

SEASONAL FLAVOR LOOKBACK: TRENDS OF WINTER

Spanning from December to mid-March, the winter season is filled with holiday inspired flavors and decadent and indulgent tastes consumers look forward to each year. Each winter, consumers await innovative seasonal and limited-edition products that feature exciting new flavors, formats and collaborations. While sweet treats in chocolate confectionery, bakery and sugar & gum confectionery dominated this season, product developers can find opportunity in the seasonal and LTO space cross-category.

From winter's indulgent tastes to better-for-you options and holiday flavor favorites, let's take a look back at the trending seasonal products and flavors for winter, and see where you can find inspiration for your brand.



45% OF CONSUMERS

say they purchase winter seasonal items as soon as they are available on store shelves

- MCCORMICK SEASONAL FLAVORS SURVEY



We took a deep dive into winter's top flavors and trends and spotted many classics and some notable growing flavors. Below are winter's top flavors in seasonal and limited edition launches this year.

TOP FLAVORS IN SEASONAL/LTO PRODUCTS: North America Introductions, Dec. 2023 - March 2024

■ Chocolate	■ Hazelnut
■ Peppermint	■ Strawberry
■ Caramel/Caramelised	■ Marshmallow
■ Raspberry	■ Vanilla/Van. Bourbon/Van. Madagascar
■ Gingerbread	■ Caramel/Caramelised & Salt (Sea) Fleur de Sel

GROWING FLAVORS IN SEASONAL/LTO PRODUCTS: Global Introductions, Q4 2023 vs. Q4 2024

■ Matcha/Maccha (Green Tea).....	+600%
■ Barbecue/BBQ/Barbacoa	+600%
■ Egg	+600%
■ Chive.....	+400%
■ Elderberry	+400%

Sources: Mintel GNPD

KEY TRENDS:

Decadent Desserts

New Year, New You

Seasonal Celebrations



NOTABLE PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS:

- Starbucks Brown Sugar Cinnamon Flavored Cold Brew Concentrate
- Smartfood Chocolate Glazed Donut Popcorn
- Coffee Mate Mean Girls Pink Frosting Pink Creamer
- Zoa Energy Holiday Punch Zero Sugar Energy Drink
- Popop Grandma's Stuffing Flavor Wrapped Popcorn Kernels
- Dunkin' Chocolates Chocolate Donut- Flavored Filled Chocolates



FLAVORS ON THE MENU 1,035 launched menu items & LTO's in Winter 2024 – DATASSENTIAL

- Red Robin Caramel Apple Pie Milkshake
- Miller's Ale House Irish Egg Rolls
- Famous Dave's Buffalo Chicken Mac & Cheese
- Cooper's Hawk Ginger Spiced Carrot Cake



CHOCOLATE CONFECTIONERY, BAKERY, AND SUGAR & GUM CONFECTIONERY

ranked highest for top North America categories with winter seasonal and limited-edition offerings

- MINTEL GNPD

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DECADENT DESSERTS

Sweet treats and decadent desserts made their presence known this winter featuring indulgent and holiday inspired profiles. Developers can find inspiration from some of these sweet flavor combinations spanning confectionery, bakery, ice cream introductions and more.

93% OF CONSUMERS

say they find food and beverage products with seasonal flavors comforting and nostalgic.
- MCCORMICK SEASONAL FLAVORS SURVEY

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



PUBLIX MARSHMALLOW, CANDY CANE & COOKIE BLAST PREMIUM ICE CREAM features marshmallow flavored ice cream with bits of candy cane and a chocolate cookie swirl.



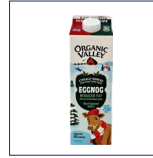
PILLSBURY CINNAMON TOAST CRUNCH CINNAMON ROLLS are made with real cinnamon and retail in a 12.4-oz. pack.

Sources: Mintel GNPD

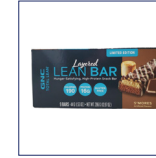
NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

While consumers tend to lean toward indulgent and comforting flavors in the beginning of winter, as January rolls around, many search for better-for-you options that can help them meet their health and wellness goals. Health forward options with better-for-you call outs can provide opportunity in the early months of the new year. But remember, taste is key!

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



ORGANIC VALLEY REDUCED FAT EGG NOG contains 33% less fat than regular egg nog.



GNC TOTAL LEAN S'MORES FLAVORED LAYERED LEAN BAR is a gluten free and high-protein snack bar with 190 calories and 16g protein.



RED BULL THE WINTER EDITION PEAR CINNAMON ENERGY DRINK claims to vitalize the body and mind.



POPPI CRANBERRY FIZZ PREBIOTIC SODA contains prebiotics for a healthy gut, is infused with apple cider vinegar and contains 3% juice.

Sources: Mintel GNPD

SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS

Consumer look forward to winter seasonal celebrations with their families and the food and beverages that accompany them. In fact, in our recent survey, New Year's Eve and St. Patrick's Day listed within the top 5 holidays consumers are interested in seeing seasonally flavored food and beverage items for. Seasonal and LTO flavors can intrigue consumers who celebrate holidays in the winter months.

46% OF CONSUMERS

say winter is the most exciting season for seasonally flavored food and beverage products
- MCCORMICK SEASONAL FLAVORS SURVEY

PRODUCTS OF NOTE



TIC TAC NAUGHTY OR NICE LUMPS OF COAL ARTIFICIALLY FLAVORED MINTS were available for Christmas 2023. The product featured a sour cherry flavor.



BAILEYS VANILLA MINT SHAKE IRISH CREAM LIQUEUR is limited edition and features flavors of vanilla, mint and a hint of chocolate blended with Irish cream for a St. Patrick's Day sweet treat.

Sources: Mintel GNPD

A WORD FROM OUR EXPERT

MOLLY ZIMMERMAN, INNOVATION MANAGER

“When looking at seasonal products, especially for winter, try leveraging flavors that are well loved and pseudo-seasonal, meaning that they are loosely tied to the season but don't lose their appeal quickly. By pairing a well-loved pseudo-seasonal flavor (like white chocolate) with something more adventurous (like matcha) you can create perfect marriage of excitement and fun to the cold winter months and comfort when you crave it most.”



Looking for flavor inspiration for your next seasonal or limited-edition product development? Reach out to us for more information. Let's get started!



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