
- Gingerbread
- Glazed donut coffee
- Glazed lemon loaf
- Grape cotton candy
- Honeycomb
- Irish cream hazelnut
- Jaffa cake
- Jelly bar (creamy peanut butter and strawberry jam)
- Mulled wine
- Nanaimo & spirits
- Oatmeal cream pie
- Orange creamsicle
- Peanut butter caramel
- Pecan pie
- Peppermint bark

Pickle
Popsicle flavours
Pumpkin cheesecake
Pumpkin cinnamon roll
Pumpkin cookie dough
Pumpkin spice donut
Roasted marshmallow
Rose water
Rum & raisin ice cream
S’mores
Smoky vanilla coffee
Snickerdoodle
Sorrel & orange peel
Spicy gingerbread cake
Strawberry & cream
Sweet cinnamon spice
Tiramisu
Vanilla ice cream
Vanilla milk chocolate almond
White chocolate raspberry & shortcake

In the spotlight:
Essential oils, extracts, botanicals, added value (functionality)

Trend highlights

- Consumers are drawn to flavors which have a “health halo. Balancing flavor with functionality is key here – consumers want foods that deliver a full sensory experience, from taste to color to texture, as well as clean label positioning.
- Consumers are taking a proactive approach to nourishing their bodies and minds, and flavor will continue to support the growth of better-for-you offerings.
- Consumers become more health conscious, flavor trends will reflect a market shift toward beverages that maximize on quality and functionality, all while packing a flavor punch.
- Flavor trends are evolving alongside consumer behavior patterns. As people continue to focus on holistic health and wellness, they are gravitating toward flavors that signal health and seek familiar, nostalgic flavors for a sense of comfort.
- Flavors That Function: As the world grapples with a global pandemic, consumers have found ways to take their health into their own hands—and stomachs. Beverages that offer immunity, cognitive, and mood-boosting benefits will be especially significant.
- Cardamom momentum
  - “The authentic taste of the botanical can be combined with various flavors to create a hybrid, in line with the flavor trends of 2020”.
- Essential oils are growing in prominence and products with essential oil claims are likely to increase in 2020. Fortune Business Insights reports the global essential oil market is expected to rise at a compound annual growth rate of 9.65% between 2019 and 2025…
- The United States is one of the top three importers of tea in the world, and demand continues to grow with new tea flavor and beverage trends.
“Botanical flavors will continue to flourish in 2020 because they add sophistication and nuance. Floral, herb, and spice flavors will primarily be used in combination with familiar true-to-fruit flavors.”

One of this year’s trends is “Tea Inside.” Consumers are shifting to a more mindful approach to products containing health and wellness, Symrise said. They also are looking for great taste.

**Flavour examples**

- Allspice
- Beets
- Black tea varieties
- Cardamom
- Cayenne
- Chicory coffee
- Cinnamon
- Citrus family (orange, yuzu & lemon are popular)
- Cocoa
- Cumin
- Elderflower
- Elderflower
- Fenugreek
- Ginger
- Green tea
- guarana
- Hibiscus
- Honey
- Juniper
- lavender
- Lemon Verbena
- Mint(s)
- Nutmeg
- Oak
- Orange blossom
- Oregano
- passion flowers
- Rose
- Rosemary
- Saffron
- Seaweed
- Turmeric
- Vanilla extract
- Yerba maté
- Yuzu

**In the spotlight**
Globally-inspired, International, Ethnic

**Trend highlights**

- As the desire for hyper-local tastes has increased, some consumers crave global dishes in their traditional form, while others prefer more approachable fusions. Through ingredient combinations, signature dishes or cooking methods, chefs can celebrate and bring to life these ethnic cuisines.

- An influx of global flavors has driven brunch in exciting new directions in recent years. Miso, the Japanese seasoning made from fermented soybeans, has been on a parallel track, adding its umami-rich tones to a variety of menu applications.

- Key global regions of discovery include South America, West Africa, Eastern Mediterranean and Southeast Asia. When incorporating emerging ingredients from these hotspots, it’s important to overlay macro trends, like veg-centricity, functional wellness and global comfort.

- Cross-cultural flavors with surprising combinations and twists can give consumers a low-risk way to be adventurous. Chef Ted Osorio says that “global mash-ups” such as French and Scandinavian, Mexican and Southeast Asia, and regional cuisines like Native American are imminently popular. Menu mash-ups continue to trend and provide you with a canvas in which to showcase your creativity.

- Consumers want to enjoy the flavors of exotic locations through regional spices, herbs, and produce. Now, while travel is severely restricted, this desire to experience other cultures through food is particularly important...these flavors include “peppers with a provenance connection like Hatch, Calabrese, and Anaheim peppers, to the specific spice blends or pastes of a region,

- “It’s fun to offer consumers a baked item they are familiar with but give them the opportunity to experience it in a new and unexpected flavor or color. There’s no better way to do that than by giving it a global twist!”

novotaste.com/trends
New tastes and ingredients, used in unique combinations, with a greater focus on the flavor source. Instead of sweeping terms like “Mexican,” there might be references to regions, such as Veracruz, Oaxaca, or Yucatan. Similarly, “Southern” food may be identified as having roots in Appalachian, Lowcountry, or Creole cuisine.

The meaning of sensory flavors and experiences has evolved. But is it rather a question of newly acquired taste preferences? Pre-pandemic, consumers were used to everything being available everywhere and at any time. Exotic fruit and spices from around the world evoked a sense of adventure, as consumers sought new eating experiences and taste combinations. In search of new trends, the modern consumer could pluck a taste experience from anywhere they imagined, and it could be eaten from the comfort of their home, wherever that may be.

Consumers stuck at home are exploring international ingredients through the beverage menu. Travel restrictions are keeping consumers close to home, but restaurant menus can temporarily transport diners to exotic destinations.

Ethnic cuisine flavors have peaked on flavor forecasts for four years now. Asian and Middle Eastern flavors continue to appeal to millennials, Hispanics and Asian consumers. A third of consumers eat ethnic cuisine at least once each week, and nearly a third are willing to pay more if it’s authentic. Types of regional cuisine that consumers are interested in have remained fairly stable.

As the desire for hyper-local tastes has increased, some consumers crave global dishes in their traditional form, while others prefer more approachable fusions. Through ingredient combinations, signature dishes or cooking methods, chefs can celebrate and bring to life these ethnic cuisines.

There’s a lot of curiosity about flavor profiles, whether its Indian, or Korean, or Japanese food.
Flavour examples

Arabic coffee  Ginger & lemon
Baharat seasoning  Gochujang
Berbere  Gunpowder spice (milagai podi)
Bourbon & cajun BBQ sauce  Harissa
Brazilian tempero baiano  Hibiscus
Cardamom  Horchata
Caribbean spices  Hot & spicy cajun
Carom  Japanese seven-spice
Chinese five-spice  Strawberry basil
Garam masala  Sumac
Matcha  Szechwan seasoning
Merguez sausage  Tahini
Miso  Tajin
Orane blossom  Turkish cardamom coffee
Peruvian seasoning  Wild maqui berry
Pho  Yellow curry
Ras el hanout  Za’atar
Rose water  
Rose, saffron & cardamom  
Rosemary & lemongrass  
Saffron  

In the spotlight
Multisensory, spicy, umami & smoke

Trend highlights

- Technomic also predicted food service operators will try to draw consumers in by menuing ingredients that elicit surprising sensory reactions like sweet limes, habanada and Sichuan buds. “This trend is a continuation of other sensory trends we see going on. “We’ve seen it with color and applications like the Unicorn Frappuccino. Bringing a surprising sensory reaction to taste is the next step we see”.

- This year’s forecast is shaping up to be focused on flavors that drive experience in a socially distant landscape. Flavors That Tingle: Burning, cooling, or otherwise tingling their way across our tongues, drinks with flavors that stimulate unique sensory experiences are set to become more prominent in the coming year.

- As Mintel points out, “narrowing in on specific flavor profiles like jalapeño … will cast a wide net.” “I believe that the increase of jalapeño-flavored foods speaks to consumers wanting more of the actual pepper and pepper flavor,”

- “Smoked and roasted flavors are on the rise and align well with adult tastes, especially in savory snacks,” noted Lu Ann Williams, director of Insights & Innovation at Innova Market Insights. With the rise of plant-based meat alternatives, smoke can help formulators achieve authentic flavors. Smoke flavors “are especially becoming popular in meat analogs and foodservice where operators are looking to add a rich, freshly cooked meat flavor. Perhaps an evolution of the smoke trend is the appearance of burnt and charred notes being called out on menus and on packaging. Suzy Badaracco, president of Culinary Tides, sees these flavor notes appearing a lot in what she calls “nuanced indulgence” products, and includes “toasted, roasted, smoked, and charred flavors” such as burnt caramel and browned butter. While it has been five years since smoke was featured in the magazine as an upcoming flavor trend, it has staying power and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. “I expect charred/blackened/fire-roasted flavor will continue to remain...
popular, especially if the flavor component is combined with visual cues and crispy texture that further stimulate consumers’ senses.”

- Global hot sauces, seasonings and pepper varietals are catching on beyond the United States into regions associated with milder fare, such as the United Kingdom and Australia. Spicy snacks will evolve to call out specific peppers, such as ghost, habanero, poblano, hatch or chipotle.

- When it comes to the history of Flavor Forecast, there’s never been a shortage of bold and spicy profiles. Consumers crave it — heat and spice offer a sensory experience and enjoyment like no other. Heat is now everywhere, from grocery store shelves to upscale dining establishments, and eating spicy for fun, delight and dares are now social pastimes.

- Expect menus and products to raise the bar with creative pairings of heat in applications like cocktails, baked goods, marinades and more. Trends like Chilies Obsession, Heat Plus Tang and Sweet on Pepper will grow in application for multi-dimensional heat.

- “Spicy” as a category is one of the more popular flavor trends.

- Sweet and heat are a yin and yang in the flavor world. While being complete opposites in taste, they are actually quite complementary. Combinations such as chipotle raspberry, mango jalapeño and lemongrass wasabi are trending across all food categories and help keep meat and poultry relevant to today’s consumers. The more exotic, the more enticing the sweet-heat combination. At the same time, the protein carrier is a familiar food. This invites consumers to embark on a flavor adventure. After all, we all need a little excitement these days during COVID-19 social limitations. “These trends reflect Americans’ desires to combine the tried and true with the new and different.”

- Chefs continuously build on the interplay of the five tastes of sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami, as each holds individual merit. Thanks to the deep exploration of the global pantry over the last decade, umami-rich ingredients have come into sharper focus. Using those ingredients to balance sweetness and add complexity leads to exciting menu development. That sweet-umami combination is well positioned as a modern flavor builder, where chefs can incorporate it in an array of savory and sweet menu features.

Flavour examples

- Aji Amarillo chili
- Ancho chile
- Barbecue
- Blackberry barbecue
- Cayenne peppers
- Chamoy sauce (pickled fruit, lime, spice & chilies)
- Chili & lime
- Chili de arbol
- Red chili pastes
- Rotisserie chicken
- Sambal oelek
- Scorchin’ cheddar,
- Sea vegetable & dried-fruit
- Sichuan buds
- Slow-smoked, dried and seasoned beef
- Smoke
| Chipotle pepper | Smokey chipotle |
| Chocolate & spicy peppers | Smoky butter |
| Cinnamon | Smoky egg |
| Cracked pepper | Smoky guacamole |
| Fresh & cooling flavors | Smoky hummus |
| Furikake | Smoky plum |
| Ghost pepper | Smoky potato |
| Ginger, jalapeno, habanero & pepper infusions (in cocktails) | Soy sauce-fruit |
| Gochugaru | Spicy chicken |
| Gochujang | Spicy dill pickle |
| Guajillo chili | Spicy margarita |
| Habanada | Sukiyaki |
| Habanero pepper | Sweet habanero |
| Harissa | Sweet lime |
| Hatch pepper | Tajin |
| Heat, smoke & spice | Teriyaki |
| Herongyang | Tien tsin chili |
| Hijiki seaweed | Toasted, roasted, smoked & charred flavors |
| Hot honey | Togarashi |
| Indian peppercorn | Zhug |
| Jalapeno | |
| Kimchi | |
| Kung pao mentaiko | |
| Lemon-coconut eucalyptus | |
| Micheladas | |
| Mushroom | |
| Peppermint-mocha cream | |
| Poblano pepper | |

**In the spotlight**

![Image of In the spotlight](image-url)
Clean label options - mocktails, allergen-free, vegan

Trend highlights

- Curiosity, even more so than environmental or health concerns, ranked as the No. 1 reason why many consumers try plant-based meat alternatives,
- People love their cocktails and if the drink makes its way into their dessert, it’s a match made in heaven. Desserts inspired by cocktails will find acceptance in 2020.
- So, we see a range of alcohol-based ice cream in a lot of places. The straight plain flavours or cocktail inspired ice creams will be a definite and evolved flavour this year.
- Given the history of alcohol-flavoured food, and the popularity of key drinks in the UK market, it’s hardly surprising that both independent and big brand snack manufacturers are keying into the demand. The pairing is still novel and therefore intriguing. When done well, it’s hard to deny the appeal of the flavour combinations. But we need to look beyond the product itself to the message that it carries. The majority of gin, prosecco, cocktail or beer-flavoured snacks seem to fall into two camps: trying to imbue the everyday with luxury (like a packet of crisps flavoured with prosecco and dusted in edible gold stars) or taking something that was a childish treat and making it, as Smith & Sinclair says, more grown-up.
Flavour examples

Maple bourbon bacon
Wine
Spirits
Cocktails
Vegan beef
Vegan eggs
Natural, vegan & halal/kosher meats such as bacon, beef, ham
Natural, vegan & halal/kosher fish flavours
Natural, vegan & halal/kosher cheese flavours
Hot & cold sensations
Umami
Kokumi
Numbing peppers
Allergen-free nuts flavours like hazelnut & peanut

In the spotlight
Flavour marketing, smoke & mirrors, emotional
mystery, locally/geographically-inspired, limited edition, seasonal, A.I. derived, social-media/takeout-inspired, cross-over, premium collections, experimental, celebrity & storytelling flavours

Trend highlights

- As the days get shorter and colder weather becomes the norm, many brands are starting to release limited edition, seasonal flavours to their core ranges.

- Frito-Lay is always finding new ways to bring bold flavors to snack time. From its Smiles with Lay’s fan favorites coming back to taking a flavor trip across the country, snack time is never boring with Frito-Lay snacks. With football season underway, snacks are flying off store shelves. Even if tailgating has turned into homegating, everyone has to have their snacks while cheering their favorite team to victory.

- Mystery flavors have always been a popular choice to release as limited-time products for brands to create a little buzz. From Oreo cookies to Pringles to Mountain Dew sodas, product developers are introducing mystery flavors, along with competitions to guess what they are, in an attempt to increase engagement with their fans and generate a little media attention.

- There is an increased focus on ingredient provenance and brand storytelling platforms in order to emphasize the taste and quality of companies’ products, as well as their uniqueness and sustainability efforts. Provenance platforms can communicate a whole range of messages to the consumer, including taste, processing methods, cultural and traditional backgrounds, as well as the more obvious geographical origin.
Experimental flavoured beverages have become increasingly popular in recent years. Younger drinkers aged 25-30 are driving this increase by being curious to try new flavours and being less caught-up in more traditional drink varieties.

- Celebrity endorsements, creations & branding.
- Dessert with meat is becoming a new trend among chefs. Chefs are now increasingly experimenting with the red stuff by adding hints into sugary delicacies. Bacon is one of the favourites in fleshing up a dessert.
- Flavours inspired by Religious events & country regions.
- McDonald’s Australia has launched 38 new Frozen Coke flavours. Diners can order the ultimate refreshing twist on slushies just in time for summer.
- Ben & Jerry’s has already released a full collection of Netflix Original Flavors.
- Seasonal flavors are crucial for consumers. “They bring a sensation of comfort along with tastes consumers know and trust. Seasonal flavors create the urge to try and buy new products,”…. 
- Pringles always thinks outside the box when it comes to releasing new limited-edition flavours in Japan.
- Alcohol flavours such as pink lemonade, Long Island Tea, Tequila and Mojito give an adult twist to bakes. ND: An interesting trend coming out of the flavoured gin space is fantasy flavours. Offering a sense of escapism and fun, these have been seen in the bakery category in the form of unicorns and flamingos but it’s a trend we are predicting further growth for in 2021.
- A new business in Inuvik is bringing wild flavours of the Arctic to the Northwest Territories in new – and sugary – ways. Northern Wild Foods is the passion project of couple Richard Skelhorn and Laure Frajman in Inuvik. Accountants by day, the two scour the Arctic countryside on weekends to find inspiration for soaps and sweets.
- The future of flavours lies in the hands of machine learning, rising consumer demands for healthy options, and trends driven by globalisation, according to a leading industry expert.
- Bud Light Seltzer is ringing in its first holiday season with a festive pack of unique flavors. It’s launching an “Ugly Sweater” variety pack nationwide on November 2 with three new flavors “inspired by the most popular holiday moments.”
- Bianlifeng, the Beijing-based digital-friendly convenience store chain, developed the unique freshly-brewed coffee flavors to attract adventurous young consumers. They are also attempting to form a beverage “challenge” on social media among trend followers through such innovations.
- If you thought a brilliant chef concocted this in a restaurant kitchen, you’d be wrong. This hit flavor was created by a ‘food innovation intelligence platform’, which basically uses Artificial Intelligence to build a virtual ‘food brain.’
I don’t know exactly when this bizarre flavored-chip trend started but it seems that it’s not going anywhere anytime soon. The latest to join the likes of pickle and turduken-flavored chips are the new Reuben sandwich Pringles.

Flavour ideas

Most of the profiles covered in this trend category involve mystery, locally/geographically-inspired, limited edition, seasonal, A.I. derived, social-media/takeout-inspired, cross-over, premium collections, experimental, celebrity & storytelling flavours. So listing them here would be misleading. If you are interested in obtaining the complete information, request the exclusive NPD edition.

Fruits & vegetables

Trend highlights

- Brands will be looking to create core flavor profiles, as well as taking a twist on these by adding botanicals and floral notes,” she adds. Appealing flavor ideas include healthy fruits, such as blueberry, cranberry, açai or cucumber; botanicals, such as rosemary, elderflower, ginger, basil, peppercorn and mint; core profiles, such as lemon, lime, orange, raspberry, cherry, grapefruit and strawberry; and exotic fruits, such as mango, passionfruit, coconut water, pomegranate, watermelon and yuzu.

- Packing the earthiness of root vegetables into something sweet might seem counterintuitive, but as pastry chefs go hunting for local produce in sparse cold-weather months, the subterranean standbys are taking root on dessert menus around the city.

novotaste.com/trends
Growth in fruit and vegetable flavours will continue, especially in powder form. These can be added to bakery products such as sponge cakes, pastries and biscuits, and refined sugar can be reduced and replaced with natural fruit sugar.

With citrus being an all-time favorite flavor for consumers, Nagarajan believes there are many creative ways to pair it with functional flavors, such as pairing blood orange with guayusa or Valencia orange with tulsi.

While many people are drawn to seasonal flavors, there are certain tastes that transcend seasons. Watermelon is one of those flavors. Although watermelon fills summer tables, the fruit is available all year round. It doesn’t disappear once all that pumpkin spice fills store shelves.

Blueberry appears to be booming as an on-trend ingredient across Asia, with the number of new product launches soaring in everything from sauces to pizza.

Flavor-combining chewy candies are gathering steam as sugar confectionery products among millennials, with key affinity for tropical fruits. Expanding portfolio of fruit-flavored candy offerings in various shapes and packaging formats are propelling the expansion of the infused fruits jellies market. Confectionery manufacturers are keen on expanding their product portfolio and constantly adding new flavors to attract consumers. They are trying new flavors based on tropical fruits.

Fruit has been incorporated in European beers for hundreds of years. But less so in the United States where it has become a common brewing ingredient only in the decades since the craft beer revolution of the 1980s. In recent years, however, its popularity has exploded — more so than in any other nation.

Fruit has always been a natural cornerstone of beverage development, but has become an even bigger player today, showing up in all kinds of exciting ways— fresh, juiced, powdered, pickled.

Innovative trends in chocolate confectionery are developed like the addition of orange or citrus as well as vegetables various fruits in chocolate.

Flavour suggestions

Açaí
Apple, pomegranate & gooseberry
Apricot
Blood orange
Blood orange & yuzu
Blueberry
Charred pineapple
Cherry blossom
Cucumber
Lemon
Lulo
Lychee

Parsnip
Passionfruit
Peach, pumpkin, goji & curcuma
Pink pineapple
Pomegranate
Prickly pear
Raspberry
Rambutan
Rhubarb
Sea buckthorn berry
Turnip
Valencia orange & tulsi

novotaste.com/trends
Orange
Orange & cherry

Whisky infused fruit
Wild blueberry
Yuzu

In the spotlight

novotaste.com/trends