

20 CATEGORY 15 INSIGHT



Savory Ethnic Foods

Consumers Exploring and Expanding Savory Ethnic Foods

From a sweet staple like yogurt going savory, to the strive for authenticity above all, consumers are expanding the variety of savory food — and their willingness to explore it — bite by bite.

Ethnic food, to consumers, means food that is more flavorful than what they usually eat. It means something exciting and exotic. What's more, consumers are attracted to bold, strong and balanced flavors. While ethnic food means "savory and spicy" flavors to most consumers, the specific attraction to heat varies by Hispanic origin. According Mintel Reports, Hispanics are more likely to look for hot flavors while non-Hispanics seek out savory or other flavor experiences.

In the U.S., savory ethnic flavors are taking over space that once belonged to traditional American fare. According to Mintel, the growth on menu items classified as traditional American has been only 1% since 2012, which is a significant slowing. This suggests world cuisines are garnering interest. A recent poll from the National Restaurant Association also shows that consumers are interested in trying new foods, especially in restaurants.

So what's next for these consumers, when they seek out savory ethnic flavor?

Savory Yogurt Reflects Middle Eastern Cuisine

Middle Eastern cuisine is gaining ground in the U.S. An NRA poll showed that 35% of respondents said they eat Middle Eastern food a few times a year. Half of Millennials polled by Mintel claim they ate Middle Eastern food in the previous three months. Feeding off of this growing interest, savory yogurt — a common food in the Middle East — is finding its way to American consumers. And these new products just might have traction — about 37% of current yogurt consumers say they are interested in savory yogurt flavors.



The White Moustache Savory Shallots is said to be made with farm-fresh milk, using traditional recipe from a Persian village.



Blue Hill carries several savory yogurt products, including flavors like parsnip, beet and carrot. The product's claims include using milk from grass-fed cows, and being free from preservatives, gluten and artificial ingredients.



The Search for Authenticity

People desire the real and genuine experience in their ethnic food, according to Mintel Reports. Consumers polled said they are much more likely to consider ethnic foods as more authentic as well as packing more flavor than other foods. Several savory offerings in the market are working to deliver on that desire for authenticity.



Savory Creations launched Authentic PHO Liquid Broth in the U.S., based on the traditional Korean soup. The product is said to be hot, exotic and tasty as well as free from gluten, MSG and GMO ingredients.



Valcom's Authentic Thai Green Curry is positioned as classic and home-style as well as free from added preservatives.



Sabra Mezze's Authentic Baba Ganoush is vegetarian, and made with grilled eggplant and sesame seed paste.

New Asian Flavors Breaking Through

When it comes to Asian food, consumers aren't just eating Americanized Chinese food and Japanese sushi anymore. A range of Asian flavors and foods are breaking through in innovative ways. Asian items on restaurant menus grew 79% between 2012 and 2015, for full-service restaurants. Thai, Vietnamese and Korean cuisines move to mainstream, while Malay and Filipino dishes take on "early adopter" status, becoming hot themes for foodies.



Maggi's Malaysian Chilli Sauce With Garlic is described as tangy and versatile, with possible uses including as a dip, table sauce and for cooking.



Saffron Road's Korean Taco with Tofu and Corn Tortilla is vegetarian, halal-certified and gluten-free. It includes fried organic tofu drizzled in a savory gochujang sauce and thrown in a colorful mix of vegetables.

Sunda

Sunda New Asian, a Michelin-recommended restaurant in Chicago, offers flavors from China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Customers seem to like its wider representation of Asian flavors. One unique dish is Dynamite Oyster, dim sum made with Filipino longanisa, shrimp, kewpie mayo, spinach, and ichimi panko.



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.

CONTACT OUR SALES SERVICE DEPARTMENT

at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or visit www.fona.com.

SOURCES

Mintel GNPD, Mintel Reports, Mintel Menu Insights, NRN.com



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