

A background image showing a glass of tea on a wooden tray, an open book, and a lit candle, creating a relaxing atmosphere.

# RELAXATION

## In the Food & Beverage Space

Everyone wants to relax more, but who has the time? With an end to the pandemic delayed by stagnating vaccination rates and new variants, many consumers are now caught between the stress of returning to work, ongoing restrictions and uncertainty surrounding COVID-19. Consumers need more than just a good night's sleep — they need to relax during the day as well. That means that for brands willing to think outside the box, there are endless opportunities for relaxation-enhancing products with great taste that will fit right into consumers' busy lives. We're taking a look at consumer interest, flavors, and new product introductions in this space. Read on to learn how your brand can incorporate a little R&R into your next innovation.

## DEFINING RELAXATION

Sure, laying on a beach with a cocktail is relaxing, but when it comes to food and beverage, there's more than one way for brands to incorporate relaxation into their products. In addition to ingredients with de-stressing properties, products can make consumers feel transported to somewhere new or can make their routines more convenient, thereby allowing them to relax and enjoy their day a bit more.



### FUNCTIONAL INGREDIENTS

Mintel reports that 90% of consumers are interested in functional foods. In fact, one in four adults in the U.S. are already consuming products with calming claims. Popular ingredients with relaxing properties include lavender, ginseng, lemon balm and chamomile.



### TRAVEL WITHOUT LEAVING HOME

With many still hesitant to travel, consumers have turned to food and beverage as a way to safely explore during lockdown. Unique flavors that evoke far-flung destinations help us to tap into a calming vacation mindset, and even fragrances can evoke other regions of the world and help consumers to relax.



### MAKING LIFE EASIER

After nearly two years of eating mostly at home, Mintel reports that 33% of U.S. adults are tired of cooking. For those experiencing pandemic fatigue, "relaxing" products can be those that make their meal preparation a little easier; such products "can help offset daily stressors because 'healthy' now includes proactive solutions to physical, mental and emotional health."





## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



COUNTERTOP'S HAPPY HONEY is described as an "adaptogen-filled raw honey formulated to promote a sense of calm, reduce anxiety, and combat stress." The honey is fortified with several other ingredients thought to have relaxing properties, including saffron, cloves and tulsi.

Image Source: Amazon



EAT ME ICE CREAM LAVENDER DAIRY-FREE FROZEN DESSERT is freshly churned in small batches, hand-packed, and is described as cooling peaks that roll over the tongue, ensuing relaxation with taste notes of floral, delicate, herbal and clearing.

23% of consumers responded that they definitely or likely would buy this product



TIESTA TEA COLD BREW LAVENDER CHAMOMILE RELAXER comprises a soft chamomile herbal tea. The product is cold brewed with all-natural real loose tea leaves, real fruit, herbs and spices to create a refreshing beverage for everyone.

26% of consumers responded that they definitely or likely would buy this product



NEW YORK-BASED CREAMERY MARCO'S PREMIUM LINE OF SWEETS & SPICES ICE CREAM is inspired by global flavors like Provençal Strawberry, Turkish Mocha and Thai Coco-lime. Called "transporting" by the New York Times, Marco's pints ship nationwide.

Source: Marco's Ice Cream



# A NEW APPROACH TO HEALTH

Even before the pandemic, there was a rising consumer awareness of the importance of mental and emotional wellbeing to one's overall health. And reports show that many consumers are more stressed and anxious than ever:

## STRESS, ANXIETY & DEPRESSION RISING

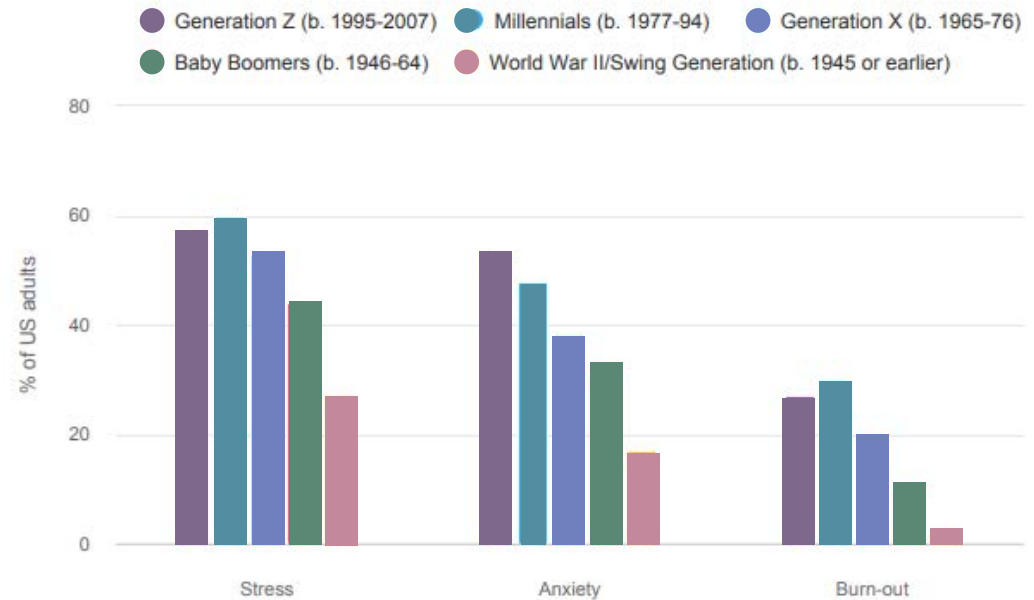
- U.S. 18-24 year olds report experiencing above-average levels of stress (55% vs 34% average), anxiety (46% vs 26% average) and depression (42% vs 21% average).
- U.S. 25-34 year olds also report experiencing stress at abnormally high levels (48% vs 34% average), anxiety (44% vs 26% average) and depression (35% vs 21% average).

Source: Mintel

## THE OPPORTUNITY FOR BRANDS

With consumers more concerned with their mental health than ever, brands should consider this a trend that's here to stay. And the age groups most likely to experience mental health issues are also those most likely to seek out solutions, including improving relaxation through what they eat: 42% of U.S. adults would like their food/drink to contribute to both their mental and physical health.

## U.S.: Mental Health Experiences in the Past Year, by Generation, May 2020



Base: US: 2,000 internet users aged 18+

Source: Lightspeed/Mintel



**42% OF U.S. ADULTS**  
would like their food/drink to  
contribute to both their mental  
and physical health.

- MINTEL

# THINKING BEYOND TEA

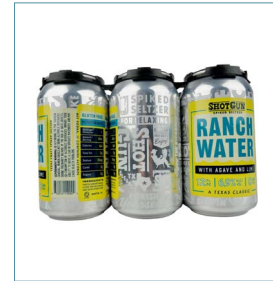


Hot tea has been a go-to beverage for relaxation, but there are so many other opportunities to introduce relaxing drinks into consumers' routines. With consumers' heightened awareness of

their daily stress levels, they're looking for solutions that go beyond nighttime sedation. The existing association between tea and relaxation could make it easier to connect them with other types of calming beverages.

And the market is wide open: Mintel reports that of all the beverage launches making a relaxation claim in 2019, 59% were tea, while 3% were juice and 1% were soft drinks. Juice, in particular, could be well-suited to relaxation claims — with its natural ingredients and association with nutrition and breakfast, juice could provide consumers with a relaxed morning ritual to prepare them for the day. And in addition to the abundance of daily opportunities for relaxing drinks, many naturally relaxing ingredients, such as lavender, lemon balm and chamomile, also have appealing flavors that can stand alone or be blended with others.

## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**SHOTGUN SPIKED SELTZER RANCH WATER WITH AGAVE AND LIME** is said to be a Texas classic for relaxing. The gluten free product contains 0g sugar.

**29%** of consumers said they likely or definitely would buy this product



**NATALIE'S ORCHID ISLAND JUICE CO. COLD-PRESSED RELAX JUICE BEVERAGE** features Orange, Pineapple, Apple, Chamomile and Passion Flower. This clean label product is described as a soothing blend of chamomile and passion flower which may calm and relax the soul.

**35%** of consumers said they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**SOM SLEEP CANNED BEVERAGES** aim to help consumers slip into sleep more easily and stay asleep longer. Each 8 oz can contains relaxing ingredients like melatonin, magnesium and L-theanine, and it also comes in a sugar-free variety.

# HOW TO REACH CONSUMERS

*24% of U.S. adults expect to be regularly trying new foods in the next year, but how do you reach them?*

## DEMOGRAPHIC INTEREST

- Millennials are already adventurous when it comes to new products, but Gen Z, Gen X and Baby Boomers are all prime targets for data-driven suggestions, whether through social media or coupons.
- While 44% of U.S. adults express interest in calming products, those between 45-64 years old are particularly keen, with half of consumers in that demographic open to trying them.

## METHODS

- Education is key: clear claims about “relaxation” can help consumers understand the intended effects of functional stress or sleep formulations.
- Quizzes or tests can help consumers more accurately assess their mental state and needs.
- Online content that educates as well as provides information about product launches is valuable for discovery through search engines.
- Offer innovative and exciting flavors that allow consumers to “vacation” without leaving home or indulgent flavors to treat themselves.



## RECESS DEDICATES ON-PACK SPACE TO INGREDIENT CLAIMS

To help consumers learn more about its formulation, Recess dedicates a side panel of its can to its ingredients and their intended effects, including hemp extract, American ginseng, L-theanine and lemon balm.



- MINTEL

# THE TAKEAWAYS

Relaxation is on everyone's mind right now, whether it's through the use of foreign flavors that inspire vacation daydreams, indulgent flavors that evoke feelings of comfort and self-care, or functional ingredients to help send consumers off to a restful night's sleep. Get in on the action by identifying new opportunities in consumers' daily routines, whether that's at work, post-workout or after dinner. Brands who can combine great taste with relaxation are going to find an enthusiastic audience — will you be one of them? We've got you covered.



## 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/)

## SOURCES

- Mintel GNPD
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- Statista
- Food Institute
- Sweet Reason
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- Siren Snacks
- Amazon

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