

Flavor in Flux

Food & Beverage Trends to Watch in
Q3 2025



How we identify what matters

Consumer tastes evolve fast. To stay ahead, we go beyond surface-level trendspotting to uncover the **deeper motivations** behind what people eat, drink, and buy.

We analyze billions of data points from social conversations, recipes, menus, and more—spanning home cooking and foodservice—to identify not just what’s trending, but why it’s resonating.

This approach helps our customers connect early to the trends with true staying power—and activate those insights in real time through the Tastewise platform.

Each trend in this report meets 3 key criteria:

- It’s crossed a meaningful threshold of consumer interest
- It’s shown consistent growth over time
- It appears across multiple channels and occasions

Backed by **10.9M** consumers, **95M** social posts, **6.3M** recipes, and **186M** dishes across **1.3M** restaurants, this is trend intelligence built for action—not guesswork.

Questions? Reach out to info@tastewise.io



Tastewise helps you:



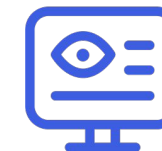
Understand consumers in real time and grow your market impact



Create personalized content quickly and easily



Use AI to explore claims, trends, and what people really want



Work better together and share insights across teams



Save time and boost revenue with smarter workflows

Our customers trust Tastewise AI to move from insights to action in a changing market

1 Trillion

Data Points

In-Home & eRetail

72B

Observed F&B moments

Social Media

4M+

Global locations and best-selling menu items

Restaurants & Food Delivery



Q3 2025 | 4 Summer Food & Beverage Trends to Watch

2025's Most Chaotic Comfort Flavor
5

Sour, spicy, and surprisingly functional—pickle is dominating drinks and snacks across menus.




Cold Comforts: Winter Flavors Go Off-Season
8

Tangerine, maple, and milk chocolate are cooling down summer with emotional, nostalgic appeal.



Sip Happens
11

From rootbeer floats to fruity matcha lattes, we're in a wave of bold, mindful, & mood-lifting refreshment.



Crunch Layer 2.0
15

Dubai chocolate kicks off a new era of texture-driven, indulgent innovation.



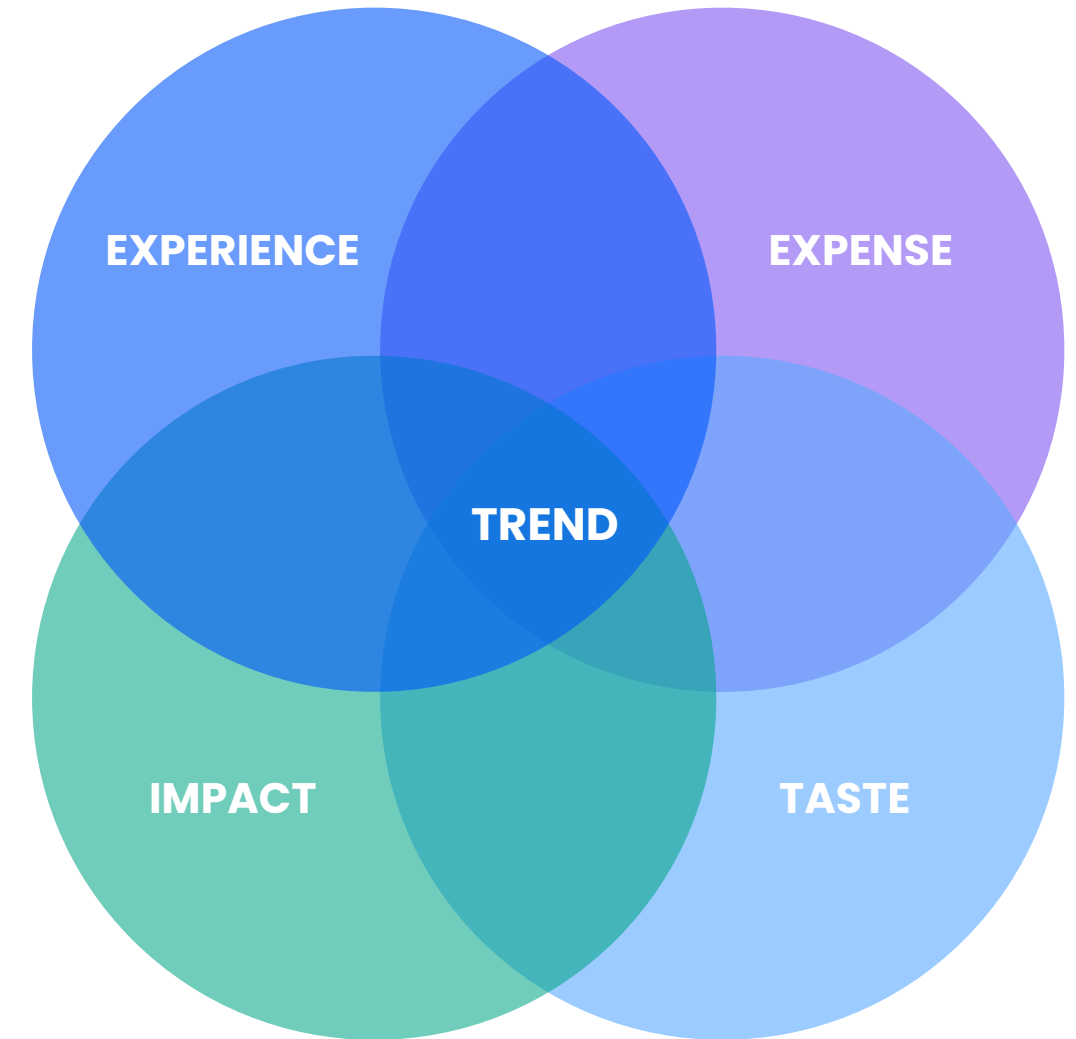
Where **relevance** and **ROI** connect

The trends in this report aren't just about what's new — they're about why people are reaching for certain foods and drinks this summer.

Whether it's protein-rich comfort or fruity matcha drinks that feel as good as they look, every trend here connects to a deeper consumer desire: to feel better, eat smarter, and still enjoy the ride.

And these trends don't live in isolation — you'll see them cross-pollinate everywhere.

A baked good with nootropics might also be packed with cottage cheese. A nostalgic shake could double as a mood-boosting functional beverage. Even the viral Dubai chocolate trend is evolving into global flavor mashups with high-protein fillings or frozen textures. The biggest opportunities lie in these overlaps — and the brands that lean into them will win both hearts and baskets.



All the data in this report was sourced from the Tastewise AI solutions, April 2023–April 2025.



#1 2025's Most Chaotic Comfort Flavor



Pickle Everything

Once a gimmick, now a sensory playground—pickle is turning chaos into comfort.

+239% YoY growth in **pickle lemonade** mentions, driven by TikTok and LTOs

58% of mentions tied to **surprise/discovery**, not just flavor appeal

+19% YoY growth for pickle in **non-alc beverages**, especially mocktails

+31% YoY increase in pickle drinks on menus, showing how LTOs are fueling traction

+42%

YoY growth in **spicy pickle drink** interest

+17%

YoY increase in hydration-related pickle lemonade mentions

From **Popeyes** to **Sonic's Grillo's-powered slushes**, brands big and small are leaning into the brine.



How are summer menus changing to capitalize on this trend?

How Pickle Is Reinventing Summer Menus

Pickles are moving from garnish to anchor ingredient

Pickles are appearing in unexpected formats:

- **Pickle + matcha, pickle + strawberry, and pickle + jalapeño** are rising flavor combos in functional drinks.
- **Spicy pickle drinks** are trending: Jalapeño-pickle lemonade up
- **+42% YoY**, aligning with the +6% YoY spicy beverage boom.



Spicy pickle lemonades and mocktails

Spicy beverage concepts are up +42% YoY, with jalapeño-pickle formats leading growth.

Sweet-sour drinks featuring pickle + strawberry, mint, or honey

Dual-flavor drinks with pickle are trending, up **+25% YoY** in consumer interest.

Fast casual and coffee shop LTOs spotlighting pickle-forward drinks

Pickle beverages now appear on **+31% more menus YoY**, especially in experimental formats.

Functional coolers with pickle brine for hydration and gut health

Pickle lemonade is linked to **hydration (+17%), mood lift (+14%), and gut health (+11%)**.

Gen Z-friendly flavor mashups with matcha, ube, or fruit brine

Gen Z is **28% more likely** to engage with extreme or sour beverage flavors.

2

Winter in the Summer

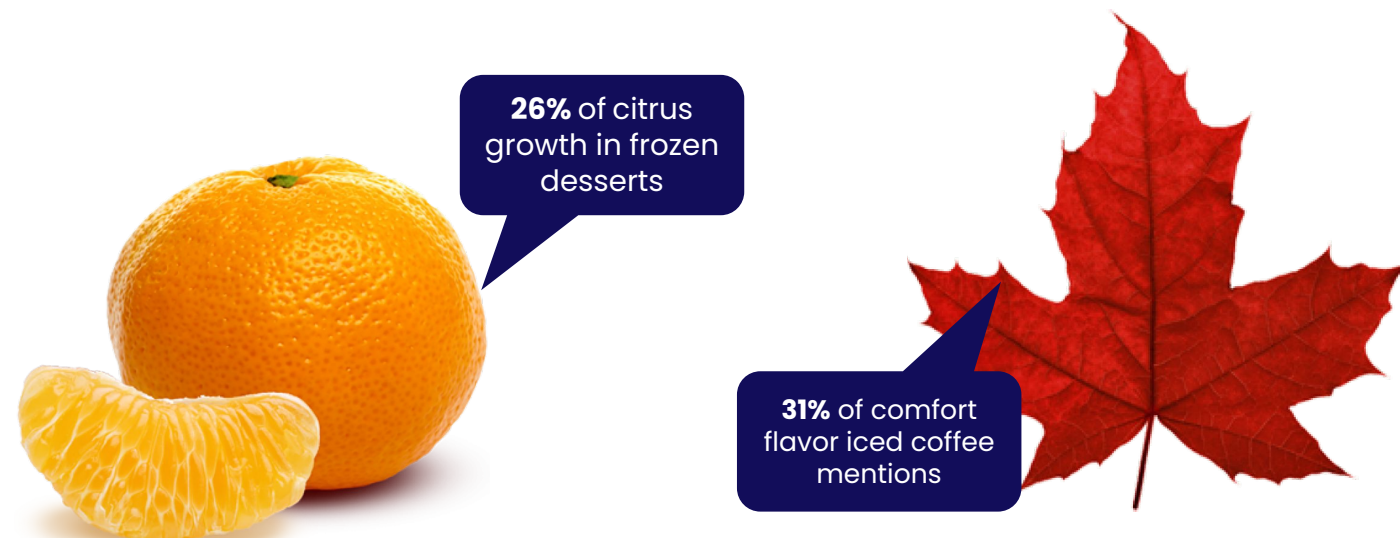


Too Hot to Cook? Cold Comfort Wins.

When the oven's off, consumers turn to frozen, no-prep, and emotionally soothing flavors that feel like home—even when served ice cold.

Winter flavors in summer

- **Pumpkin frozen yogurt and apple pie smoothies** are trending up **+16% YoY**, with **125K+ mentions** this summer.
- **No-bake snacks** with milk chocolate, cinnamon, and raisins drove **230K–260K mentions**, supported by **+9% YoY** growth for toffee-based recipes.
- **Cinnamon in iced formats** is up **+8.3% YoY**—frequently found in **iced lattes, cold chais, and smoothie bowls**.



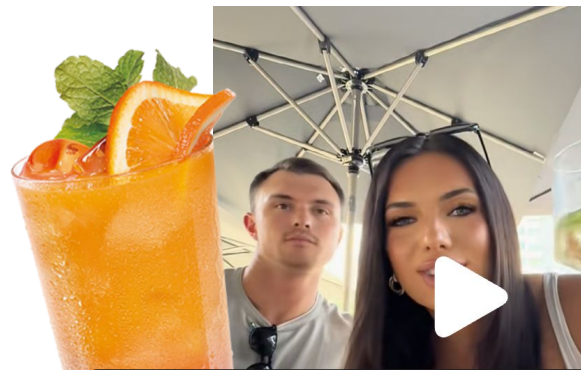
Look out for: Starbucks' maple cold brew, tangerine creamsicle smoothies at boutique cafés, and new iced takes on cinnamon toast and hot chocolate.


“Cold Comfort” Hits the Summer Menu

Nostalgic winter flavors are trending in iced and frozen formats, proving that emotional comfort doesn't follow the calendar.

Tangerine Frozen Treats

Tangerine is showing up in **popsicles, slushies, cocktails and smoothie bowls**, with **+23.98% YoY** growth and **1.2M+ summer mentions** across social, recipes, and menus.



 **thesheajones**
shea huber ❤️ · 1d ago

this drink is honestly SO GOOD. 10/10

Milk Chocolate Goes Iced


Now a top 10 summer dessert flavor, **milk chocolate** is thriving in **iced mochas, cold pies, and dessert lattes**, with **+12.5% YoY** growth and **850K mentions**.



Spiced Lattes (Without the Heat)

Cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger are appearing in cold formats like **smoothies, iced chais, and spiced cold brews**, up **+7.1%–8.3% YoY**, totaling **860K+ mentions** combined.



 **victoriagarrickbrowne** 🌟 Introducing the VGB x **@eataalfalfa** Strawberry Cloud Matcha!!! 🍓☁️🍵 Available at all Alfalfa locations starting 6/20.

I've been obsessed with **@eataalfalfa** house made matcha for years, so it was time I put my own little spin on it... and you know I love my strawberries!! 🍓

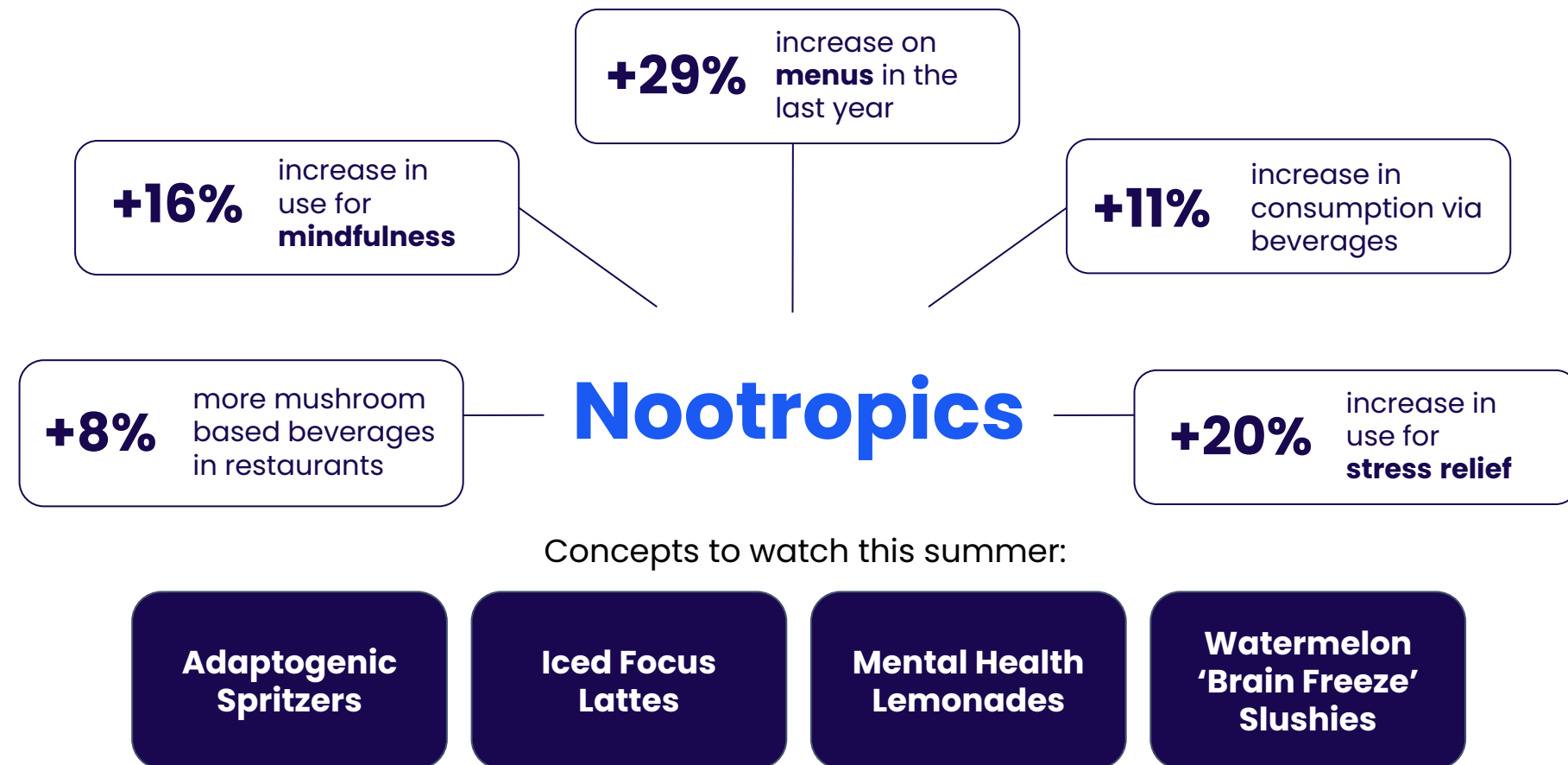
3 Sip Happens



Every day Nootropics

Stress relief and mental clarity go mainstream as ingredients like mushrooms and matcha get functional makeovers.

Nootropics are ingredients that support **brain function**, including focus, memory, and mental clarity. From functional sodas and cold brews to mood-boosting snack bars, 4% more consumers are getting on the nootropic train. As consumers seek energy with intention, **nootropics offer a way to feel sharper, calmer, and more in control**—without sacrificing flavor.



💡 What This Means for You

Have you read the news lately? People are **stressed out**, and trying to protect their mental health -- and they're turning in droves towards **nootropics**, once a niche nutritional supplement, for help.

Leverage the power of nootropics, commonly found in **turmeric, matcha, botanicals, and mushrooms**; call out **"focus fuel", "calm energy",** and **"mental resets"** to meet consumer needs.



Fizz & Flashbacks for Feeling Good

From wellness to nostalgia, this summer is about casual drinks that deliver feel-good function *and* flavor nostalgia.

Mushroom Drinks

+11% YoY in consumer interest, as **reishi** and **lion's mane** enter the mainstream; **+14%** in menu mentions

Functional Benefits

77% of consumers seek **functional** benefits in beverages



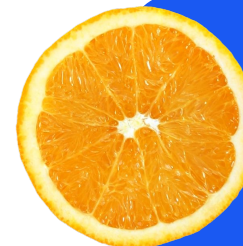
Prebiotics + Hormones

+29% YoY in consumer interest in prebiotics drinks; **+19% YoY** in hormone-support bevs

Nostalgia Beverages

+6% Yoy in consumer interest,, fueled by **soda fountain** drinks & **retro** flavors; **reconnection** as a driver for beverage experiences grows **+58% YoY**.

This summer, expect to see playful, nostalgic spins on functional drinks – like **nootropic rootbeer floats**, **prebiotic creamsicle spritzers**, or **stress-relieving aguas frescas**.



"Vanilla joins zesty orange for a flavor that's nostalgic and totally iconic"

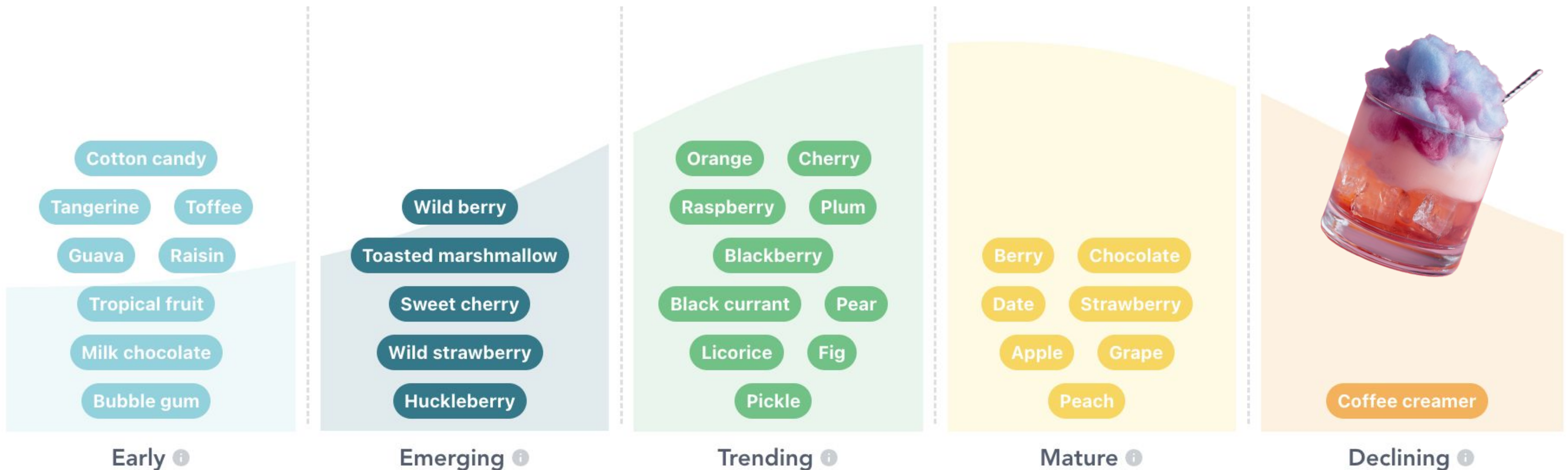
Brands like Poppi lead the way with beverages that support **gut health** while tapping into **nostalgic** flavors that spark emotion and memory.



What “Feel-Good Flavor” Looks Like Now

Consumers crave familiar, fruit-forward flavors across all stages of the nostalgic trend cycle—bringing a sense of comfort to modern functional drinks, and fresh opportunities for product messaging.

What do Consumers Consider Nostalgic in Non-Alcoholic Beverages?



4 Crunch Layer 2.0



What's Behind the Dubai Chocolate Buzz?

Even the most viral trends are grounded in real demand

At first glance, **Dubai chocolate's +3,000% YoY growth** might seem like a fleeting trend—but its rise is powered by a craving for **crunch-forward indulgence**:

- **+198% YoY** growth in **crunch + chocolate** mentions shows texture is now central to dessert appeal
- **Pistachio-chocolate pairings**—key to Dubai chocolate—are up **+171% YoY**, driven by craveable contrast
- **Crunchy layers** like kataifi and cereal shells appear in **+36% more dessert recipes YoY**

Foodservice is all in: **Shake Shack's Dubai Crunch Shake** and **Starbucks' secret frappes** bring texture-rich luxury to the menu

LTOs to watch for this summer:

Snack twists like pistachio-chocolate popcorn with a salty twist

Adult summer shakes featuring pistachio, chocolate, and rose combos

Frozen treats wrapped in kataifi shells for ASMR-worthy crunch

Dubai chocolate reflects a broader shift: indulgence that's global, sensory, and rooted in feel-good formats—not just fleeting hype.



Dubai Chocolate – What’s Next?

Tastewise AI-generated concepts that capture trending experiential, visual, and flavor claims around “Dubai chocolate” and “crunch”

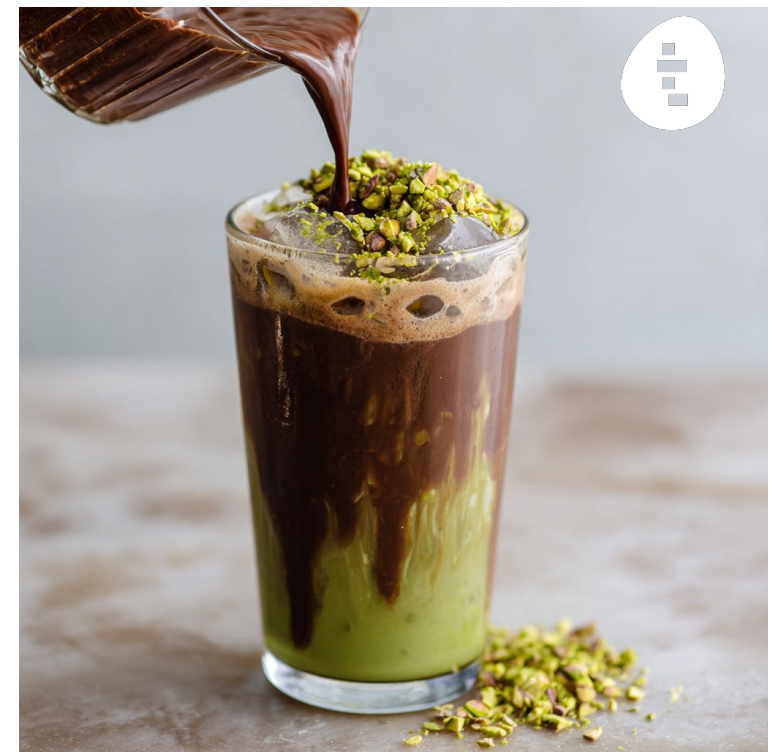
DIY Chocolate Pistachio S’mores Kit



Frozen Dubai Chocolate w/ Crunch Shell



Chocolate Pistachio Iced Matcha Latte



Key Takeaways for Brands in Q3 2025:



1

Functional meets emotional: Consumers want drinks that do something and feel like something— easy swaps for nostalgia, mood boosts, and flavor memories drive trial.

2

Flavor risks bring adventure: Sweet heat, briny-sour, and bold fusions like spicy wine and pickle lemonade are hot-weather playgrounds for experimentation

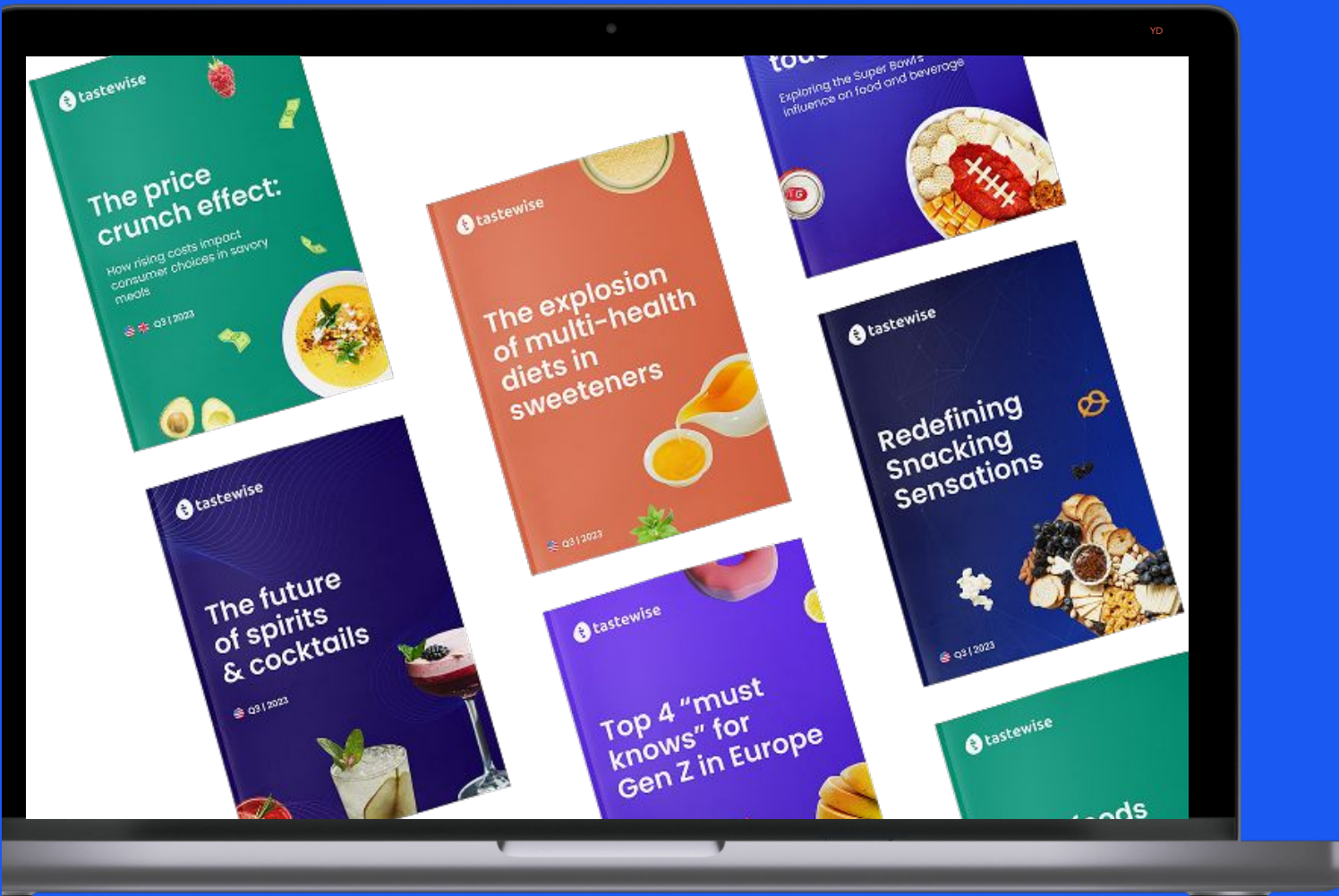
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Treat culture is evolving: “Little treats” are now premium, multi-textural, and visual—think strawberry matcha or dessert-inspired lattes.

4

Indulgence gets global: Dubai chocolate and Middle Eastern-inspired formats satisfy rising cravings for richness, regional flavor, and sensory depth.

Craving faster wins in 2026?



We're launching our **annual trend predictions** report for 2026 towards the end of Q3 '25.

Want first dibs? Email "2026" to live@tastewise.io to get on the pre-release list.