

54%

of operators say that LTOs are a central part of their business

Source: Datassential's Limited Time Offer Keynote Report

FOOD INDUSTRY TREND REPORT 2022 PUMPKIN SPICE SEASON

DATASSENTIAL'S TAKE:

Fall flavors are creeping earlier into summer every year, which continues to impact the flavors and offerings showing up on menus and retail shelves. Now a range of fall-themed LTOs and marketing messages have become big business for the industry.

We've said often over the past two-plus years how important innovation is in getting consumers excited about eating out and trying new things again, and in this era of economic contraction and high inflation, it's perhaps more important that ever.

According to our [Limited Time Offer Keynote Report](#), operators plan to release more LTOs this year than last, with more than half calling these menu items a core part of their business. While pumpkin spice, which is in the final Ubiquity stage of the trend cycle, has fallen 5% on menus in the last 12 months, there were still 174 pumpkin LTO releases at major chains last fall.

If pumpkin spice brings comfort, the other top fall flavors this year are following suit, as seen on the left. Spicy ginger is the only flavor that has remained in the top five from the year prior and follows a range of sweet-spicy and tart-spicy flavors that have been trending, from spicy margaritas to flavors like mango habanero.

But what about fall fruit? Apple was a popular choice last year, and apple options are still expected on menus this year. For a fresh take, many operators are considering citrus options. In our [TIPS Midyear Trend Report](#), we predicted that blood orange, a flavor that's grown 18% on menus over the last four years, will pop up on menus this fall and winter.

Dunkin', in fact, recently announced it will release a Blood Orange Refresher this fall. They will also introduce a Nutty Pumpkin Coffee (coffee with a pumpkin swirl and hazelnut shot) which will release with the full lineup (including the returning Pumpkin Cream Cold Brew, which is quickly becoming a default option on menus) on August 17. That's after a number of brands, including Cracker Barrel, Red Robin, and 7-Eleven, have already released their fall-themed menu items.

What should major brands stay away from? According to our [Limited Time Offer Keynote Report](#), operators should avoid becoming overly-reliant on discounting, focus on freshness first and seasonality second, and make new items easy to prepare for new or over-worked staff.

BEYOND PUMPKIN SPICE: OTHER FALL FLAVORS

TOP FIVE FALL FLAVORS

Which flavors index the highest on fall menus? These flavors either only appear on fall menus or are at least 10 times more likely to appear on fall menus:

SWEET

VIETNAMESE CINNAMON

SPICY GINGER

ALLSPICE

EGGNOG

PUMPKIN PIE

SAVORY

COCONUT MILK

"OKTOBERFEST"

MUSTARD CREAM

TURKEY GRAVY

CRANBERRY SAUCE

Source: Datassential INSIDER



38%
of consumers love or like blood orange



Blood Orange Paloma
Dave & Busters



45%
of consumers love or like ginger



Gingerbread Ice Cream
Braum's

Source: Datassential FLAVOR