



2025 trends predictions

Compiled by the
Specialty Food Association
Trendspotter Panel

November 2024





Ready to get a glimpse of the future of food?

The Specialty Food Association (SFA) Trendspotter Panel has released their predictions for the top 2025 food and beverage trends in the specialty market.

Comprising 16 experts from diverse segments of the culinary world, the SFA Trendspotters track emerging products at the bi-annual Fancy Food Shows, getting an advanced look at the flavors, formats, and ideas set to reshape the food industry.

Specialty food makers are always first to respond to evolving consumer values and preferences—like an increasing appetite for real sugar or the upscaling of cooking at home—but these consumer-driven trends are set for mainstream adoption. Read on for a sneak peek of what we'll be seeing all over retail shelves and restaurant menus soon.



girl dinner 2.0

Snacking is here to stay, with freestyle format and flavor combinations infusing new energy into the red-hot category. “Consumers will become even more flexible with how they eat,” in 2025, predicted Trendspotter Melanie Bartelme. “Most US consumers eat traditional meals every day, but snacking is on the rise. Savvy food and drink brands will help consumers see the products they make as suitable for however consumers choose to eat them. Think pizza cupcakes for lunch, jianbing for dinner, and dumplings as a snack.” Cited as one of the top trends driving growth in SFA’s [2024-25 State of the Specialty Food Industry](#) research, snacking is gaining nuance and seeing new innovation. Look for “familiar snacks with a twist,” said Trendspotter Jeannie Houchins, like Fishwife’s tinned seafood, [Poppy Handcrafted Popcorn](#), [Acme](#)’s Lox in a Box snack kit, Firehook Crackers, Lotus Foods Forbidden Rice Ramen, [Brooklyn Cured](#) charcuterie and Goodnow Farms Chocolate.





instant global gratification

Trendspotter Kat Craddock was excited by “so, so many great new South Asian brands!” and expects that consumers everywhere will continue to gain access to non-native flavors and new-to-them dishes in convenient formats. Craddock noted “Vermont-made Dosa Kitchen dosa batter, Sun Ghee’s flavored ghee, Arya Roti’s premade roti, Doosra’s snacks, and Satya Desi Pantry.” “Convenient to heat-and-eat or mix-and-make formats of authentic global foods will add flavor adventure to consumers’ snacks and meals,” said Trendspotter Kara Nielsen. “Frozen Japanese ramen and dumplings from around the world; nutritious Indian dosa pancake mixes, and flavor-packed traditional Thai simmer sauces are examples.” Plus, regionality is on the rise. Trendspotter Dr. Beth Forrest pointed to “not just tapenade, but Santorini and Kykonos tapenade (smaller regional specialties); not just salsa but salsa macha.” Among SFA members, this trend is exemplified by Xınca’s pupusas, Sobo Foods plant-based dumplings, [pi00a](#) Asian-inspired pizzas, Brooklyn Delhi’s Chickpea Tikka Masala and Yolélé’s Yassa Fonio Pilaf.



yes, chef

Building on the Summer 2024 trend of Upscaling at Home, look for a proliferation of “cheffy kits for the home cook,” said Trendspotter Clara Park. “Consumers are increasingly seeking gourmet-quality meals in convenient formats,” according to Trendspotter Kantha Shelke. Economic concerns are a major factor driving this trend. “Restaurant visits may decrease in favor of restaurant quality meals at home thanks to some great home cooking equipment along with more access to top products such as Japanese Wagyu, truffles, and fine oils and cheeses. A splurge to be sure, but still a fraction of the cost of a restaurant meal,” said Trendspotter Jonathan Deutsch. “With inflation hitting our pockets at the store and especially restaurants, people, especially those with families, will once again return to cooking fresh meals with cultural and flavorful twists,” said Trendspotter V. Sheree Williams. Todo Verde’s Al Pastor Seasoning, Flour & Olive’s baking mixes, Olio Piro Olive Oil, [Jasper Hill Farm](#) Harbison cheese, Agrumato Citron Extra Virgin Olive Oil, [Sabatino](#) White Truffle Sauce, The Matzo Project Matzo Ball Soup Kit, and [DeLallo](#) Pizza Night gift box.



functional foods, natural enhancements

“Personalized nutrition will gain momentum, driven by technological advancements and a growing focus on health,” said Trendspotter Patsy Ramirez-Arroyo. “Companies will offer customizable product lines, develop AI-powered nutrition apps, and create functional foods with targeted health benefits. Functional foods that support cognitive health and emotional well-being will also grow in popularity. Ingredients like adaptogens, nootropics, and mood-enhancing botanicals will be featured in various products.” Functional has expanded beyond beverages, said Forrest, citing “chocolates (Chi Chi), functional mushroom broth, high protein oats, and Mānuka honey.” Trendspotter Sherin Ali called out “the growing demand for food that helps people stay sharp and balanced... Consumers are increasingly seeking foods that support mood, mental clarity, and overall wellness, especially as conversations around focus and neurodivergence grow.” Taylor Pass Honey Co Reserve Mānuka Honey UMF 05+ MGO83+, [ALO](#) Original Awaken Aloe Vera + Wheatgrass drink, Brook37 Wellness Teas, and High Country Fungus Magic Cocoa with seven mushrooms are example products from SFA members.





chili cornucopia

Chilis remain popular and they're available in myriad varieties. Park predicts, "more unique chili pepper callouts: e.g. urfa biber, Carolina reaper." Seen in previous Trendspotter highlights such as Nuanced Heat, chilies are everywhere—"but gone are the days of the ghost peppers and gratuitous fire. It's about flavor with chili crisp and crunch, berbere, hot honey, and harissa," said Deutsch. The growing diversity of chilis is indeed a cross-cultural development—Houchins predicted "heightened heat in worldly foods" as a top 2025 trend. The Spice House's Aji Amarillo, [Alicorp](#)'s Tari Rocoto Pepper Sauce, Sachili Smoked Red Pepper Seasoning (Marash), and Madhu Chocolate Mango Chili Bar, which uses Mathania.





vivacious vinegars

Multiple trends collide in the rise of exciting new vinegar flavors, uses, and occasions. “Countering the sweet tooth of the past few years, a spectrum of vinegars outside the stable of white, balsamic, apple cider, red, and rice are cropping up as reductions, fruity condiments, and shrubs, said De la Vega. “Drinking vinegars increasingly part of the morning or recovery routines. With the boom of chili crisps and umami, it’s time to balance with tart and acidity. Look out for vinegar-based condiments like Puerto Rican pique or Filipino sawsawan.” Calling out a desire among consumers for “elevated foods (making the ordinary interesting again!),” Forrest specifically cited “cucumber vinegar” as a new variant to keep an eye out for. American Vinegar Works Apple Cider Hot Vinegar, [Manicaretti](#)/Alemany Chestnut and Honey Vinegar, Giusti Sweet and Sour White Condiment, [Ottogi America](#) Korean Plum Vinegar, [Mikey V](#)’s Sam Sauce with yuzu and black vinegars, and Villa Manodori’s Dark Cherry Balsamic showcase SFA members driving this trend.



gimme (some) sugar

As consumers set personal guidelines for new styles of health-focused eating, “we are seeing more interest in real sugar, honey and syrup used for light sweetening rather than artificial or naturally derived sweeteners,” said Deutsch. “Think Burlap & Barrel single origin sugars and honeys, and Runamok honeys and syrups.” Furthering the Summer 2024 trends of Fruit Forward and Warmth & Comfort, nearly one in three Trendspotters noted a fruit flavor or sweet dish in their predictions, from passion fruit (Stan Sagner) and pineapple (Forrest) to crumb cake (Donnarumma) and “mainstream maple” (Mikel Cirkus). SFA member products are giving consumers the sugar they crave, from Bumbleberry Farms Sweet Maple Honey Cream and [Bourbon Barrel Foods’](#) Aged Pure Cane Sorghum to Little Red Kitchen’s Molasses Cookies and Sunday Night Foods’ Chocolate Premium Sauce.



also trending



oil-based hot sauces.

“Enthusiasm over traditional chili crisps and salsas machas heralds in a new wave of creative riffs, many of which are made by cool-kid 1st, 2nd, and 3rd gen immigrant founders keen to celebrate their culinary roots,” said Craddock. Examples include Cuatro Mamas, Chingonas, and Tierra Negra, and Fly By Jing.



black garlic.

“It’s all over fine dining, and we’ll see it as a flavor in specialty snacks soon,” said Trendspotter Sarah Lohman. Epicurean Pantry’s Black Garlic line, which includes ketchup, pearls, and honey, and Olivelle’s Black Garlic Shiitake Rub and Seasoning.





lavender.

Cited at the Summer Fancy Food Show, “this floral note is making its way into various food and beverage products. Expect to see it soar in confectionery, preserves, and specialty drinks,” said Shelke. Brands will be “leveraging lavender,” in 2025, predicted Cirkus. [Savannah Bee Company](#) Lavender Raw Honey, [Beehive Cheese](#) Coffee-Lavender Cheese and Simpson & Vail Lavender Lace Tisane are just some examples.

flavored cheeses.

“It’s not all blueberry Wensleydale, kiddos. Flavored cheese is getting fancier, and far more global,” said Craddock. “Examples include [Marieke](#)’s fenugreek gouda, [Vermont Creamery](#)’s honey-truffle chevre, and Montchevre’s collaboration with Mike’s Hot Honey.”





taste the trends at the 2025 Winter Fancy Food Show

These trends—and many more—will be everywhere at the upcoming Winter Fancy Food Show, including in the all-new First Taste Experience food hall, where a full day of sampling and discovery of 2025 trends is planned. Qualified buyers, distributors, importers, and others may [register now](#) for the Show, taking place January 19-21 in Las Vegas.

Professionals from diverse segments of the culinary world comprise the SFA's Trendspotter Panel:

Sherin Ali, Brand Strategist at Mokha Creative Studios

Patsy Ramirez-Arroyo, food & sustainability consultant

Melanie Bartelme, Associate Director, Mintel Food & Drink

Mikel Cirkus, dsm-firmenich, Global Creative Director, Foresight & Trenz, Taste

Kat Craddock, editor in chief, CEO, SAVEUR

Jenn de la Vega, Put A Egg On It

Jonathan Deutsch, Ph.D., CHE, CRC, Drexel University

Jeanette Donnarumma, Food Media Producer

Dr. Beth Forrest, Professor of Liberal Arts and Food Studies
at the Culinary Institute of America

Jeannie Houchins, Global Food & Beverage Communications Executive

Thomas Joseph, Marquee Brands/Martha Stewart, Sur La Table

Chala June, writer Sarah Lohman, Food Historian and Author

Klancy Miller, freelance, For the Culture

Kara Nielsen, Kara Nielsen Food Trends

chef Clara Park, founder, eat cetera Philly

Stan Sagner, Strategy Consultant, We Work For Food, LLC

Kantha Shelke, Ph.D., CFS, IFT Fellow, Corvus Blue LLC

Cathy Strange, Ambassador of Food Culture, Whole Foods

V. Sheree Williams, The Global Food & Drink Initiative, *Cuisine Noir*



About the Specialty Food Association

The Specialty Food Association (SFA) was founded in 1952 and is the not-for-profit trade association of the \$207-billion specialty food industry. Representing more than 3,600 businesses worldwide, SFA champions industry participation and success for a diverse community of makers, buyers, importers, distributors, and service providers by developing resources, information, education, and events that celebrate innovation and inclusivity. SFA owns and operates the Fancy Food Shows as well as the sofi™ Awards, which have honored excellence in specialty food and beverage annually since 1972. SFA also produces the e-newsletter Specialty Food SmartBrief, the Trendspotter Panel annual predictions and Fancy Food Show reports, the [State of the Specialty Food Industry Report](#), and Today's Specialty Food Consumer research. Find out more at specialtyfood.com, and connect with SFA on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#).

Press Contact: Jennifer Lea Cohan, press@specialtyfood.com