

'NO APOLOGIES' FLAVOR

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FOOD
AND BEVERAGE SPACE

TREND REPORT BITE



In a rational rebellion against the “always-on” mindset of modern life, consumers are making the conscious choice to stop and enjoy the moment. An unapologetic personal escape from everyday demands offer a chance to savor sweet flavors no matter how small the occasion. Brands are appealing to this need for ‘no apologies’ flavors with imagination innovations that are inspired by mythical worlds, joyful celebrations, comforting classics and more. Check out the flavor themes that are sure to delight and offer indulgence.

NO APOLOGIES FLAVOR THEMES TO EXPLORE:

- Enchanted flavors
- Have your cake and eat it too!
- Flavors from the bar cart
- Cookies reimaged



41%

of consumers believe indulgent
foods are good for the soul.

*Mintel, Trending Flavors and Ingredients in
Desserts and Confection – US, 2023*

Enchanted Flavors

From enchanted worlds to fantastical creatures, fantasy flavors, ingredients and formats are turning “make believe” into magical eating experiences. Consumers continue to seek out sweet experiences that inspire their imagination and tickle their curiosity. Profiles are inspired by mythical animals, space exploration and whimsical rainbows which allow creative interpretation when selecting an appropriate flavor. This is about equal parts flavor and appearance with bright, bold colors, textures, and packaging.

FANTASY FLAVORS ARE A TOP 2024 TREND

+23% average annual growth of new food and beverage launches with fantasy flavors. (Global, CAGR H2/2020 to H1/2023)

- INNOVA MARKET INSIGHTS, TOP TRENDS IN FLAVORS FOR 2024



TREND SPOTTED

JST WRK UNICORN BLOOD ENERGY DRINK is a rainbow sherbet flavored carbonated drink that's equally unique and delicious. US, Oct 2023



FARM GIRL RAINBOW HOOPS CEREAL is described as high in plant-based protein and an excellent source of fiber with a taste kids love. Canada, March 2024

Have Your Cake and Eat it Too!

Cakes are having a major moment! Birthday cake has made its way into breakfast, popcorn, beverages, and other sweet treats—signaling a transition from a type of dessert into also a flavor. Beyond birthdays, there are an abundance of cake types and occasions they represent. From major celebrations to simple, joyful moments, a bite of cake is a sweet escape with positive memories. New York cheesecake, coffee cake, lemon poppy, spiced carrot, red velvet, and more are delicious flavor profiles to deliver delight.

From our Culinary Team: Coconut Cake Martini

Cocktail meets the kitchen in this [recipe](#) for a dessert martini that tastes like a little slice of heaven - coconut cake! Made with coconut extract and birthday cake vodka, it is a luscious treat.



TREND SPOTTED



BLUE BELL GOOEY BUTTER CAKE ICE CREAM is described as “delicious as the gooey butter cake made famous in St. Louis!” US, March 2024



ETHEL M CHOCOLATES RED VELVET CAKE BATTER MILK CHOCOLATE is sweet and creamy red velvet cake flavored ganache, wrapped in gourmet milk chocolate, topped with red velvet cake crumbs. US, Jan 2024

Flavors from the Bar Cart

Alcohol inspired flavors are appearing in a variety of categories to appeal to sophisticated, adult tastes. The flavors of craft spirits, fine wines and cocktails are making their way to ice cream, desserts, sauces, and even unexpected places, like supplements. Also, as the zero-proof drink movement continues to grow, people still want to enjoy the taste of their favorite drinks. With the bar cart now a source for inspiration, there is an opportunity for innovations with boozy flavors.

Grown-up Experiences: Boozy Cookie Truffles

“By crafting more grown-up experiences, cookies can win over adults. While the presence of children certainly increases engagement with the market, there is space to position and innovate towards adults.”

- MINTEL, COOKIES, US, 2023



Recipe from the kitchn



TREND SPOTTED

1 UP NUTRITION GREENS AND REDS SUPERFOODS PLUS DIETARY SUPPLEMENT FEATURING A MIMOSA FLAVOR

US, March 2024



JENI'S SPLENDID ICE CREAMS HOT TODDY SORBET is made with orange, lemon, honey, cayenne pepper and Uncle Nearest premium whisky- just like the best hot toddy. US, Feb 2024

Cookies Reimagined

These days, crossovers and mashups are driving much consumer behavior and interest. One classic dessert receiving innovative makeovers is the humble cookie. Beloved cookies are lending their flavor and sometimes texture to other bakery items, bars, frozen treats, sweet drinks, alcohol, and even sports nutrition and pet treats. With so many types and regional recipes, there's no shortage of inspiration. Take the flavors of favorites like gingersnaps and snickerdoodles, or Global varieties like Latin Alfajores and the Dutch stroopwafel and reimagine them in fun new applications.

EXPLORING REGIONAL COOKIES

“Regional cookie variations across the US are gaining broader appeal. These cookies blend regional flavor profiles with a well-loved format - cookies.”

- DATASSENTIAL, THE WORLD OF COOKIES, FEB 2024



Molasses Sandwich Cookie @ Halo Cupcake, Loves Park, IL

Benne Wafers @ Juke Joint Sweets, Hilton Head Island, SC



TREND SPOTTED

310 SHAKE ALL IN ONE MEAL DRINK MIX WITH SNICKERDOODLE FLAVOR is an “insanely delicious, complete superfood meal drink mix with snickerdoodle flavor.” U.S, Feb 2024



SAFE AND FAIR GINGERBREAD COOKIE GRANOLA is made with real ginger, non GMO and suitable for vegans. US, Dec 2023

THE TAKEAWAYS

Culinary mashups, elevated comfort food, and a more balanced approach to eating has resulted in consumers unapologetically seeking fun, indulgent flavors and formats. Regardless of the application, playful, experiential sweet flavors inspired by joyful moments and bites (or sips) are sure to please. There is an opportunity to capture the taste buds of curious, fantasy-seeking consumers with whimsical and dessert inspired flavors which allows for much creativity. Not sure where to start? We're here to help you deliver a memorable, sweet profile.

YOU DESERVE MORE. LET'S GET STARTED.

What does true partnership look like? You deserve a flavor partner ready to turn these trends into the tangible.

Let McCormick Flavor Solutions market insight and research experts get to work for you. Translate these trends into bold new ideas for your brand. Increase market share and get to your "what's next." Our technical flavor, seasoning and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend.

From concept to manufacturing, we're here for you — every step of the way. Contact your sales representative or [click here](#) to chat us up.

Snickerdoodles



Click to check out the latest dessert recipes from our culinary team for 'no apologies' flavor inspiration for your innovation!

[Peanut Butter Snickerdoodle Tart](#)



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