



# SEASONAL FLAVORS TRENDS OF WINTER

Spanning from December to March, winter encompasses notable holidays in the food and beverage space including Christmas, New Year's, and Valentine's Day celebrations. And with continued interest in comfort and indulgence foods, there's much opportunity in LTO and seasonal treats that expand upon well-known and loved seasonal flavors.

From charcuterie houses to apple pie Kit Kats, let's take a look at winter's seasonal flavors and trends and see how they can help inspire your next innovation.

# TOP WINTER FLAVORS



We took a deep dive into this season'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. 2020-Mar. 2021

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| ■ Chocolate           | ■ Almond                   |
| ■ Strawberry          | ■ Vanilla/Vanilla Bourbon/ |
| ■ Gingerbread         | Vanilla Madagascar         |
| ■ Hazelnut            | ■ Orange/Sweet Orange      |
| ■ Caramel/Caramelized | ■ Fruit                    |
| ■ Milk                |                            |

## TOP FLAVORS IN SEASONAL/LTO PRODUCTS:

North America Introductions, Dec. 2020-Mar. 2021

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| ■ Peppermint          | ■ Pumpkin/Squash & Spice/  |
| ■ Gingerbread         | Spicy                      |
| ■ Chocolate           | ■ Vanilla/Vanilla Bourbon/ |
| ■ Berry               | Vanilla Madagascar         |
| ■ Sugar               | ■ Nonpareils/Sprinkles/    |
| ■ Caramel/Caramelized | Hundreds & Thousands       |

## FASTEAST GROWING FLAVORS

Global Introductions, Q4 2020 vs. Q4 2019

- Apple (Green) +400%
- Bergamot +400%
- Acai +400%
- Gin & Tonic/Gin and Tonic/G&T +333%
- Carrot +300%
- Hibiscus/Roselle +300%

## FASTEAST GROWING FLAVORS

North America Introductions, Q4 2020 vs. Q4 2019

- Hazelnut +300%
- Nonpareils/Sprinkles/Hundreds & Thousands +300%
- Red Velvet +200%
- Egg Nog +200%
- Praline (Nut Filling) +200%
- Almond Butter +100%

**"(Seasonal flavors) bring a sensation of comfort along with tastes consumers know and trust. Seasonal flavors create the urge to try and buy new products. They also help consumers to feel the warmth of these popular periods of the year."**

-FOOD INGREDIENTS FIRST

## TOP SELLERS IN SEASONAL & LTO

It's no surprise that winter's top seller list was filled with indulgent sweets considering the classic chocolate confectionery favorites of Valentine's day and warm nostalgic flavors of Christmas. However, this year's winter introductions also featured some savory flavor breakthroughs spotted in cheeses, meats and salty snacks.



### TOP SEASONAL SELLERS-IRIS

- Oreo Brookie-O Chocolate Sandwich Cookies
- Cheerios Chocolate Strawberry Sweetened Whole Grain Oat Cereal
- Apple Pie Flavored Candy Bar
- Sugar Cookie Flavored White Creme with Cookie Pieces
- White Chocolate Sugar Cookie Chocolate Candies
- Build-a-Santa Milk Chocolate
- Gummy Clusters Candy
- Vanilla Candy Cane Cookie with Marshmallows Cereal
- Jazzberry Flavored Cereal
- Strawberry Shortcake Cookies
- Polar Peppermint K-Cup Coffee Pods
- M&Ms Tree Sugar Cookie Kit

### TOP GLOBAL CATEGORIES:



CHOCOLATE CONFECTIONERY



SNACKS



BAKERY



HOT BEVERAGES

# A TIME FOR CELEBRATION



Spanning multiple holidays - Christmas, New Years, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day – just to name a few, this year's winter introductions brought back feelings of nostalgia and celebration. Below are some notable winter themed products in the food and beverage space.

**"December holidays in particular are times when consumers say they traditionally like to 'celebrate the holiday to the fullest.' This year, that definitely includes planning, shopping for, preparing and enjoying special foods as they are central to our cultural celebrations."**

-FOOD BUSINESS NEWS

## PRODUCTS & OFFERINGS OF NOTE



**BUD LIGHT UGLY SWEATER SELTZER VARIETY PACK** was released for Christmas 2020 and includes the following flavors: cranberry, apple crisp, ginger snap and peppermint patty.

**25%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

**DUNKIN' GINGERBREAD LATTE** is claimed to have a taste of gingerbread flavor topped with whipped cream, caramel drizzle and cinnamon sugar for a little extra sweetness. The drink was offered in November 2020. Photo Source: Dunkin'

**DUNKIN' SUGARPLUM MACCHIATO** features the combination of premium espresso and milk with bright berry flavors of blueberry, raspberry, blackberry, and plum with notes of vanilla and a sweet sugary finish for the ultimate winter delight. The drink was offered in December 2020. Photo Source: Dunkin'

**HERSHEY'S BUILD-A-SNOWMAN COOKIES 'N' CRÈME CHOCOLATE** features cookies 'n' crème chocolate to "break, build and play" with for the holiday season. The chocolate also comes in a Santa edition.

**50%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

**PEET'S COFFEE** released holiday offerings in 2020 with a lineup featuring a Snowcap Mint Macha Latte, Snowcap Peppermint Cold Brew, Holiday Spice Latte, Peppermint Mocha, and Dark Chocolate Orange Mocha.

Photo Source: [Teaandcoffee.net](http://Teaandcoffee.net)

# FLAVORS FOR INNOVATION

## WHITE CHOCOLATE & APPLE

White chocolate and Apple are two flavors that each have interest garnering by consumers. In fact, globally, Apple (Green) shows growth of over 400% for Q4 2020 vs. Q4 2019. White chocolate on the other has made its way onto beverage menus as well as into other indulgent products. Instagram also shows 2.6 million posts with the hashtag #whitechocolate . Both have been introduced in combination with other flavors such as mocha and sugar cookie, showing innovation opportunity in flavor pairings for product developers.



## PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**KIT KAT APPLE PIE FLAVORED CANDY BAR** is described as crisp wafers in an apple pie flavored white creme. The product is limited edition.

**48%** of consumers responded that they likely or definitely would buy this product.

**BAILEYS APPLE PIE IRISH CREAM LIQUEUR** is a limited-edition product said to be infused with the delicious taste of Irish cream liqueur and the taste of homemade apple pie and vanilla ice cream. | China

**CARIBOU COFFEE PUMPKIN WHITE MOCHA** features real chocolate melted into steamed milk and combined with espresso and real pumpkin. The drink is topped with whipped cream and white chocolate chips.

Photo Source: Behance

**STARBUCKS TOASTED WHITE CHOCOLATE MOCHA** features festive flavors of caramelized white chocolate mocha sauce, espresso and steamed milk topped with whipped cream, sugar sparkles and crispy white pearls.

Photo Source: Starbucks

# THE TAKEAWAYS

Winter introductions commonly lean on nostalgia, comfort and indulgence for inspiration, and this year's winter LTOs and seasonal introductions were no exception. Though many consumers look to familiar flavors for comfort during the pandemic, LTOs and seasonal offerings provide an opportunity for developers to add unique twists to flavor classics. Opportunity in this space will continue into the spring and summer seasons, especially with more refreshing and fruity flavors popping up. 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

- Mintel
- Mintel GNPD
- Food Business News
- Food Ingredients First
- Starbucks
- Dunkin'
- Behance

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