



# OF THE EARTH

## OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE SPACE

### 2023 TREND REPORT BITE

#### OF THE EARTH

As sustainability continues to influence purchase habits among consumers, they are leaning into earthy flavors that drive a greater connection to natural ingredients and rich combinations that help them savor the moment. Brands are using umami profiles to round out the flavor of sugary treats, while smoky and nutty profiles add depth and temper the heat of inherently spicy dishes. Trying to balance flavor profiles, can be beautifully complex.

*Innovation Themes:*

*Umami Oomph • Smoky Crunch*

*Roasted & Nutty • Olive Oil Decadence*



**66%**

*growth of 'umami' as a  
descriptor on U.S. Menus Q4  
2019-Q4 2022*

*Source: Mintel Menu Insights*

*Google search for "Simple  
Clean Eating" average*

**48K** *per month.*

*Source: Google Insights, US, July 2022-July 2023*

# Umami Oomph

Comfort foods are playing with new punches of bold umami flavors. Ingredients like truffles, soy sauce, and miso can stand alone as their own rich flavor or they can be substituted for salt in desserts and baked goods. A blend of black pepper, onion, garlic, and truffle can deliver richness and depth.

## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



TRADER JOE'S SWEET & SALTY UMAMI CRUNCHIES RICE CRACKERS were launched in May 2023 and features soy sauce for a bold umami flavor.

*"Umami has been trending with consumers for a while now with no sign of slowing down. In fact, Kroger and the Food Institute have named umami as a trending profile in 2022."*

*Shannon Pimmel, Marketing Manager, Sokol Food Industry Executive*



GOOD & GATHER UMAMI MUSHROOM SEASONING BLEND adds earthy, salty, and savory flavor to meat, popcorn or veggies.

# Smoky Crunch

Brands are combining smoky flavors from chili and paprika with fried and charred elements that add a crispy texture. Inspired by smoky flavors and spices from the Caribbean, New Mexico, Portugal, and Spain, many dishes are layering in flavors with heat as well as crispy texture in every bite.

## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



FIX & FOGG'S AWARD-WINNING SMOKE AND FIRE PEANUT BUTTER (NZ)

The unique spicy and smoky flavor comes from New Mexico hatch chile, natural manuka smoke, and Spanish smoked paprika which plays off of the creamy salty peanut butter.



CANADIAN GROCERY STORE, LOBLAW'S PRIVATE LABEL, PRESIDENT'S CHOICE JERK CHICKEN features smoky, spicy flavor from allspice, chili pepper, and thyme. To amplify the smokiness and in keeping with traditional Caribbean jerk, they recommend cooking the wings on the grill until they're sticky, charred in spots, and supremely juicy.

# Roasted & Nutty

Ingredients like green tea and sesame are becoming popular for brands to incorporate into sweet drinks and treats for their ability to balance out sugar with a nutty earthy flavor. Complex processes produce flavors drenched in depth like the Japanese green tea, hojicha, that is roasted over charcoal in a porcelain pot for an earthy essence.

## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**MCDONALD'S HOJICHA- FLAVORED ICE CREAM** Currently exclusive to Singapore McDonald, the restaurant adapted their world-famous ice cream to come up with a line of hojicha- flavored ice cream treats. Launched Sept. 2022.

*"There are various types of Japanese tea, each of which offers a different level of umami, sweetness and bitterness to play with. In 2021, the export value of tea from Japan reached over 20 billion Japanese yen and the top destination was the U.S." Forbes, Jan 31, 2023*



**DANG TOASTED SESAME THAI RICE CHIPS** The nutty of sesame is roasted to provide a lightly sweet and savory flavor combination that pairs effortlessly with the natural sweetness and crunch of a rice chip.

# Olive Oil Decadence

The smooth flavors of olive oil bring out a rich, herby, and fruity profile in classically sweet desserts and treats. Hints of light indulgence comes through these desserts laced with the gracefulness of olive oil. Experience an added touch of luxury with a splash of tart fruitiness or citrus.

## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**STARBUCKS UNVEILED THEIR OLEATO LINE**, a series of beverages crafted with their traditional arabica coffee blended together with extra virgin olive oil, at select locations in the US after piloting the offering in Italy.

*74% of U.S. consumers claim to love or like olive oil. Datassential FLAVOR*



**ELIA'S GRECIAN OLIVE OIL CAKE MIX** Inspired by ancient Greece, Elia's mix incorporates almond and citrus. These carefully selected elements are an elegant, yet simple spin on cakes that stimulate the senses.

# THE TAKEAWAYS

Consumers are embracing moments of pause. During these times of reflection, they are incorporating earthy ingredients and thoughtful layers of flavor nuances into dishes to best express current sentiments.

- Comfort foods are playing with new punches of bold umami flavors. Ingredients like truffles, soy sauce, and miso are rich on their own or can be a great substitute for salt when developing sweet applications.
- Combine smoky flavors from chili and paprika with fried and charred elements for an added crispy texture.
- For brands trying to help balance sweetness, ingredients like green tea and sesame deliver a nutty, earthy flavor.
- To add a richness to sweet delicacies like bakery or confections, bring out a rich, herby, and fruity profile with the smoothness of olive oil.



## SOURCES

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