

A close-up photograph of chocolate chip cookie dough, showing the golden-brown texture and several dark chocolate chips scattered throughout. The dough is slightly crumbly and appears to be in the process of being prepared or baked.

# INDULGENCE

## 2018 • TREND INSIGHT REPORT

Indulgence is continually top of mind for consumers. They give themselves permission to indulge, especially in ways that are rooted in nostalgia and familiar tastes. Finding the balance between eating healthy and satisfying a craving comes down to a game of push and pull, as indulgence is now a regular part of consumers everyday lives. To dive into the topic deeper, we've commissioned a nationwide survey to look at indulgence and explore the topic deeper. From the experiential nature of indulging, to occasion and the influence of wellness, let's dive in and savor the moment.

# INDULGENCE TYPES

There are many ways in which consumers indulge each day. We define indulgence in 4 ways:

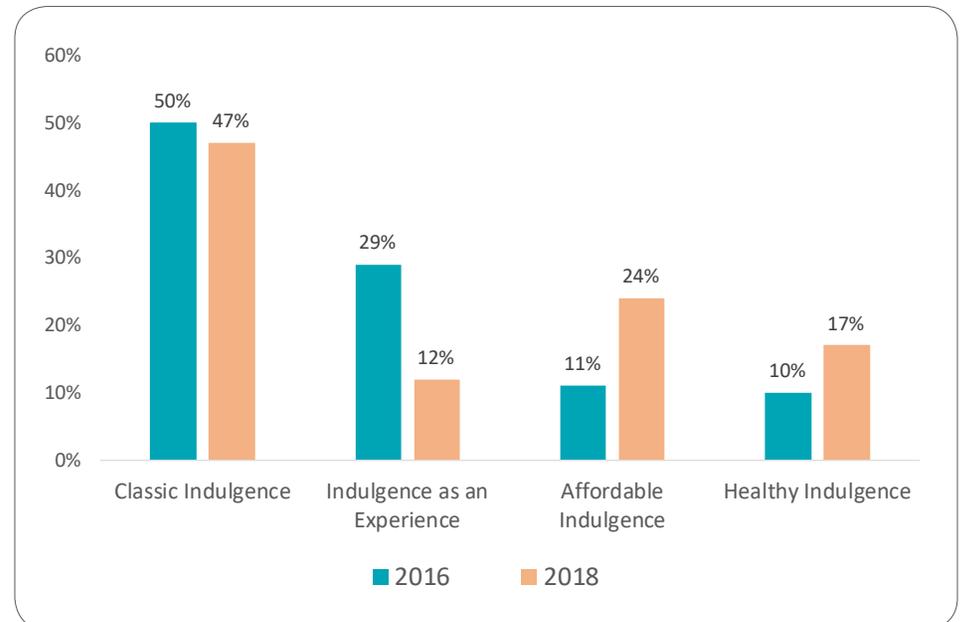
<h2>Classic Indulgence</h2>	<p>Treating yourself, sinful decadence, nothing healthy about it, no reason to feel guilty. Dessert, alcoholic beverage or your guilty pleasure of choice as a reward after a long week.</p>
<h2>Indulgence as an Experience</h2>	<p>Enjoyment of a moment, perhaps tied to events, celebrations or feeling.</p>
<h2>Affordable Indulgence</h2>	<p>Treating ourselves without breaking the bank. Still minding our budgets, but allowing an extra purchase to bring happiness, satisfaction or comfort.</p>
<h2>Healthy Indulgence</h2>	<p>Enjoying a treat with all the flavor and taste desired, without the guilt of eating something "bad" for you.</p>

We wanted to dig a little deeper and compare the results of our original indulgence survey from late 2016, so we commissioned another nationwide survey to see how consumers thoughts on indulgence changed overtime.

Three out of the four types of indulgence are showing significant changes from just two years ago. The preferred type of indulgence is still **classic indulgence** with 47% of consumers declaring that is it their preferred type of indulgence.

The type of indulgence with the greatest amount of change over time is **indulgence as an experience**, which is showing a decline of 17%. This moves indulgence as an experience from the number 2 spot in 2016 to the number 4 spot and is now the least preferred indulgence type.

Moving up the ranks is **affordable indulgence**, with a 13% increase in just two years. 24% of consumers prefer this type of indulgence. With a 7% increase, **healthy indulgence** is now preferred by more consumers (17%) in just two years' time.



Source: ©FONA International National Consumer Survey, 2018

39%

OF CONSUMERS ARE  
EATING INDULGENT  
FOOD/BEVERAGES  
2-3 TIMES PER WEEK.

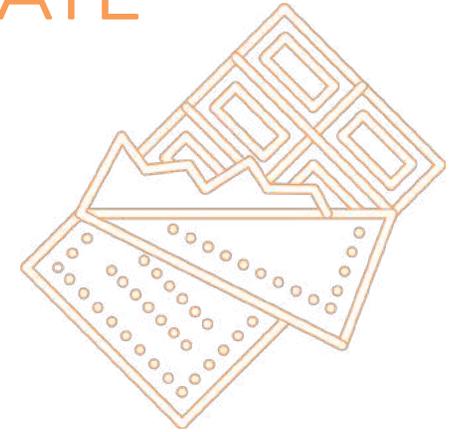
## TIME TO INDULGE

There are delicious and indulgent temptations around us most of the time. Whether it's the box of doughnuts on Friday at the office or a Saturday afternoon dessert, there is always a reason to indulge, even just a little. Our survey results show that 39% of consumers are eating indulgent food/beverages 2-3 times per week and 30% of consumers are eating indulgences 4-6 times per week.

Based on the IRI 2018 State of the Industry report, we can see that the snack categories defined as "true indulgence" and "treats" are showing positive sales growth with 1.9% and 1.8% respectively. The largest growth within the snack category with 2.5% growth are defined as "permissible" snacks as consumers are ultimately giving themselves permission to indulge as it become a regular part of their everyday lives.

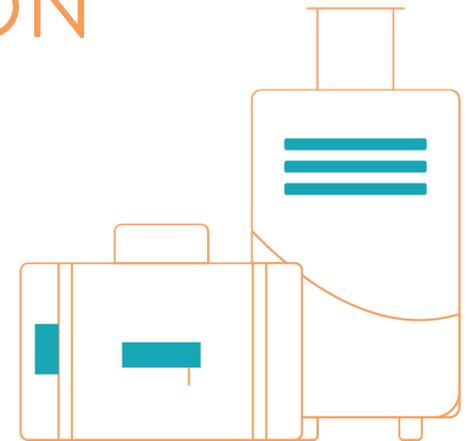
## CHOCOLATE

is the first indulgence that comes to mind by 25% of our consumers. This is followed by cake (16%) and cookies (15%).



## VACATION

is the top non-food/ beverage indulgence selected by 29% of our consumers. This is followed by spa services (19%) and new shoes (11%).



Source: ©FONA International National Consumer Survey, 2018

60%

OF CONSUMERS LIMIT THE PORTIONS OR FREQUENCY WHEN TREATING THEMSELVES TO A CLASSIC OR DECADENT INDULGENCE.

## CLASSIC INDULGENCE

Classic indulgence has been the top indulgence type for several years running. With so many delicious temptations out there and new products hitting store shelves daily, there's no question why. Whether consumers feel they earned it or just simply deserve it, treating themselves is one way to make yourself feel good and boost your mood. Within this type of indulgence calories play no role, but according to 60% of the consumers we surveyed, portion control and the frequency of the indulgences is one way they are limiting going overboard.

When it comes to flavor and their indulgent treats, consumers are selecting over-the-top indulgent flavors. The top-rated flavor is definitely a beloved classic flavor profile—chocolate peanut butter cup. This flavor is available in many product categories from chocolate confectionery, coffee creamers, ice cream and protein bars—consumers are getting their fair share of their favorite indulgence flavor.

## CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER CUP

is the top rated indulgent flavor by our consumers. This is followed by cinnamon roll and turtle cheesecake.



Source: ©FONA International National Consumer Survey, 2018

79%

OF CONSUMERS FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES AFTER CONSUMING A HEALTHY INDULGENCE.

## HEALTHY INDULGENCE

Finding a balance between eating healthy and satisfying your sweet tooth with an over the top indulgence is a challenge that we all face, but the more important question is "is it worth the calories?" Consumers are starting to lean towards finding the happy medium and choosing products with great taste that do not break the calorie bank. Many new product categories are trying to play in the consumer sweet spot and allowing consumers to eat great tasting products and not worrying about their waistline at the same time.

Based on Mintel Purchase Intelligence data, we are able to highlight new products that are delivering on both health and indulgence based on overall consumer ratings. The average scores for new products for "indulgent treat" is 48% and the average score for a "healthy" rating is 39%. Take a peek at the top rated new products.



### Outshine Yogurt & Granola Blueberry Acai Frozen Yogurt

- Indulgent Treat Rating: 81%
- Heathy Rating: 81%

**CONSUMER QUOTE:** "Sounds very tasty and healthy." Female, South, 35-54 years old.



### Creative Snacks Co. Almond Clusters Baked with Cashews, Pumpkin Seeds & Sunflower Seeds

- Indulgent Treat Rating: 78%
- Heathy Rating: 80%

**CONSUMER QUOTE:** "The nuts are healthy for snacks. The product seems appealing and certainly would be filling as a snack" Male, South, 55+



### Chobani Dulce de Leche Blended Greek Yogurt

- Indulgent Treat Rating: 78%
- Heathy Rating: 70%

**CONSUMER QUOTE:** "It's Greek yogurt which is super healthy and the flavor is what I'm interested in." Male, South, 18-34

# THE TAKEAWAYS

*Indulgence has become a huge part of consumers' lives. Whether they are looking for an over-the-top classic indulgence or a calorie-friendly healthy indulgence at the end of the day, no matter their choice, it must taste good. Select flavor profiles that meet their needs and the daypart. From the delicious chocolate peanut butter cup for an evening treat or a sweet cinnamon roll in their morning coffee the indulgent flavor opportunities are endless. Consider also the changes since 2016 we've spotted: while indulgence as an experience has fallen in consumer preference -- healthy indulgence has grown. This shows the influence of the health and wellness movement. Even decadence has a health component in consumer minds. Note those blurred lines in your product development.*

## 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 FONA's 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 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. Let's 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 for you — every step of the way. Contact our sales service department at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or chat us up at [www.fona.com/contact-fona/](http://www.fona.com/contact-fona/)



## Need more?

Reach out to Pamela, your consumer trend expert!

Pamela Oscarson  
[poscarson@fona.com](mailto:poscarson@fona.com)  
630.578.8634

## SOURCES

Mintel GNPD

Mintel Reports

Mintel Purchase Intelligence

IRI 2018 State of the Industry Report

FONA Proprietary Survey, 2018