

*Dairy*

*Nuts*

*Inclusions*

*Chocolate*

## CONFECTIONEY NPD

### Sweet Bakery and Confectionery Trends

Scrumptious fillings are on trend, while conscious consumers are driving demand for ethically sourced chocolate and indulgent vegan varieties.

There are two overriding themes when it comes to innovation in bakery and confectionery, either super-indulgent, flavor-rich creations, or personalized nutrition - meeting the needs of those who are vegan, celiac or looking for lower-calorie options.

#### Indulgent Fillings

Italy's SIGEP Observatory carried out research into artisanal bakery in advance of the SIGEP 2020 exhibition held in Rimini January 18-22 and identified trends in filled bakery.

Sourdough bread has enjoyed a dramatic rise in popularity in recent years and now there are sweeter variants breaking through. The Lovingly Artisan Bakery in Cumbria (UK) won a gold medal in the 2015 World Bread Awards with its Sultana & Rosemary loaf, and now there is a Spiced Apple variant - a sourdough loaf made using apples with a splash of rum.

"This sourdough loaf sums up Cumbrian Food heritage. As always, our approach is all about slow, double-fermented, naturally proofed breads," the company says.

Chairman of the Club Coup du Monde de la Patisserie, Alessandro Dalmasso, notes growth in panettone filled with vanilla or marron glacé and the continuation of the Piedmont tradition to include two broad beans - anyone who find a bean buys the drinks. An indication of how play and theatre culture are increasingly part of the fun of patisserie.

But it's not all about fillings; toppings are enjoying creative innovation too. French company Deli Lites appeals to those looking for healthier cakes with high nutritional value. Its orange and turmeric cake, for instance, has a chestnut topping.

#### Free From

Meeting the ever growing demand for vegan cakes, the UK's Bells & Whistles Company makes individually packaged cake slices that are milk and gluten-free, in enticing flavors such as Nut Truffle, 2 Berry & Cashew and Ginger & Apricot.

There has been a clear move across the board to cater for personalized nutrition. Nairn's, known for its cheese oatcakes, has expanded its range to cater to the gluten-free market with three packs of chunky biscuits made using oats, dark chocolate, coconut, blueberry, apple and cinnamon.

Consumers are today concerned about nutritional values, even when it comes to indulgent bakery options. UK-based Pullin's Bakery is meeting this demand with its Wholefood Bar made without refined sugar and yet being high in fiber and made rich and tasty thanks



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According to PTC Foods data, chocolate launches with a salted caramel flavor saw a 95% rise (Global 2017 vs 2018).



Selected Tunches featuring honeycomb, such as De Villiers Chocolate Honeycomb Milk Chocolate Bar and Buttermilk's Caramel Sea Salt Honeycomb Dipped In Dark Chocolate.

to cranberry and super seeds. Lizzie's Food Factory, another manufacturer based in UK, is an example of a company taking energy bars to the next level. Lizzie's Plus Bar contains pecan and cranberry and is made using gluten-free oats, dates, sunflower seeds, sunflower seed butter and raspberry essence. The Plus Bar is also certified gluten-free by the Coeliac Society.

For those looking for high protein content, NuGo Slim is a vegan bar containing 17 g protein, 3 g sugar and 7 g fiber with crunchy peanut butter dipped in real dark chocolate without maltitol or artificial sweeteners.

### The Low-Sugar Trend

There is no doubt that consumers are seeking out everyday treats that are lower in sugar.

Nairn's has also introduced coconut and chia oat biscuits that contain 55% less sugar than the average sweet biscuit. Using whole grain oats that are high in fiber, the biscuits offer a low glycemic index (GI) value, meaning they provide a slower release of energy. Each biscuit contains 45 calories, and they are sold in 200 g packs.

"Sugar has been under the spotlight for a few years now, but for us, it has always been one of our main priorities when it comes to developing our products," says Martyn Gray, Managing Director at Nairn's. "We've worked tirelessly to ensure that our biscuits not only taste great, but are also healthy and have a lower sugar and calorie content. All our sweet biscuits contain between 12-20 g of sugar per 100 g.

However, our lowest, coconut and chia oat biscuits contain only 12.4 g of sugar per 100 g. With research showing nine out of ten people in the UK eat sweet biscuits regularly, and that these biscuits make up over 60% of the total market value proportion, we make it that little bit easier for people to enjoy a treat without compromising on taste. We benchmark our range of biscuits and gluten-free biscuits with over 100 similar products, and on average, our biscuits contain up to 45% less sugar," he explains.



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### Meringues and Honeycomb

By cutting fat and focusing on a sweet sugar rush, meringues and honeycomb hit the sweet spot when it comes to calorie counting. Co-founder of UK-based meringue company Flower & White, Leanne Crowther, has reported that low-calorie sweet treats have continued to attract consumers. Flower & White's snack meringue range has grown in popularity and is now being stocked all over the UK since it hit the market in July 2019, as well as being available on Virgin Atlantic flights.

These natural meringue bites and bars meet the boom in demand for snacking products, which are low in fat and calories, plus contain fewer ingredients giving them a clean label.

These meringues are handcrafted using British free-range eggs as well as natural flavors and colors; the indulgent snacks are gluten-free, low-fat and suitable for vegetarians - as well as being under 100 calories per portion. They're made using a Swiss recipe, which includes heated sugar, and coated with fair trade Belgian chocolate.

"Our meringues are not like the meringues of old, although they have all the same favorable qualities," says Crowther, who runs the company with her husband Brian. "For example, our low-calorie salted caramel bar is only 57 calories, but feels like you're eating something that's 300 calories, which is amazing."

As people are becoming more environmentally conscious, consumers are also looking at the sustainability claims around what they are buying. The meringue bars and bites are packaged in a 100% recyclable paper pouch, which is plastic-free and will satisfy customers who are looking to make better choices about the packaging of the items they consume.

"We were the first in the UK to introduce this type of packaging, and it's something of which we are incredibly proud of," says Crowther.

### Chocolate Bar Appeal

Thorntons Chocolate has launched four new flavors onto the market: 70% Dark, Honeycomb, Caramel Cheesecake, containing real fudge pieces and shortcake biscuit and Orange Crisp, containing orange pieces. Developed with a younger audience in mind, each tablet weighs 90 g and is formulated into a distinctive square shape echoing the premium product credentials.

"Thorntons Tablets are an exciting proposition for shoppers, as these are products with intense flavors and a great texture. We know that tablet bars are becoming increasingly popular among shoppers, and we're confident that expanding into this format will bring more consumers into the category," says Levi Boorer, Customer Development Director at Ferrero.

Ferrero's multi-million acquisition of Thorntons in 2015 is part of its continued investment in the competitive UK market. Another big move from the company has been into 102 g sharing bags of chocolates with sophisticated centers such as Goey Caramels, Crispy Truffles and Creamy Fudge packaged anew to cater for this category currently worth £473.3 million and growing at a rate of 8.4% in the UK.

### Conscious Chocolate

Designed as a healthy alternative for devout chocolate lovers as well as millennials looking for something new, Conscious Chocolate supported by the Fortissimo Group uses ethically sourced ingredients to further the appeal of raw chocolate. Replacing fructose heavy



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agave syrup with coconut blossom sugar, with an inherently high level of vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients, the formulation also has the bonus of leaving little residue on the fingers when eating. High in fiber and suitable for celiacs, the newest flavor in this inventive range is a Maca & Spirulina blend, made with Peruvian Cacao, which is sweetened with coconut blossom, packaged in a 60 g bar.

“With Veganuary burgeoning in popularity and the rise in plant-based diets and awareness of climate issues, there is demand and desire for more healthier choices in the marketplace. This is why dairy-free and vegan claims are booming and dark chocolate is on trend. Conscious Chocolate offers all of the healthy, free-from credentials; being free from dairy, gluten as well as being organic, raw bars that are perfect for indulging as they maintain a creamy and decadent taste,” Emma Jackman, Conscious Chocolate Managing Director, says.

Another vegan, organic and free-from and completely natural chocolate brand that saw a remarkable hike in sales in 2019, is the relatively new brand Enjoy! Now on sale at Planet Organic, The Vegan Kind, Buy Whole Foods Online, Spark Etail and Kingdom of Sweets in the UK - all retailers who are paving the way in vegan and organic goods. “Our customers are already loving the products with the Salted Caramel Buttons as their favorite,” says Alison Thomas, Grocery Buyer at Planet Organic. Enjoy! is also now stocked in Whole Foods Market, Morrisons, The Health Store, Food for Thought, Earthfare, The Natural Food Company, as well as more than 100 independent stockists.

“The vegan market is growing at a massive rate as more people care about what they are eating,” says Enjoy! Founder Chris Crutchley. From its Hampshire-based factory Enjoy! makes chocolate using organic, raw and natural ingredients. Its base recipe contains just three organic ingredients - cacao powder, cacao butter and coconut sugar. The range of twenty six products are vegan-friendly and free-from all 14 major food allergens including dairy, soy and gluten.



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The other big reason for Enjoy!'s success is its low sugar credentials. Last year, research revealed that UK high street milk chocolate brands contained an average of 54.5 g per 100 g whereas the Captivating Coconut Bar from Enjoy! contains half that, at 23 g per 100 g. Similarly, its fudge range, including Opulent Orange, Velvety Vanilla, Magical Mint and Barmy Banoffee contains four teaspoons less than standard fudge at 44 g. Much of this is due to the coconut sugar content. This is made from the sap of flower buds from the coconut palm tree and this natural sugar ranks lower on the glycaemic index (between 35-54) rather than refined sugar, which ranges between 60 and 75.

#### **What's next?**

Last year industry saw huge growth in the popularity of Portugal's pastel de nata, custard tarts made with light, flaky pastry. These originated from Catholic monks and their use of egg whites for starching the fabric of their habits. To avoid wasting the yolks, the custard was made and the tarts followed. This year we can expect to see variants on this theme, perhaps filling the multi-layered tart with a light coffee mousseline or a soft lemon curd for a little variety.

Looking ahead to 2020, there will likely be more offerings in dark chocolate, with better-tasting and tempting fillings such as black cherry, caramel and bitterly sumptuous soft fruits. These treats will be designed to meet the need for lower sugar, vegan and organic consumers, but with all the taste and opulence consumers would want from a guilt-free treat.



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