



# SEASONAL FLAVORS TRENDS OF WINTER

A magical season full of family gatherings, indulgent meals and holiday treats, winter spans major holidays in the food and beverage space from Christmas to New Year's and Valentine's Day celebrations. And though consumers have been venturing out of their home more as the pandemic begins to subside, their interest in comfort and indulgence food remains. While indulgence in bakery, candy and confections are often a common pairing with winter flavors, there's opportunity cross-category in limited-edition and seasonal offerings. From seasonal winter classics to the new and innovative, let's take a look at the flavors and trends rising to the top, and see how they can help inspire your next innovation.

# TOP WINTER FLAVORS



We took a deep dive into winter's top flavors and spotted many classics and some notable growing flavors. Below are winter's top flavors in seasonal and limited edition launches this year.

## TOP FLAVORS IN SEASONAL/LTO PRODUCTS:

Global Introductions, Dec. 2021-Mar. 2022

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| ■ Chocolate           | ■ Vanilla/Vanilla Bourbon/<br>Vanilla Madagascar |
| ■ Gingerbread         | ■ Fruit  |
| ■ Hazelnut            | ■ Orange/Sweet Orange                            |
| ■ Caramel/Caramelised | ■ Raspberry                                      |
| ■ Strawberry          |  |

## TOP FLAVORS IN SEASONAL/LTO PRODUCTS:

North America Introductions, Dec. 2021-Mar. 2022

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ■ Sugar                                 | ■ Peppermint                                     |
| ■ Sugar (Icing/Frost/<br>Glaze/Fondant) | ■ Caramel/Caramelized                            |
| ■ Chocolate                             | ■ Almond   |
| ■ Gingerbread                           | ■ Strawberry                                     |
|   | ■ Vanilla/Vanilla Bourbon/<br>Vanilla Madagascar |

## FASTEST GROWING FLAVORS:

Global Introductions, Q4 2020 to Q4 2021

- Pumpkin Pie +600%
- Peanut Butter +500%
- Pineapple +500%
- Sugar (Icing/Frost/Glaze/ Fondant) +500%
- Brownie +500%
- Chocolate (White) +450%

## FASTEST GROWING FLAVORS:

North America Introductions, Q4 2020 to Q4 2021

- Sugar (Icing/Frost/Glaze/Fondant) +866%
- Chocolate (White) +800%
- Peanut/Groundnut +600%
- Pumpkin Pie +600%
- Peanut Butter +500%
- Brownie +400%

**"Excitement around seasonal items has grown during the pandemic, with new spins on familiar favorites and limited-edition flavors giving consumers the means to break the monotony."**

**-FOOD BUSINESS NEWS**

## TOP SELLERS IN SEASONAL & LTO

Winter's top seller list was filled with many indulgent sweets and festive holiday treats. Comforting nostalgic flavors of Christmas and Valentine's Day inspired innovative introductions especially in the confection and bakery space. However, this year's winter introductions also featured some savory flavor breakthroughs spotted in snacks, meals and more.



### TOP SEASONAL SELLERS-IRIS:

- Oreo 110 Birthday Chocolate Confetti Cake Sandwich Cookies
- Mtn Dew Spark Raspberry Lemonade Flavored Carbonated Drink
- Red Bull Pomegranate Energy Drink
- Cadbury Milk Chocolate with a Crisp Sugar Shell Mini Snowballs
- Cheerios Strawberry Banana Flavored Sweetened Whole Grain Oat Cereal
- M&Ms Snowballs White Chocolate Pretzel Candies
- Gingerbread Cookie Crisp Wafers
- Hostess Strawberry Cheesecake Mini Cakes with Icing
- Frankford Peppermint Hot Chocolate Bomb
- Premier Protein Winter Mint Chocolate High Protein Shake
- Dove White Chocolate with Strawberry & Crème
- Martha Stewart Brown Sugar Brussels with Uncured Bacon
- Merry Monkey Belgian-Style Ale
- Scalloped Potatoes
- Kellogg's Town House Holiday Dippers
- Thomas' Everything English Muffins

### TOP GLOBAL CATEGORIES:



BAKERY



CHOCOLATE  
CONFECTIONERY



SNACKS



HOT  
BEVERAGES

# CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES



Whether celebrating from home or gathering with family friends, holiday-themed product offerings were of abundance this year to bring holiday cheer. And with 32% of consumers saying they associate winter holidays

with special flavors, food and beverage developers can use this as an opportunity to innovate their product lines. Though Christmas stands out as the holiday during this season with holiday-themed introductions, Valentine's day and St. Patrick's day themed treats also made their presence known this season.



## 32% OF CONSUMERS

say they associate winter holidays with special flavors.

Source: Datassential - SNAP



## 44% OF CONSUMERS

say they associate Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa with flavors or special dishes/LTOs they look forward to ordering.

Source: Datassential - SNAP

## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**TRULY HOLIDAY PARTY PACK** features flavors of hard seltzers including Pomegranate Ginger Fizz, Cran Orange Sparkler, Spiked Apple Spice and Holiday Sangria Style. The limited-edition pack has 100 calories per serving and was released for the 2021 winter holidays.

Source: Yahoo! News, Twitter



**BETTY CROCKER HOLIDAY SUGAR COOKIE CUPS KIT** was available for Christmas 2021. The limited-edition kit comprises a sugar cookie mix, naturally and artificially flavored vanilla frosting, holiday sprinkles and paper baking cups.

49% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**MEIJER MISTLETOE TRAIL MIX** was available for Christmas 2021. This product features red and green M&Ms, dry roasted peanuts, yogurt flavored coated waffle cone pieces and pretzel squares.

47% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**FAVORITE DAY VALENTINE COOKIE HOUSE KIT** is available now for Valentine's Day 2022. This limited offering product is ready to build and includes pre-baked cookies, pre-made icing, pink and red icing tubes, and candies for decorating.

37% of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

# GROWING FLAVOR INSPIRATION

Two flavors that we spotted growing globally in the seasonal and LTO space were peanut butter and pineapple. While peanut butter's comforting and nostalgic flavor profile fits right into the season, pineapple may be a more unexpected flavor for the winter months. According to Mintel GNPD peanut butter and pineapple flavors showed global growth from Q4 2020 to Q4 2021, with 500% growth for each flavor. We're taking a look at a few products of note below.

## PINEAPPLE



**OCEAN SPRAY JUICE DRINK BLENDS FROM CONCENTRATE** is a limited-edition product and is described as cranberry juice with a tropical twist. The pack comprises the following varieties: Cran-Tropical, Cran-Watermelon, Cran-Pineapple and Cran-Mango.

**61%** of consumers in our panel responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**LIFE SAVERS FRUIT VARIETY CANDY CANES** were available for Christmas 2021. Described as festive and fun, the candy canes are naturally and artificially flavored and come with wild cherry, pineapple, and watermelon flavours.

**52%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**ZOOPER DOOPER BY M PINEAPPLE FLAVOURED MILK** is described as a pasteurized reduced fat pineapple flavoured milk. This limited edition product is made in Australia from at least 99% Australian ingredients.

**40%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

## PEANUT BUTTER



**CARMAN'S PEANUT BUTTER BROWNIE PROTEIN BARS** claim to be ultimate bar with benefits and a protein boost to help one feel satisfied for longer. They provide 10g protein, roasted nuts, roasted peanuts, natural peanut butter and rich cocoa.

**37%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**KELLOGG'S NUTRI-GRAIN BEGA PEANUT BUTTER CRUNCH FLAVOURED CEREAL** is made with wheat, oats and corn encrusted with peanuts and peanut butter flavour. The limited-edition product is said to fuel active bodies.

**39%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.



**REESE'S MINIATURES PEANUT BRITTLE PEANUT BUTTER CUPS** are now available for Christmas 2021. The product is described as a peanut brittle flavored crème with crunchy peanut butter.

**59%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

# INNOVATIVE OFFERINGS



Food and beverage developers can also take inspiration from brands introducing innovative offerings connected with their product and menu introductions. In fact, research shows opportunity in this space — 41% of consumers saying seasonal flavors are a factor in purchasing something brand new from a menu when dining out. From festive giveaways to DIY kits and more, let's take a look at how brands are amping up the fun and flavor this season.

## KRISPY KREME FESTIVE DOUGHNUT KIT

was offered in the UK with a Doughman, the Sprinkle Bell, the Tree Yo'self and the So Good Pud doughnut. The Christmas Creations Kit includes four doughnuts, and a selection of sprinkles and icings so festive decorations can be added at home.



## SPARKLING ICE CHEERS TO GIVING CAMPAIGN

aims to celebrate non-profits by inviting supporters to share stories of their impact, for a chance to be selected as one of three winners of a \$50,000 donation. The brand also announced the return of the popular Sparkling Ice Cranberry Frost flavor and debut its newest flavor for the holidays, Sparkling Ice Apple Cider.



## PUBLIX LIMITED-EDITION ICE CREAM

was introduced including two new additions: Salted Caramel Toffee Crunch, which gets its crunch from pieces of cocoa pretzel bark, and Praline Pecan Bread Pudding dotted with praline pecans. They also brought back favorite holiday flavors including Eggnog, Peppermint Stick and Pumpkin Pie.



## HÄAGEN-DAZS WAFFLERIE

in Covent Garden in the UK offered bubble waffles and alcoholic winter-themed ice cream. The pop-up focuses on the brand's limited-edition winter flavours: Irish Whiskey & Chocolate Waffle and Rum Salted Caramel & Biscuit.



# THE TAKEAWAYS

This year's winter limited-edition and seasonal introductions again found inspiration from nostalgia, comfort and classic holiday flavors. LTOs and seasonal offerings during this season provide an opportunity for developers to add unique twists to flavor classics as well as innovate new profile ideas. From holiday inspired products to growing flavors such as peanut butter and pineapple, developers capitalized on the opportunity for fun and fresh flavors. And as seasonal and limited-edition introductions are still anticipated in the spring and summer seasons, opportunity in this space will continue to grow. So, is there an opportunity to expand the horizons of seasonal flavor 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/)

## SOURCES

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- Food Business News
- Yahoo! News
- Twitter
- Datassential
- PR Newswire
- Southern Living
- Goliath Consulting

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