Now Taste This

2017’s Evolving Trends and Hottest Ingredients
Overview

A quick background and introduction to IDEO
IDEO is a global design and innovation company. Our Design for Food studio focuses solely on innovating in the food and beverage space. Based in San Francisco, we are 25 food-loving designers with decades of experience rethinking the edible landscape.
Every year we like to attend the Fancy Food Show in January to see and taste new food and drink.

This year, our designers thought it would be interesting to look at how food trends have evolved over the last few years of the show and to synthesize that with what we hear from consumers in our project research.
We identified 7 interesting themes along with a few trending ingredients to whet your appetite in 2017.

Enjoy!
Trends don’t come and go with the drop of a hat—they gradually creep in, gain acceptance, evolve, and fade out. We looked at how past trends showed up at this year’s Fancy Food Show and how they evolved since we last saw them.
“Clean” is the new “natural.”

**Then**

“Natural” meant “better for me,” and “organic” was associated with “quality.”

**Now**

The term “clean” is being used to represent both “better for me” and “better quality” ingredients.
“Clean” gets called out.

In this vegan organic meal replacement drink, “clean” is front and center. Claimed to be the equivalent of a cold-pressed juice, a smoothie, a kombucha, and protein shake in one, these Eat Clean drinks highlight their use of the purest ingredients and processes to help fuel your body and mind.

Treats no longer get a free pass.

In past years, treats have gotten away with being more processed as they’re already a permissive indulgence. Now, the idea of eating “clean” has transcended into all areas of the kitchen, including natural baking sprinkles and caramels made from honey instead of corn syrup.
TRENDS #2

Sustainability is the main course.

THEN

Products gained consumers’ favor by telling their story of sustainable practices or environmental awareness.

NOW

More products are truly “walking the walk” by featuring previously wasted ingredients and using ultra-sustainable packaging.
TREND #2

Sustainability is the main course.

Food waste that is delicious.

Regrained Bars help fight food waste by using previously spent grains—a byproduct of beer making—as their main ingredient. ChicP is a British hummus company that uses rejected “ugly” produce to flavor its dips.

Tea bags become biodegradable.

Teapigs’ iconic “tea temples” packaging uses 100% biodegradable materials that were developed in Japan. Most tea bags on the market today are only 70-80% biodegradable.

Honey gets a bee-free alternative.

Bee Free Honee is a plant-based alternative to honey made from apples. They are looking to create awareness around the plight of the honey bee while also donating to bee research and innovation efforts. Save the bees, keep the honey.
Products go against the grain.

THEN

Paleo, Whole30, Atkins and other diets encouraged Americans to reduce carb intake by eliminating grains and gluten from their diets.

NOW

Products are getting more creative as stand-ins to replace carb-favorites to fit into these lifestyles.
TREND #3

Products go against the grain.

Gluten-free flour has fun.

Pereg offers a full line of all natural and gluten-free alternative flours ranging from seed- to fruit-based for all your grain- or gluten-free baking needs.

Pizza night and Taco Tuesday go grainless.

The popular Pinterest recipe for low-carb pizza can now be found ready-to-top in grocery stores, while there also is now an option available for grain-free, flour-like tortillas.

Grain-free grains are now possible.

Bob’s Red Mill shows us that no food is off-limits when it comes to being grain-free—even Muesli which is traditionally based on a mix of grains.
Protein goes ‘au naturel.’

Products highlighted the protein content in them—often fortified with isolated or concentrated versions.

Interest in the quality and source of protein is rising, and consumers are looking for more naturally protein-rich options.
Jerky expands beyond beef strips. Jerky has been revitalized in recent years with tons of new flavors and attention to craft. Now, the meat selections are not only extending with atypical meats like Salmon, Venison, and Beef Liver, but they’re also taking on new forms and snackable formats.

Bars get a savory tofu makeover. Baked Tofu Bars offer another alternative to cheese sticks or jerky when you’re looking for on-the-go protein snacking.

Cheese moves to the center of the plate. Packaged veggie burgers only recently began to improve in flavor. Now Halloumi, a Middle Eastern cheese, is another option for the growing popularity of meat alternatives on sandwiches and salads.
Vegetables get versatile.

**THEN**

Packaged snacks including vegetables were limited to baby carrot sticks.

**NOW**

Vegetables are becoming the star of a variety of snack options.
Soup is the new juice.

A natural progression of the juice trend, Zupa is a line of savory vegetable soups that are ready-to-sip. It’s “whole without the bowl.”

Vegetable smoothies become the norm.

Fruit & Veggie Blenders are a single blend of frozen, pre-cut fruits and vegetables for savvy consumers who are already sneaking veggies into their smoothies at home.

Fruit bars get veggie-fied.

The popular 2-3 ingredient, ultra-simple, That’s It fruit bars recently launched a new savory line based on beans and veggies.
TREND #6

Drink to your health.

THEN

Cold-pressed juice cleanses and kombuchas were the ultimate way to detox and be healthy.

NOW

Fermentation has spread beyond kombucha, and other enhanced beverages are making a mark.
**Vinegar—not just for salad anymore.**

Suja made a name for itself with the wave in popularity of cold-pressed juice. They’ve now combined their passion for juice with gut health, recently launching a line of flavorful Drinking Vinegars.

**Coconut water is brought to life.**

The popular Kombucha brand, GT’s, now offers a lightly fermented coconut water.

**Water goes electro-kinetic.**

Reliant Recovery Water is a new type of functional water. The secret? Added oxygen and minerals that supposedly helps you recover faster and reduce stress.
Trendsetters are hooking up.

**THEN**

Products would ride a wave—having a moment at its peak in popularity and then falling out of fashion.

**NOW**

A product can stay relevant longer by attaching itself to another trend, leveraging positive halos and associations.
Two alternative milks team up.

Soy, and then Almond milk, both saw a surge in popularity with people looking for dairy alternatives. Multnomah Falls puts the two favorites together, touting their complementary nutritional profiles.

Kale Chips, meet Bone Broth.

Kale Chips skyrocketed in popularity as a healthier alternative to potato chips. How could they be made even better? Kaleidoscope Foods coupled them unexpectedly with Bone Broth, known for its concentrated trace minerals associated with a range of health benefits.

Bone Broth, meet Apple Cider.

Kale: you’re not alone. Apple Cider is also jumping on the Bone Broth wagon. This ready-to-heat, wholesome beverage provides on-the-go nourishment.

Seaweed gets a sweet twist.

Seaweed has been in the spotlight for the last few years, traditionally sticking to the savory side of snacking. Until now. Ocean’s Halo Seaweed Strip introduces flavors like coconut, almond, and chocolate so that you can have the best of both worlds.
2017 Evolving Trends

1. “Clean” is the new “natural.”
2. Sustainability is the main course.
3. Products go against the grain.
4. Protein goes ‘au naturel.’
5. Vegetables get versatile.
6. Drink to your health.
7. Trendsetters are hooking up.

OVERVIEW
In addition to the 7 themes, there are a few individual ingredients that are all the craze. While some are having a moment in the spotlight—popping up across aisles in a range of products—others that were hot in the past few years have cooled off in popularity.
Teff

Teff is a tiny grain from Ethiopia that’s being called the “next Quinoa.” High in protein, iron, fiber, with tons of micronutrients, this versatile gluten-free grain can be eaten raw, steamed, boiled, or baked.

Maca

Rich in vitamins, minerals, and claimed to help with endurance, maca appeared in powder form, paired with chocolate in a ‘superfood’ bar, and even roasted and blended with water as a coffee alternative.

Hemp

Related to marijuana but not actually from the same plant, these rich and nutty seeds are nutritional powerhouses. Hemp seeds are complete proteins and contain essential fatty acids, fiber, and protein.

Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple Cider Vinegar is an ancient folk remedy for curing ailments with modern-day science to back up some of its true benefits. It’s known for lowering blood sugar levels and cholesterol along with reducing risk of heart disease.
HOT (OR NOT) INGREDIENTS

Still Hot

These ingredients have emerged as trendy ingredients in the past, and they’ve continued to stick around.

Coconut

Coconut is no new news—however, the way it’s been incorporated into new products has extended the length of its trend life.

Turmeric

Popular for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits, turmeric is showing up in new ways including as a flavor in lentil chips and “superfood” popcorn.

Matcha

Matcha has now gone mainstream in the beverage space, carried by the common coffee shop, but its use in new formats has brought the trend to life in new ways.
Not So Hot

While these ingredients had a moment, they are less “all the talk” than they once were.

Chia
A couple years ago, you could spot chia in pretty much every aisle of the Fancy Foods Show. It was in everything—from bars and cereals to yogurts and drinks. While you can still spot it, it’s not all the rage it was.

Acai
Acai was the hot superfood of a few years ago, showing up in popsicles, breakfast options, smoothies, and sambazon bowls. It’s now become more mainstream and lost the intense excitement it originally carried.

Insects
We thought insects were going to gradually gain steam with the appearance of Bitty Foods and Exxos last year. Nothing new has seemed to take hold...yet.
And we’re full.

Are you craving the latest food trends too?
We’d love to talk. Say hi to our team at

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