



Ingredient Hot List

HEALTHY-ISH FATS & INDULGENT ADDITIONS

Consumers are redefining indulgence to reflect reward, enjoyment, adventure and even healthy, or at least *healthier*. This new idea of indulgence is reflected in a fascination with fats and an ever-present sustainability-focused adoption. From ghee to offal, coconut oil to cashew, let's look at the hot ingredients capturing this balance of richness, reward and responsible eating.

**We've got all the feels – and so do consumers.
Let's dive in.**

COCONUT OIL

THE LOVE FOR COCONUT OIL IS REAL. SO IS THE DEBATE ABOUT IT.



The recent clamor for coconut oil – which looks like more of a solid form of fat such as butter or shortening -- began a few years ago, propelled by surging interest in low-carb, higher-fat diets and in vegan eating. Coconut oil, extracted from the flesh or kernel of coconuts, has been used for millennia. And this isn't the first time this ingredient has been touted to certain audiences as a superfood: thousands

of years ago, coconut oil was used by Indian healers. Its halo was knocked askew a bit after the American Heart Association came out in 2017 and advised people to limit their consumption of saturated fats like coconut oil. That said, **coconut oil still has a strong following and is spotlighted in an array of new products.** It's a hot ingredient in terms of both attention and application.

Versatility is a big reason why coconut oil has experienced a boom in the modern marketplace. Coconut oil is an ingredient in foods and beverages as well as personal care and beauty products. Within the food and beverage world, its

high flash point makes it appealing to those making fried foods, such as loaded fries or chicken. Coconut oil also has a range of baking applications, in nutrition bars and other baked goods.

A newer (and arguably friendlier) take on the coconut oil is **MCT oil, a liquid fat extracted from coconut oil.** MCT stands for medium chain triglycerides, which are more readily and quickly absorbed by the body than long chain saturated fats. MCT oils are a component of many keto-friendly foods with an indulgent taste, including smoothies and butter coffees.

COCONUT OIL, CONTINUED



Consumer sentiment via social media bears out the idea that people who love coconut oil really do, while health perceptions might have steered some people away, even as it's used in baked goods or fried foods that are already considered an indulgence. Social media analysis points

to 97% positivity, while overall posts about coconut oil have trended downward 14% in the past three years.

In the meantime, other studies have been published noting that coconut oil raises good/HDL cholesterol levels more than olive oil and butter. Compounds in coconut oil also have been shown to protect against the growth of certain bacteria and pathogens.

COCONUT OIL / MCT OIL PRODUCTS OF NOTE



THE IMPOSSIBLE BURGER, which has almost a cult-like following, contains coconut oil, along with wheat protein, potato protein and heme.



VIOLIFE CHEESE, from Ariva is an alternative made with coconut oil as a base. Different varieties of this alternative cheese are available, including Just Like Parmesan and Mozzarella Flavour.



MAGNUM ICE CREAM, known for its premium dairy-based novelties and ice cream, has unveiled new non-dairy frozen dessert bars made with a vanilla base comprised of a blend of coconut oil and pea protein and dipped in non-dairy Belgian chocolate.



BULLETPROOF MOCHA COLD BREW COFFEE, combines "Brain Octane" coconut oil and grass-fed butter into a cold brew that was featured at a demonstration of "the products of tomorrow" by Mintel during an IFT event in 2018.

GHEE BUTTER



If coconut oil is a hot ingredient – and we’re not just talking about its high smoke point – ghee is right there as well. Already dubbed **“the next coconut oil,”** ghee butter is a clarified butter with roots in India, including Indian medicine. Still popular in India and in other Middle Eastern and Asian countries,

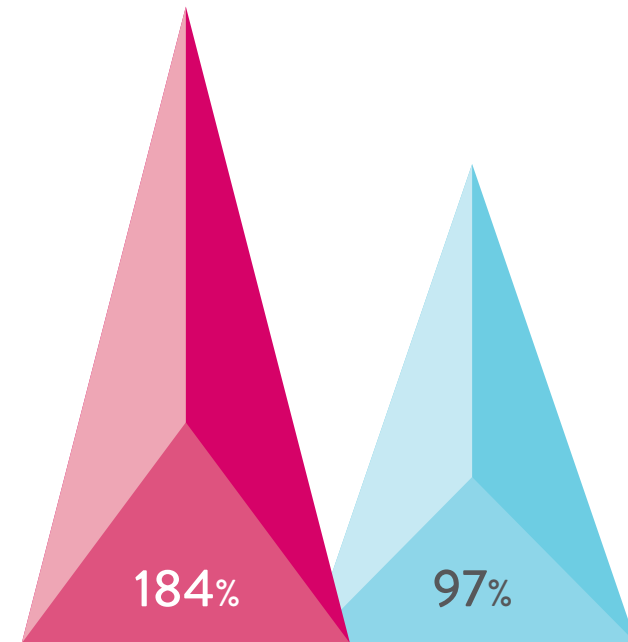
ghee butter has emerged as an ingredient in the other parts of the world. Of ghee butter product launches over the past three years, 9% were in Latin America and 8% were in Europe, In the U.S., ghee is included in a lineup of **trending “phat fats”** projected by Whole Foods as one of the top three food trends of 2019.

Ghee is a trending butterfat in large part for its balance of sumptuous flavor and natural qualities. High in nutrients like vitamins A, D and E K and in essential fatty acids, ghee butter dovetails into keto and paleo diets because of its low-carb, high-fat properties.

While it has natural properties, ghee butter tastes indulgent, imparting flavor to fried or cooked foods or blended into different products and recipes, ranging from ghee-infused popcorn to ghee-glazed vegetables.

Consumer Sentiment and Demographics

Many consumers are geeked out about ghee. Ghee’s share of butter is now the highest in Asia Pacific, at 30%, followed by Latin America at 29%, North America at 16% and Europe at 9 percent. On social media, posts about ghee have rocketed **184% over the past three years,** and the ingredient enjoys a **97% positivity sentiment.** Breaking it down a bit, the product appeals to 70% Of women and 30% of men.



GROWTH 2016-2019

POSITIVE SENTIMENT

GHEE BUTTER, CONTINUED



The rise of ghee products and butter's revival in the U.S. can be attributed to a number of factors, like their perceived versatility when cooking and the changing perceptions of fat. However, the unifying quality that connects all brands enjoying significant growth in the market is their focus on naturalness.



- MINTEL, "THE FUTURE OF BUTTER AND YELLOW FATS, 2019"

GHEE PRODUCTS OF NOTE



GHEE M.C.T. POUR OILS AND SPRAYS from Fourth & Heart are available in Original and Truffle flavors and are a blend of ghee, coconut oil, MCTs and avocado oil.



GHEE NUT BUTTER from Farmtrue comes in cacao chai, cashew coconut and maple walnut varieties.



LESSEREVIL'S line of popcorn snacks includes avocado oil, coconut oil, and grass-fed ghee flavors.



BROWN BUTTER GHEE, the newest shelf-stable product from Tin Star Foods, has a high smoke point for cooking and is also promoted as a buttery boost to coffee and a good pairing with an afternoon scone.

CRACKLINGS AND OFFAL

You can't count out any food as a relic of the past, particularly if combine indulgent enjoyment with sustainable ingredients. The elevation of *nose-to-tail* cooking, which includes cracklings and offal as components, is a prime example of *what's old is new again*.



Consumer Sentiment and Demographics

Whole-animal eating – call it nose-to-tail, beak-to-feet or head-to-fin – has been a thing in high-end dining for a few years, with dishes like monkfish liver mousse and offal arancini making it onto menus like Kimpton Hotel & Restaurant, among others. But it's now segueing into other areas, especially as people following low-carb, high-protein diets seek foods that are satisfying and satiating. Another driving factor is the move to cut down on food waste: the National Restaurant Association

reports that chefs believe zero-waste cooking is the sustainability trend of 2019.

The craving for cracklings – like pork rinds, with more fat attached – is one example. In the social media realm, posts about cracklings jumped 152% in the past three years. Within salty snacks, the growth of traditional items like pretzels and popcorn is now outpaced by high protein meat snacks and “other” snacks that include pork rinds and cracklings.

Meanwhile, organ meats and other under-utilized parts of animals are also finding interest among adventurous eaters and those following diet plans like paleo and keto. Social media posts about offal have increased 37% in the past three years, with the greatest increase coming within the past year. Demographically, men seem to relate more to offal than women, at 57% to 43 percent.

37%

SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH

CRACKLINGS AND OFFAL, CONTINUED SKIN IN THE GAME



Whole animal ingredients are showing up in a range of products and recipes.

Crispy cracklings, in the form of pork or poultry fat trimmings fried and seasoned, are on the menu in traditional barbecue joints in the south as well as places like Elephant Bar Restaurant in Los Angeles and Zazu Kitchen + Farm in Sonoma County, California. In Mexican cuisine, puffy pieces of fried pig skin are known

as “chicharrónes”; today, chicharrónes are getting new life and attention as pork belly and authentic Mexican cuisine score big among a broad swath of consumers. In the retail sector, packaged crackling snacks are finding space on the shelf and e-commerce sites, alongside similar foods like pork rinds.

Meanwhile, offal isn't so awful anymore to a growing segment of consumers, who had previously eschewed cuts like tripe and tongue that their grandparents or great grandparents might have prepared. Restaurants that tout their butchery skills and farm-to-table fare tout inventive takes on organ meat, like pig's foot Milanese at Babbo in New York City.



The wonderful thing about cooking with offal is that the organ will always have the underlying flavor of the animal, all that's really changing is the texture. Once you realize that, you'll soon get over any squeamishness you have and really appreciate the flavor and richness.

- EMMA NKUNZANA, CRUSH



CRACKLINGS AND OFFAL PRODUCTS OF NOTE



SOUTHERN RECIPE SMALL BATCH, a line of pork snacks from Rudolph Foods, now includes Tender Style Pork Cracklins that are similar to the brand's pork rinds but “with more fat attached.”
USA



SALT & VINEGAR CHICHARRONES from the H-E-B's County Fare brand fuse authentic Mexican flavors and fried pork skin.
USA



SPICY GREEN CHILI & LIME FRIED PORK CRACKLINS from 4505 Meats serves up some zest with the crackling base. USA



BAMAN SPICY BEEF OFFAL RICE NOODLES are made with selected tripe, beef heart, spices and rice noodles, China



DUCK LIVER MOUSSE WITH COGNAC, by Alexian Pate, USA

CASHING IN ON CASHEW

Kidney-shaped cashew nuts come from the cashew apple grown on tropic evergreen trees and are mainly produced today in Vietnam, Brazil, India and Ivory Coast. Their popularity stems (no pun intended) from a milky, smooth and delicate flavor that sets this nut apart from other nuts like peanuts, pecans or almonds. The cashew has a richness that lends itself well to rich dishes as a crunchy topping or mix-in, or in the form of cashew milk, cashew cream, cashew butter and cashew “yogurt.” The luxe flavor of cashews also comes through in cashew oil pressed from the cashew nut.

At the same time, cashews are packed with a host of nutrients, including iron, zinc, copper, magnesium and phosphorus, while also promoting healthy levels of “good” (HDL) cholesterol. As keto and paleo diets have surged, high-protein and high-fiber cashews fit right into those types of eating.



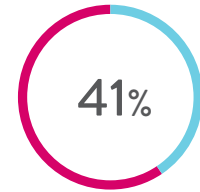
CASHING IN ON CASHEW, CONTINUED

Consumer Sentiment and Demographics

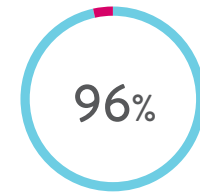
While money may not grow on trees, there are some serious gains being made in the plant-based food market, including tree nuts and, specifically, cashews. (The plant-based movement is something we've examined in [multiple reports](#) this year, and shows signs of a permanent consumer shift.) Global production of cashews reached nearly 790,000 metric tons in the 2017-2018 season, up 32% compared to the previous decade average. The market for

cashews, which reached nearly \$10 million in 2018, is expected to reach \$12.7 million by 2024.

Underscoring their status as a hot ingredient, cashews are trending well on social media, with a 96% positivity association and a 41% uptick in posts over the past three years. Women tend to post more about cashews than men, at 76% to 24%, respectively.



GROWTH IN SOCIAL POSTS
2016-2019



POSITIVE PERCEPTION

PRODUCTS OF NOTE

For a nut that's been munchable for years on its own or in fancy nut mixes, the cashew is an ingredient in a plethora of new products that marry indulgence and a protein-rich, plant-based profile.



ARK FOODS CAULI MAC AND CHEESE, made with cauliflower florets and tossed in a cashew-based cream sauce, tastes rich but contains only 140 calories, 3.5 grams of fat and 16 carbs. USA



PIMP MY SALAD BYRON BAY CASHEW PARMESAN TOPPING is a dairy-free topping that adds flavor and a taste of indulgence to vegetables and salads as well as dishes like pasta, pizza and grains. USA



CASHEWGURT is a creamy, dairy-free yogurt alternative. Certified organic, non-GMO, kosher and free of lactose, gluten and soy, Cashewgurt is available unsweetened and in blueberry, strawberry, vanilla, lemon, coconut and cherry flavors. USA



CASHEWTOPIA frozen desserts are billed as "smooth, creamy and delicious as a gourmet ice cream should be, but without the guilt." USA

"Incorporating nuts into other products could resonate with consumers, particularly given their high awareness."

-MINTEL

THE TAKEAWAYS

From keto to wellness to sustainability, wider consumer movements are reflected in the the indulgent ingredients capturing consumer interest. For example, the popular high-fat keto diet has been a catalyst for a fascination with coconut oil and ghee butter. A movement toward plant-based food and beverage has contributed to the popularity of cashew and, again, coconut oil. Offal and cracklings reflect a greater interest in “nose to tail” sustainability, which is ironically also a driving force of plant-based interest. Are any of these ingredients right for your product development? A big reflection should be about your consumer understanding. What are the drivers at play? Is it keto? Wellness? Sustainability? Wherever their interests lie, the universal truth our research shows time and time again: Taste is consistently the #1 driver for purchase, and should always be a priority.

SOURCES

- Food Navigator
- DuPont Nutrition & Health study
- Health Focus International
- Iconoculture
- International Food Information Council
- Mintel
- Plant Based Food Association
- Tyson Foods
- The Nielsen Company
- Washington Post
- Whole Foods
- www.nosh.com
- www.facebook.com/pg/ImpossibleFoods
- www.farmtrue.com
- www.alexianpate.com



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