

20 FLAVOR 15 INSIGHT



MINT

A snapshot of mint flavor trends in breath freshening, oral care & healthcare

Mint flavors are among the leading flavors in a broad variety of products around the world. They are most prevalent in the breath freshening category of gum and mints, and oral care products where they are most often paired with cooling agents. Mint can also be found in many healthcare products where the strength of the mint flavor is often used to mask off-notes of functional ingredients. Additionally, mint is used to support the reason to believe in a product aiding in digestive health. Lastly, mint is also positioned as an indulgent flavor in sweet goods and beverages where it is often paired with indulgent icons like chocolate.

BREATH FRESHENING

Mint is the leading flavor in breath freshening products within the confectionery category. In the gum and mint category, 76% of consumers are seeking an improvement in breath freshening and list it as their primary consumption driver according to a recent Mintel survey. So, it's no wonder mint flavors combined with cooling dominate.

In North America, unspecified mint is the leading flavor. Unspecified mint usually is a peppermint dominant mint blend (often a sweet mint or a peppermint with some herbal notes). Peppermint is the second most common flavor identified in new product introductions with spearmint the third most common flavor. While cinnamon and other spices are not technically mint, they offer a similar freshening value proposition to consumers and are therefore considered among the mint category. Cinnamon is in the top 10 flavors featured in gum and mint products although not as prevalent as the others. Up and coming freshening components include flavors such as eucalyptus, menthol, ginger and tea flavors. Popular mint pairings include a variety of fruit flavors, especially citrus.

In other regions, mint, peppermint, and spearmint still dominate with some variations by region. In Europe for example, cinnamon is not nearly as popular in breath freshening products. The current surge in the use of warm spices in the European oral care segment however, might change that in the near future. In Europe, more highly mentholated products are much more popular than in the U.S. Herbal mints, eucalyptus, tea flavors and the use of chlorophyll to enhance a freshening proposition are significantly more popular.

In Asia Pacific, the leading flavor "mint", includes more mint profiles that can be considered to have herbal notes. Peppermint and spearmint are still extremely popular but rank behind strawberry and lemon in leading flavors. Menthol is very popular as is the use of tea flavors to enhance a freshening or oral care proposition.



Consumers value the breath freshening abilities of breath fresheners and mint products without the need for disposal. An excellent example of a product touting breath freshening and the absence for disposal, is Ice Breakers Cool Blasts Chews. They are quick-dissolving chewable mints that freshen the mouth without waste. Available in peppermint and spearmint. USA



EatWhatever Ginger Gel Caps & Ginger Mints are said to give a kissable breath in two steps. The gel cap is said to make the tummy calm and happy whilst freshening the breath, and the ginger mints are said to melt in the mouth providing the immediate benefits of ginger. USA



Kanro She-Her-Her Strong Mint Candy is designed to powerfully refresh breath and nose. It is formulated with strong menthol, caffeine, flavonoid and herb extract. Japan



Wrigley's Doublemint Wu Tang Kou Xiang Tang (Sugar Free Gum) is said to change from apple flavor to mint flavor. It features a long lasting refreshing formula to provide a long lasting fresh breath. China

ORAL CARE

Mint flavors are even more dominant in the oral care segment. In general, non-descript mint is the leader across regions which primarily refers to a peppermint dominant, signature mint profile unique to the brand. Spearmint is not quite as popular but has recently surged as big brands try to differentiate their products. Like in gum, blue and green communicate to consumers whether to expect more peppermint or more spearmint in a uniquely named product. Non-mint flavors like bubble-gum and berry are also popular in the oral care segment and are often combined with light mint and/or cooling in products for kids.

In North America, herbal type flavors are growing in popularity although they are still not as common as in other regions. Non-specified "herbal" is used most. Eucalyptus and flavors labeled simply as "spice" are also growing.

In Europe, menthol is among the top five flavors. Spearmint and peppermint are popular but herbs/herbal flavors are in the top three flavors. Mint flavors are more popular in Western Europe where fruit flavors are more popular in Eastern European oral care products. Flavors like raspberry, citrus, lime, aloe, and green tea are emerging for more specialty products.

In APAC, unspecified mint, strawberry and spearmint are among the leading flavors featured in new products. Tea flavors are extremely popular in the oral care segment in China with green tea among the top 5 flavors. The top growing flavor from 2013-2014 is salt. New products including salt in the ingredients have been introduced touting benefits of preventing plaque and improving gum health. Many of the salt based products are paired with bamboo for whitening benefits. Additional products are now including volcanic ingredients to prevent inflammation, whiten teeth, dissolve plaque and tartar, and provide antibacterial properties.



Hello mouthwash, toothpaste and breath spray have been introduced with the objective to make oral care that's safe, effective delicious and beautiful. The products are as natural as possible and free from triclosan, dyes and artificial sweeteners. Flavors available: pink grapefruit mint, peach mango mint, super mint and mojito mint. USA & UK



Crest's Be line of toothpaste invites consumers to "explore outside their boundaries, arouse their senses and energize their brushing routines like never before." Flavors available: mint chocolate, vanilla mint spark and lime spearmint zest. USA



Clay Based Toothpaste with Refreshing Organic Mint Extract contains 99.5% natural ingredients and 10% of ingredients from organic farming. The product is formulated with white clay, organic mint extract and unrefined sea salt. It helps stabilise normal pH, stops proliferation of dental caries, absorbs bad smells. France



Shukoujian Qing Zhu Yan Ya Gao (Green Bamboo Salt Toothpaste) features a unique bamboo salt formula and contains whitening ingredients. The toothpaste is claimed to relieve gum problems, effectively remove odors, freshen breath, quickly restore cells, whiten teeth, protect gums, and prevent mouth ulcers, gingivitis, plaques and sensitive teeth. China

HEALTHCARE

In the healthcare segment, mint flavors are most popular in digestive treatments such as antacids where the mint profile supports the value proposition of soothing and settling. Like other categories, unspecified mint is the leader with peppermint a close second. Spearmint is not as popular but still among the top 10 flavors along with a host of standard OTC (over the counter) fruit flavors like cherry, grape, citrus, berry, and vanilla.

Mint is also popular in various vitamins and supplements where the strength of mint profile aids in masking off notes and preventing unpleasant reflux. Here, unspecified mint is the far and away leader but most are peppermint dominant, sweet mint profiles. In the cough & cold segments, menthol is a major ingredient aligning with mint profiles.

In healthcare, chocolate and mint is the most popular mint pairing. Most other mint products are singular flavors. As the use of citrus and mint combinations as well as herbal and spiced mint grows in breath freshening and oral care, we may see an emergence of new mint profiles in healthcare as well.



NeoCell Beauty Bursts Fresh Mint Chocolate Gourmet Collagen Soft Chews are formulated for firm, smooth skin and strong nails and hair. This all natural and delicious product delivers high absorption beauty nutrients in gourmet soft chews. USA



Slimming Lemon-Mint Flavored Green Tea & Guarana Powder contains green tea, which supports the elimination functions of the organism and guarana seeds that support a natural fat metabolism. This naturally flavoured product can be enjoyed as a hot or cold drink. Spain

CONCLUSIONS

Sweet mint and peppermint dominant “mint” is a safe choice for a variety of products across the world. Peppermint and spearmint are also relatively safe bets, although peppermint and “mint” might be better suited to products that feature efficacy claims.

The opportunity for unique mint profiles exists in the healthcare segment following key trends in breath freshening and oral care. Accenting mint profiles with citrus, herbal or tea notes can create a signature profile to make a product stand out among its competitors and private label counterparts. There is also room to differentiate by tapping in to warm spices which offer consumers similar benefits for freshening, soothing, and masking.

FONA CAN HELP!

Let FONA’s market insight and research experts translate these trends into product category ideas for your brand. They can help you with concept and flavor pipeline development, ideation, consumer studies and white space analysis to pinpoint opportunities in the market. Our flavor 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. We understand how to mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution. From concept to manufacturing, we’re here every step of the way. Contact our Sales Service Department at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or visit www.fona.com.

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