

2016 TREND INSIGHT REPORT



Eat Dessert First!

From traditional favorites to new innovations to spins on standards, the options for unique and flavorful desserts appear endless.

Restaurant menus and even store-bought products are pushing the boundaries and finding new ways to entice consumers clamoring for just a little something. Pastry chefs are taking their ingredients up-a-notch to include stoneground flours, several kinds of sugar, single-origin chocolates and vanillas from around the world. According to pastry chef Meg Galus at Boka in Chicago, "We're drilling down everything. It's no longer just butter, sugar, flour, eggs. It's about all the specifics."

From cupcakes, cake-pops, sundaes, premium pies and minis — the sweet tooth is well covered in this trend report.

Let's take a closer look at what we see trending in all things dessert!

A Twist on the Classics

Old-fashioned favorites are getting a makeover—whether it is with premium ingredients, a healthier version or even adding unique flavor combinations, we are seeing old familiar favorites in a whole new light. After all, change is good — especially when it comes to dessert.

Give me S'more!

A traditional campfire treat is making its way onto dessert menus in many different forms. Since 2010, there has been an 133% increase in s'mores flavored menu items. It is featured most often in a traditional format as well as in dessert pizzas, ice creams, cakes and even cocktails. One of the most premium versions can be found at Bourbon Steak at the Four Seasons Hotel in Washington, DC. Executive Chef Joe Palma reinterprets this campfire classic in bold new ways with their Smoked S'mores. The homemade marshmallow is smoked under a glass cloche with an ember from the wood-burning grill and served on a wooden board with melted milk and dark chocolate, a hazelnut graham streusel and toasted marshmallow ice cream.

Desserts with Herbs

Unlikely pairings are popping up all over, especially in desserts. Herb and fruit combinations are becoming extremely popular as ways to enhance the overall flavor of the dish and bring out unique signature notes to an already loved dessert. Unique offerings and recipes include: Rosemary Thyme Angel Food Cake with Pineapple Compote, Basil-Mint Coconut Cream Pie, Rhubarb Tarragon Strudel, Blackberry Basil Tart, Apple Sage Cake and Honey Lavender Ice Cream.

Did You Know?

In some parts of the world, such as much of central and western Africa, there is no tradition of a dessert course to conclude a meal.

A Healthy Spin Perhaps?

Pinterest provides endless recipes for creating a healthier version of our favorite desserts with fruit or veggies as a main ingredient.

- Chocolate Zucchini Brownies
- Coconut & Avocado Grasshopper Bars
- Dark Chocolate Beet Cupcakes
- Apple Cauliflower Cupcakes
- Sweet Potato Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Black Bean Lava Cakes & Brownies
- Blueberry Lemon Greek Yogurt Cake



Cheers for Dessert

Although liquor infused desserts aren't new, they are quickly gaining in popularity. On the menu, liquor based desserts have been on the upswing—from Q4 2010-Q4 2015 there has been a 73% increase in new menu offerings. Mostly appearing in casual dining and fine dining the options are beginning to expand beyond tiramisu and baked Alaska to the inclusion in whipped cream, sauces and beverage desserts. Alcohol and dessert are pretty great on their own. When combined, the results are often unforgettable.



Have Your Cocktail and Eat It Too

The trend to infuse your sweets with a little something more than just a bit of sugar and spice is taking hold with consumers. We are spotting a couple of unique items on the menu. Here are the details:

- *Prohibition Bakery* in New York City, is one of the alcoholic cake specialists offering cupcakes with names such as Pretzels & Beer, Sangria, Mint Julep, Scotch & Cigar, Margarita and the Car Bomb, a cake spiked with whiskey, Bailey's Irish Cream and stout.
- *Delightful Pastries* in Chicago—boozy doughnuts include Vanilla Bean and Vodka Custard, Chocolate Custard and Godiva Chocolate Liqueur and Passion Fruit and Grand Marnier Jelly varieties.

Dessert Beverages

Pairing dessert and alcohol for a nightcap has long been a tradition, but why not combine the two for a delicious treat in one. Here are a few menu offerings we are spotting:

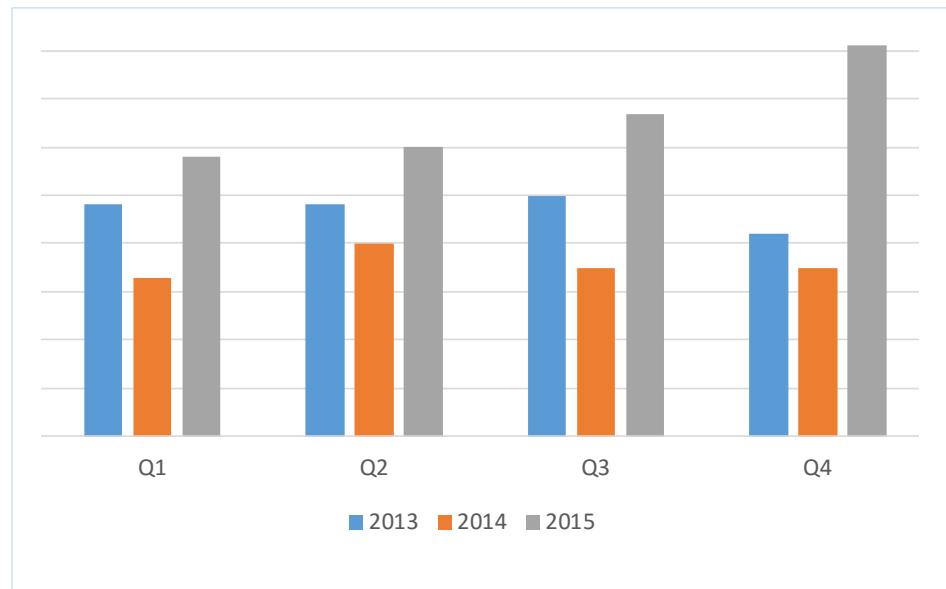
- In the "Brain Freeze" section of the cocktail menu at the *Fox & Hound Smokehouse Tavern*—they are featuring a RumChata Whiskey Float. It includes vanilla ice cream covered in a heavenly mix of RumChata, Buffalo Trace Bourbon and Coke.
- This dessert is sure to spark a conversation between you and your sweetheart—it is the Conversation Heart Milkshake at *Rosebud American Kitchen and Bar*. The boozy milkshake is made with bourbon and your choice of strawberry or raspberry, then topped with whipped cream and conversation hearts, and served with two straws.

Seasonal Desserts

Seasonal desserts on the menu have been on a bit of a rollercoaster ride 2013-2015. After declines in 2014 for all quarters, we saw a strong comeback with significant growth for all of 2015. The top growing seasonal menu items include pie, ice cream and cheesecake. Here are a few seasonal menu items of note.

- Summer Citrus Harvest Pie—A refreshing combination of lemon and Key lime with just the right tartness! A traditional key lime filling layered with a velvety lemon chiffon, topped with fresh whipped cream at *Coco's Bakery*.
- Apple Tuscan Bread Pudding—A warm Italian dessert with York apples, caramel and vanilla cream sauce at *Olive Garden*.
- Seasonal Smackdown—Herbal Sage Winter Tea Ice Cream, Whipped Cream and Peach Ginger Sauce at *Casa Nueva*.
- Northwest Blackberry Sundae—Local blackberry topping with ice cream at *Burgerville*.
- Pumpkin Spice Lava Cake—Warm pumpkin spice cake, cream cheese icing, Maker's Mark bourbon-caramel sauce and candied pecans at *Longhorn Steakhouse*.

Seasonal Menu Offerings by Quarter



Source: Mintel Menu Insights

Pumpkin
is the top seasonal
flavor on the menu





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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