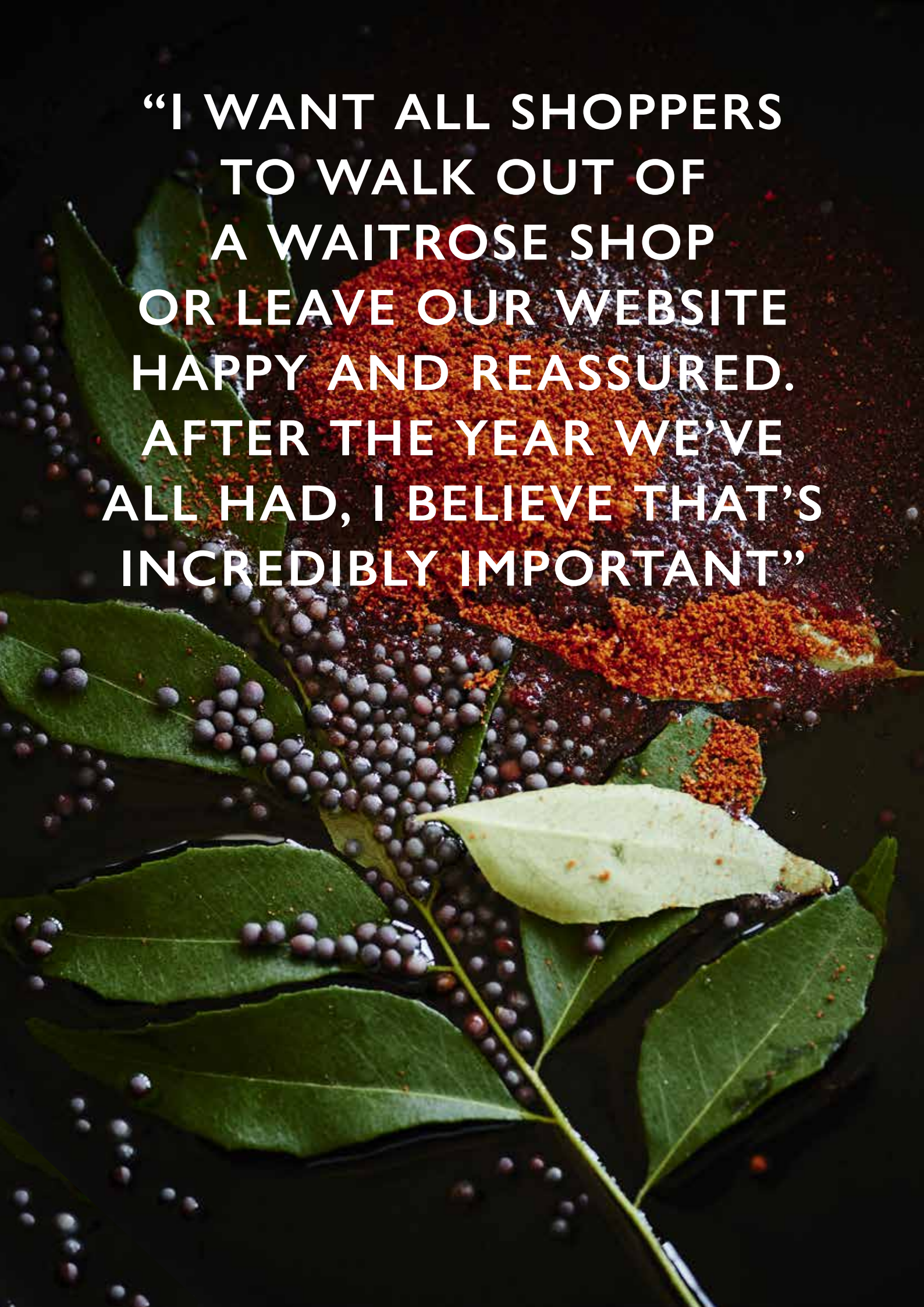




WAITROSE
& PARTNERS

FOOD & DRINK REPORT

2022-23



“I WANT ALL SHOPPERS
TO WALK OUT OF
A WAITROSE SHOP
OR LEAVE OUR WEBSITE
HAPPY AND REASSURED.
AFTER THE YEAR WE’VE
ALL HAD, I BELIEVE THAT’S
INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT”



Welcome to GENERATION RESILIENCE

It's been a year of highs – the Platinum Jubilee, Commonwealth Games and Women's Euros, reuniting with friends and family and finally taking those holidays postponed by the pandemic. But it's also been a year of extraordinary lows, with the Ukraine war and cost of living crisis. Then, on 8 September, the nation bid farewell to our much-loved sovereign, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and welcomed our new monarch, HM King Charles III.

Such seismic events have led to a year of seismic shifts. Most markedly, anxiety over rising inflation has increased, with 72% of our survey respondents telling us they are now 'more mindful' about their grocery budget.

After the toll of the pandemic, consumers will have likely started the year tired and pessimistic. Now adding to this stress were rising food, fuel, energy, rent and mortgage costs. According to one report*, in the 12 weeks to 2 October, grocery price inflation leapt to a record high, with the average household facing a £643 jump in their annual bill to £5,265 if they continued to buy the same items.

These events have created a difficult backdrop for many people and like all supermarkets we've had to judge the mood and react. We're seeing some big changes. Over a third of respondents told us they are 'shopping around more for offers'. A quarter are economising by 'making shopping lists and sticking to them', 23% switching to supermarket-own brands and 21% making thrifty swaps such as buying loose instead of packaged veg. Batch cooking and frozen food are also picking up steam as people keep tabs on their budgets.

We've been helping our customers to save, especially through our Essential Waitrose range and better promotions, and by upgrading our myWaitrose loyalty scheme to give weekly vouchers to our most frequent customers. We've also been suggesting ways to avoid food wastage and have recently introduced Super Saver recipes for under £2 a portion on waitrose.com.

Despite all this gloom, whenever opportunities for a release of pressure arrive, it's human nature to want to embrace them. Many people seek this through food –

after all, it's one of life's great pleasures, especially eating with and cooking for people you love.

Past experience says that if people can't afford to go out as much, they'll look for treat moments at home. As the nights draw in, we are likely to see an increase in sales of wine and spirits, premium desserts and bakery treats. But sometimes all you need is a good bar of chocolate to take the edge off – 46% of people said they are buying more sweet treats this year.

Another sea change in how we shop is seeing the profound effects that the pandemic, war and climate change have had on our food supply. More people are asking questions about where food comes from and, increasingly, the climate impact of what we eat. Animal and worker welfare are top concerns for around a quarter of people, and we have proudly led on both for decades. Regardless of economic headwinds, we will never compromise on this. In the short term, however, the hard reality is that budgeting will come first for most customers – 51% told us price is the key factor in choosing which products to buy.

Despite this, a large number also now understand the real cost of cheap food. We are very proud of the fact that our Essential Waitrose range comes with exceptionally high sourcing and welfare standards, giving customers who care an ethical option at a budget price.

As for 2023? Regretfully, we have no crystal ball. Instead we are doubling down on our mission with a new campaign called Food To Feel Good About. It's about being proud that we find only the best quality, most delicious food, and always at fair prices. It's about always asking more questions about food to find better and better ways to bring it to our customers. And it's about being proud that what we sell makes a positive difference to the world. I want all shoppers to walk out of a Waitrose shop or leave our website happy and reassured. After the year we've all had, I believe that's incredibly important.

I hope you enjoy the *Waitrose & Partners Food & Drink Report 2022-2023*.

JAMES BAILEY

Partner & Executive Director

*Kantar Worldpanel data, 11 October 2022

THE FACTS & FIGURES

Waitrose carried out extensive research into the top food and drink trends. We conducted OnePoll consumer research on a wide range of topics in early September 2022 with 2000 people across the UK of all ages – not exclusively Waitrose shoppers. The research is backed up with sales data from millions of purchases throughout the year. All sales figures are compared with the same period as the previous year, unless otherwise stated.

WHICH FOOD TRENDS WON THIS YEAR?

34%

Amount by which sales of fish heads increased – delicious in curries and stocks.

FORGOTTEN FOOD

It started with restaurants using meat such as cull yaw (old ewe) and retired dairy cow, ingredients that we have forgotten about. It then moved onto fish heads, collars and wings. Now this 'use it all' trend is hitting the mainstream – partly driven by economy and sustainability, but also by the rise of the slow cooker which makes cooking cheaper (often tougher) cuts a doddle. Sales of beef shin, ox cheek and lamb neck are up by 23%, 9% and 4% respectively. Sales of fish heads increased by an incredible 34%.

WHOLEFRUIT CHOCOLATE

Waitrose's exclusive new WholeFruit launch takes chocolate to another level. Unlike traditional bars which use only the seeds, WholeFruit uses the entire cacao fruit which gives a fruity, zesty taste with zero waste. It's healthier, too – each bar contains 40% less sugar.

GRILLED LETTUCE

Fire and smoke have long been used to create deep, caramelised flavours in foods. Now green grilling is picking up pace with charred broccoli and sprouts, even lettuce. Simply take one little gem and place in a hot pan with a splash of olive oil until the edges brown; serve with a twist of lemon.

RISE OF #NEXTOVERS

Not to be confused with leftovers (which are just yesterday's supper heated up and served again), nextovers are surplus ingredients turned into something completely different the next day. Check out TikTok for ideas galore. Grilled chicken breasts into stir fries, mashed potatoes into fish cakes, houmous into salad dressing... Anything goes!

WHIPPED FETA

Whipped feta burst into our lives this year thanks to TikTok (42.9 million views and counting). Now the creamy, crumbled cheese dip blended with olive oil, cream or yogurt is a firm fixture on the supermarket shelf, with sales up by 33% (May 2022 to June 2022), and searches for whipped feta recipes on waitrose.com up by a whopping 4,325% year on year!

CBD-INFUSED DRINKS

The more we've learned about CBD, the non-addictive compound found in cannabis that doesn't give you a high, the more we've become aware of its mental benefits in helping us to destress and focus. Next up: CBD-infused drinks launching in Waitrose this month, in flavours including blood orange and grapefruit, and elderflower and mint.

AGED FOOD

The centuries-old process of ageing food to boost its flavour and texture is currently enjoying a revival, with sales of dry-aged rib-eye and sirloin up by 17%, and Waitrose installing specialist ageing cabinets in 41 of its shops.

SWEET + SALTY = SWALTY!

Since the craze for salted caramel swept the nation a decade ago, we've seen a blurring between sweet, savoury and salty. Pip & Nut has recently added a sweet and salty peanut butter to its range, and our Sweet & Salty Popcorn is our bestselling flavour. More sweet dishes are being given a savoury spin, too – for example, Heston Blumenthal has created a savoury version of a festive classic for Waitrose this Christmas with his Fig & Pear Mince Pies in Triple Cheese Pastry.

FISH WEDNESDAYS

As the nation becomes more aware of the health implications of eating too much red meat, responsibly sourced fish is getting its moment in the sun. NHS guidelines recommend that we eat fish twice a week, including one portion of oily fish which is good for the heart. Waitrose has been making it easier for shoppers to make a midweek fishy switch with new dishes such as salmon meatballs (no meat, just little balls of fish), perfect with spaghetti.

WHO'S FOR A COCKTAIL?

You wouldn't normally put 'tea' and 'cocktails' in the same word, but thanks to some intrepid TikTokers who started spiking their herbal tea with spirits this summer, tea-infused cocktails are now trending, with the hashtag #teacocktail clocking up 1.5 million views on TikTok. Coming to a bar near you: Green Tea Marteanis, Lapsang Old Fashioneds and Camomile Collins.

...AND WHICH ONES LOST?

COLOUR-CODED MILK BOTTLE TOPS

We scrapped hard-to-recycle coloured bottle tops on all Essential Waitrose milk, replacing them with clear recyclable versions.

MUSTARD

Poor seed harvests in France led to shortages of Dijon mustard.

YEAST

So long, sourdough! DIY bread-making went by the wayside as the nation went back to work. Yeast sales are down 20%.

RUSSIAN VODKA

In light of Ukraine, we decided to take it off the shelves.

DISPOSABLE BARBECUES

The source of several serious wildfires in the UK this summer. In March we were one of the first supermarkets to remove them from shops.

CURRY MEAL KITS

People prefer to buy curry paste or scratch cook ingredients and customise as they've become more skilled in the kitchen.

PREPARED VEG

This year we removed some prepped vegetable lines such as sweet potato and celeriac, as more people economised by buying whole vegetables.

BEST BEFORE DATES

As the discussion around food waste ramped up, we ditched Best Before dates from all our packaged fruit and veg.



HOW COVID-19 CHANGED SHOPPING HABITS



Has the pandemic had a lasting effect on what we buy? We looked at the basket composition of a shopper in 2019 compared with 2022

2019 basket*

- Prepared vegetables
- Deli counter cheese
- Sandwiches and wraps
- Croissants and pains au chocolat
- Hosiery
- Traditional ready meals

COVID-19 upended our lives and shopping routines, but once things returned to normal this year, did we do so too? The short answer is no. In 2019 we were shopping little and often, and, while there are signs that is becoming increasingly the case as shoppers continue to adapt to the current economic challenges, data shows we are still doing bigger shops than before. The average basket size is now 15% higher than in 2019/20. This equates to 1.5 more items in our baskets. The 2022 basket shows how we are trying to be more health conscious – salad ingredients are up, along with fresh chicken and pre-packed fish. Yogurts and health drinks such as probiotic shots are more popular as we become more aware of gut health. But at times our best intentions slip – we’re buying more crisps, snacks, biscuits and chocolate than we did three years ago. With hybrid working now the norm, we’re seeing a decline in

office-ready hosiery, croissants and packaged sandwiches, but a rise in instant coffee and tea. And sushi is well on its way to overtaking sandwiches as the nation’s favourite grab-and-go lunch. The economy is also changing our baskets, with loose veg instead of prepared, and affordable cupboard staples such as tinned food (veg, meat and fish). Traditional ready meals are down as people cook more from scratch, perhaps a habit formed in the pandemic when people took to their kitchens. The number of households with pets rose from 45% in 2019 to 62% in 2022. As a consequence, our data showed pet food appearing in more baskets this year. Proving some things never change, however: Essential Waitrose Fairtrade Bananas took top spot in both 2019 and 2022. Found in 7% of baskets, they are the most common item people buy, closely followed by Essential milk and fresh tomatoes.

2022 basket*

- Loose vegetables
- Everyday cheese
- Sushi
- Crisps, chocolate and snacks
- Instant coffee
- Natural yogurt
- Pet food

*Based on an average basket composition. **Statista April 2022



THE AVERAGE BASKET SIZE IS NOW 15% HIGHER THAN IN 2019/20



When the Ukraine war began on 24 February this year, attention turned to global food supply. After all, Ukraine was known as the ‘breadbasket of Europe’. As a major supplier of corn, soybeans, rapeseed and sunflower seeds, there were questions over whether the invasion would lead to food shortages. Russia and Ukraine also account for 28% of the world’s wheat exports. As a consequence, prices of wheat rose steeply on the markets, impacting on costs for consumers. And it wasn’t just bread, biscuits, cereals and pasta. Grain is used in animal feed, affecting eggs, dairy and meat, as well as in beer and pet food. The knock-ons have been wide. Russia and Ukraine produce about 75% of the world’s sunflower oil exports. In April, Waitrose and other supermarkets were forced to temporarily limit cooking oil to two bottles per customer to ensure there was enough supply to go round. It led to some rapid rethinking across the industry. With sunflower oil a key ingredient in everything from mayonnaise to crisps, biscuits and ready meals (even cosmetics), many food manufacturers had to rethink their formulations and find alternatives. Rising energy bills, pandemic supply chain issues, post-Brexit labour shortages and export delays, as well as price hikes in fertilisers and red diesel, have also piled extreme pressure onto UK food prices this year. Farmers, producers and supermarkets have been battling wave after wave of increased costs while working hard not to pass them all on to their customers. At Waitrose, we have responded to the crisis affecting our suppliers with extra support, including for our pig and chicken farmers.

A final challenge to food prices this year came with extreme weather. Two casualties of summer’s heatwave were Spanish olives and olive oil. Spain produces nearly half the world’s supply. UK farmers have also felt the effects. We have quickly taken steps to support fresh produce suppliers worst hit by the drought and help them get as much produce as possible to market. We bolstered our A Little Less Than Perfect wonky fruit and vegetable range and diverted millions of misshapen carrots and other veg into own-label soups, ready meals and smoothies, ensuring no food that’s good to eat is wasted. Paul Bidwell, Waitrose Partner & Fresh Produce Buyer, says: “Our Little Less Than Perfect range is nothing new – we’ve done it for years. But we constantly look at ways we can support our farmers through challenging conditions, and often that means altering our specifications. “Many of our UK suppliers have managed through the drought thanks to back-up water supplies from reservoirs or rain water capture systems, so we’ve focused our efforts on those that need the most help. What’s in store may look a little different at times, but it will always represent the same great quality, taste and high standards that our customers are used to.” We’ve also created a new brand promise, Food To Feel Good About, making sure our food is both sensitively priced and high in quality. Our primary focus has been the Essential Waitrose range. This features more than 1,000 products, including outdoor-bred pork, free range milk and responsibly sourced fish fingers, and helps customers shop on a budget without compromising on quality.

UNITED WITH UKRAINE

The brutal Ukraine war is beyond comprehension, and its reverberations have been felt worldwide

Swap...

Sunflower oil for vegetable oil – both can be used in frying, baking and roasting.

Vegan meat substitute seitan for soy-based tofu and tempeh. Seitan is made of gluten, the protein found in wheat.

Olive oil for vegetable oil in cooking, or grapeseed or avocado oil if you’re drizzling it on a salad.

£1.6m

The amount Waitrose customers and Partners raised for the British Red Cross to support Ukraine.



RUSSIA AND UKRAINE produce 28% of the world’s wheat exports + 75% of the world’s sunflower oil exports.



SPAIN produces nearly half the world’s supply of olives and olive oil.





Trend one

THE THRIFTY KITCHEN

As the going got tough this year, the nation got savvy – with bargains, batch cooking and cheap and cheerful traybakes

We are living in an age of flux: rising food prices, climate challenges and a shifting political stage (at home and abroad). So it's no surprise that more than a third of our 2022 survey respondents told us they were 'very concerned' about how the rising cost of living would affect them in the coming months.

Our research found that people are becoming more budget conscious, seeking out ways to save on their weekly grocery bills: 72% admitted they are now more mindful about what they're spending, and over a third said they are 'shopping around for bargains'. 27% have taken to planning their meals in advance. Nearly a quarter of people told us

63%
of respondents say they 'feel guilty about food wastage'.

they have 'switched to supermarket own brands' for their basics. James Bailey says, "At Waitrose we have responded to the crisis by doubling down on our good food promise. We believe budgeting shouldn't mean compromise and are proud that our Essential range delivers not just on price, but on quality and taste."

CANNY COOKS
This year is also about finding thrifty alternatives – for example, our survey found that more than a third (32%) are choosing vegetable oil instead of olive oil and 21% are buying loose fruit and vegetables rather than bagged to avoid buying more than they need. 45% would consider buying less meat for budget reasons.

Canned food has seen an uptick. While sales of pilchards more than doubled in thrifty January, it's Spam that has been the comeback king of 2022. Sales of the canned pork and ham are up by 36% and searches for waitrose.com's recipe for 'Spam' fritters with crushed peas have risen by 82%. Love it or loathe it, it's clear this wartime favourite is back to stay.

A few items have also been set aside from shopping lists, for now. Some people said they're making 'little downgrades', the most popular being swapping chicken breasts for thighs to make equally tasty but economical midweek traybakes, and substituting artisan loaves for the humble sliced white loaf (sales are up 17%).

Yellow stickered food has also been rising in popularity, with 1 in 4 people saying they like to keep an eye out for money-off bargains. Others have been looking for more inventive ways to cut costs. After butter prices saw a hike in July, partly due to skyrocketing world oil prices, online searches for #HomemadeButter saw a 407% increase.

If making butter feels too ambitious, try batch cooking, which is booming especially among older millennials (aged 35-44). Ruling the roost is food writer Elly Curshen, aka @ellypear, who regularly posts money-saving tips on meal prep and how to use leftovers to her 76,000 (and rising) followers.

On that note, frozen food is also picking up steam, with 39% putting their

39%
have been putting their freezer to work more this year.

SOME 72% ARE NOW MORE MINDFUL ABOUT WHAT THEY'RE SPENDING, AND OVER A THIRD SAID THEY ARE SHOPPING AROUND FOR DISCOUNTS

freezer to work more this year. Not only is freezing a healthy option that 'locks in' vitamins, minerals and flavours, it's also cost-effective and convenient. Leading the pack are our comfort food classics fish pie, lasagne and mac and cheese.

WAR ON WASTE

Frozen food also touches on another rising concern: food waste – 63% say they 'feel guilty about food wastage', with over half now making a concerted effort to check what they already have in their fridge before they hit the supermarket.

"This isn't a new issue but it has been finding a new voice and urgency recently," says James Bailey. "As food banks and charitable demand for food has increased, so the imperative to make sure good edible food isn't wasted increases.

And as customers' budgets are squeezed, making sure you don't waste the food you do buy will become more important."

People are trusting their noses more – albeit something the younger generation (aged 18-24) have been keener to adopt, with 25% saying they now ignore Best Before dates. In August this year, we responded to this trend by removing unnecessary dates on nearly 500 of our fresh fruit and vegetables.



+16%

Tarte aux fruits



+30%

Melt-in-the-middle chocolate pudding



+45%

Raspberry meringue roulade



+17%

Lemon tart



+6%

Rice pudding

Trend two

EDIBLE ESCAPIISM

The key to happiness in 2022? An indulgent sofa supper, a dish with an exotic twist... and the pudding effect!

People might be budgeting more, but they're still making time for little indulgences. In fact, nearly a third (30%) of our survey respondents confessed they're buying even more treats!

Treating isn't confined to Saturday night splurges either. Even midweek, a long hard day often calls for a nice dish or snack to lift the spirits. Of the things that are slipped into the shopping basket, posh crisps and nuts top the bill, with 47% of respondents buying them regularly, closely followed by a nice bar of chocolate or a decadent pudding (46% of respondents), a houseplant or cheery bunch of flowers (39%) and a bottle of wine (36%).

With one eye on our waistlines, air fryers – versatile mini ovens which use less oil than frying – have long been seen as a way to cook healthier treats. But when reports emerged of them being more economical than ovens in the face of soaring energy bills, air fryer mania hit Britain in late August. On 24 August, sales of air fryers were up 56% year on year on johnlewis.com.

As autumn set in, it was a return to our homebody habits honed during the pandemic. But while nearly half (46%) of our respondents now eat at home more, they still like to make nights in front of Strictly a special occasion – 21% like to

WHILE NEARLY HALF (46%) OF OUR RESPONDENTS NOW EAT AT HOME MORE, THEY STILL LIKE TO MAKE WEEKEND NIGHTS IN FEEL SPECIAL

cook something nice from scratch and a similar number said they prefer to 'choose a meal that needs little or no prep and a good bottle of wine'. 'Gourmet comfort food' is not surprisingly the number one choice – a creamy curry, macaroni cheese or shepherd's pie.

Comfort food may be firmly in the nation's heart, but our survey also shows that we are still hungry for new tastes, with 31% expressing a desire to try new cuisines, and many admitting to popping something new in their shopping basket when they're browsing just because 'they're curious about what it tastes like'. As a result, Mexican was this summer's grilling go-to, with barbacoa steaks, supersized slow-cook kebabs and lashings of chipotle cheese stars of many a barbecue. Sales of Waitrose's new truffle burgers and truffle-infused brioche buns also flew.

More people are cooking from scratch more than ever before. Reflecting this rise, we have expanded our range of Cooks' Ingredients to over 450 ingredients, helping customers to add more exotic and mouthwatering flavours to their cooking in an affordable and easy way. Trending ingredients include a South Indian-inspired Gunpowder Spice – just a pinch will transport you to a different corner of the world without breaking the bank.

The pudding effect

Retailers call it the 'lipstick effect' – the act of people cheering themselves up with cheap little treats in times of hardship. At Waitrose we're calling it the 'pudding effect' – nearly a quarter (24%) of our survey respondents (aged 18-24) told us they like to treat themselves to a nice dessert at weekends. Here are the sweet treats trending now...

Top 3 bestselling desserts at Waitrose

- Custard tart
- Chocolate éclairs
- Cappuccino mousse

Trend three

VIDEO GOES VIRAL

Crunch, slurp, chomp, gobble – this year it's *all* about noisy food!

100bn+

Number of views clocked worldwide by videos on #FoodTikTok. Hits included cloud bread (3bn views), feta pasta (1.1bn) and dalgona coffee (583m).

Pizza toast, jam and sparkling water, corn ribs: when it comes to food and drink trends, TikTok rules supreme, although you have to be quick to keep up! More than half (51%) of all 18-24 year olds in our survey told us they have taken to the platform for foodie inspiration this year.

In 2022, video content is king, with #FoodTikTok racking up a staggering 100 billion views globally. It led to Instagram deciding it wanted a piece of the action, switching its algorithm to favour

videos. But after a barrage of powerful influencers – including Kim Kardashian – complained that videos were ‘cluttering up their feeds and stopping them from seeing their friends’, it quickly u-turned.

And what are people posting? While traditional recipe ‘how-to’ videos by cooks and bloggers still rule, increasingly it’s more about ordinary people becoming ‘kitchen counter chefs’ and sharing their own exploits. A clever hack they saw online. A Sunday batch cook. A street vendor ‘chopping’ ice cream. Unboxing and tasting a buzzworthy new product. Anything goes, just try not to be Fanny Cradock! 🤪

As people discover social media’s increasing array of editing tools, videos are also becoming more creative. Enter an old friend, ASMR, short for ‘autonomous sensory meridian response’, a tingling sensation some people get when watching placid sights and sounds such as whispers, accents and crackles, and likened to a ‘brain massage’. It’s a trend that has been around since 2010 but one that’s making its way into the mainstream in 2022.

Treating yourself to an ultimate cheese toastie that’s so good you want to show it off? Why not film it: show the ‘scratch’ of buttering the toast, the ‘squelch’ of the filling, the ‘pull’ of the melted cheese and the satisfying crunch when you finally bite into it. Mmmm!



Trend four

LESS BUT BETTER

Welcoming in a more considered approach to food

Quality over quantity definitely seems to be a mantra of 2022, with our survey respondents stating they were buying ‘less but better meat’ ‘for budget and for health reasons’. It follows that EatFlexi – our delicious range of dishes and products such as sausages and meatballs that contain half meat, half plant protein – expanded its range this October.

This trend for moderation is becoming the norm in social occasions too, with the rise in popularity of no or low-alcohol spirits, wine and beer. While the younger 18-24 crowd seem to be spearheading the trend at 45%, there are signs that it is filtering up to the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups too, with 33% and 31% respectively admitting they had bought no or low this year.

Health has been hitting the headlines recently due to new government legislation to tackle childhood obesity, which means retailers must

make certain changes to where they display foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS). That explains why in recent months some customers have seen their supermarket aisles shuffled around so that HFSS goods are no longer at the front of the store or at the end of aisles.

We’ve also reacted to customer demand by expanding our healthy food ranges (see Foods with benefits, p14, for more info). Our Good Health label, a handy shortcut which indicates if a product is healthy, is now on 1,600 products. And we’ve also been reformulating products over the past 15 years to gradually reduce sugar, calories, fat and salt content without compromising on taste.

Meanwhile, the food industry is carrying out wholesale recipe reformulations to familiar foods – and soon you may be seeing healthier alternatives to your favourite cakes, crisps, sweets and biscuits.

EAT Flexi:

Thrive:



91% of Waitrose own-brand products now meet the government’s 2024 calorie reformulation targets.

32% of our survey respondents say they only choose foods that are low in sugar and fat.

27% say lowering their cholesterol is a health priority and 26% lowering blood pressure.



13m

Number of followers Sam Way (@samseats) has on social media, making him the undisputed king of food ASMR.



Trend five

FOODS WITH BENEFITS

As the nation becomes more nutritionally savvy, foods with health-giving promises fly

One thing the pandemic has done is make many people prioritise their health and wellbeing. When asked what was the key to happiness, 'being healthy' topped the list, with 'spending time with friends and family' a close second.

In fact, 34% of our survey respondents told us they now try to eat 'more healthily' most of the time. The reasons behind this are varied. Over half (53%) are choosing better diets to improve their health and 32% say they are eating well 'to live longer.'

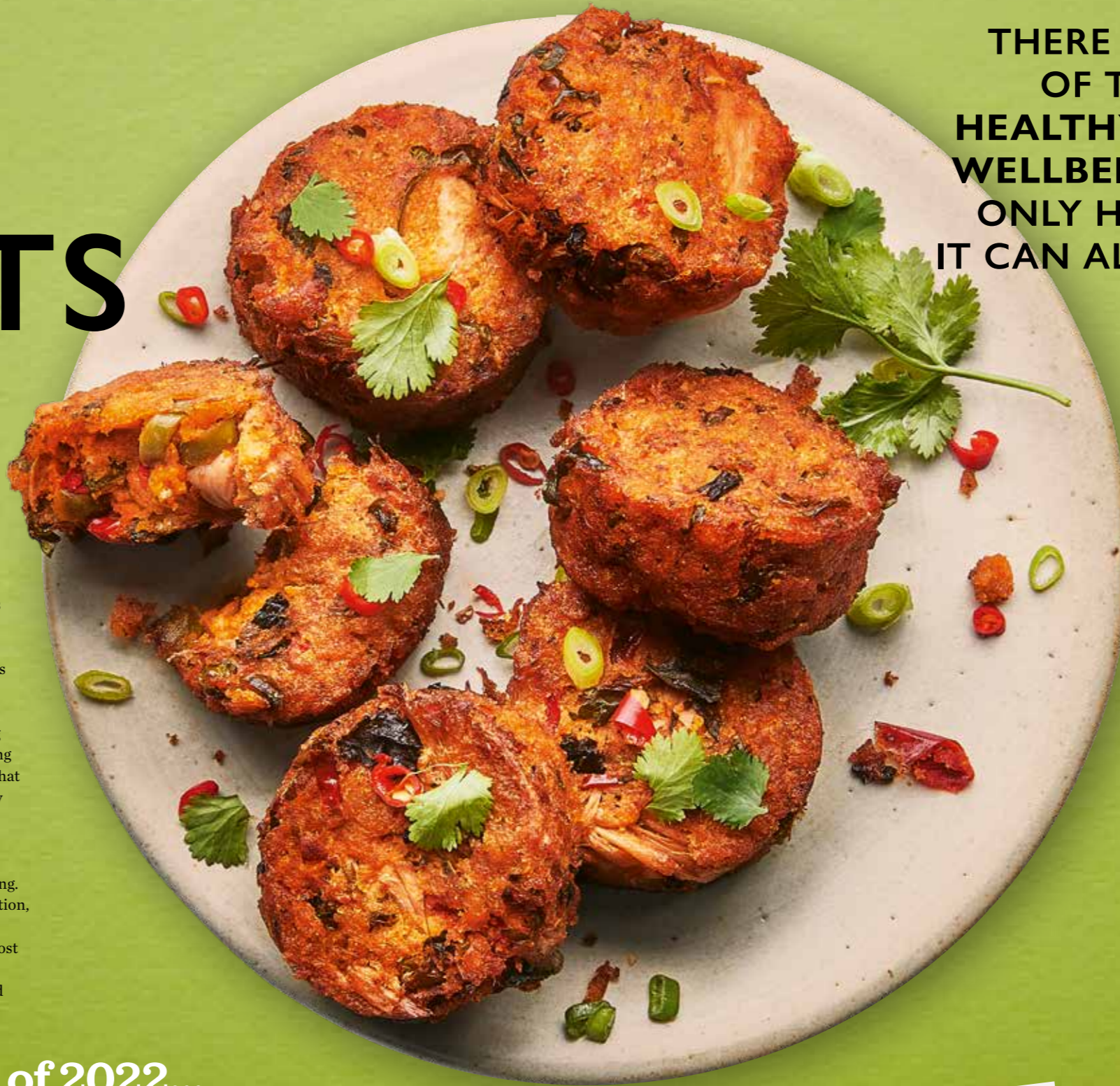
It's clear that people are becoming more nutritionally savvy. Over half (56%) are looking at the ingredients on a label before they decide to buy a product, and more than a third (36%) admit to having bought something that promises a specific health benefit in the past six months.

We've been listening. In the last

year we've expanded our Holistic Living ranges (Thrive, GoVeggie, PlantLiving, EatFlexi and Gut Health) to include more flavour innovations. As a result, sales have collectively grown 74% in the past year, with dishes such as PlantLiving Rainbow Vegetable Fritters, EatFlexi British Beef, Mushroom & Mozzarella Burgers and GoVeggie Aubergine & Feta Burgers all selling well.

With new research continuing to highlight the benefits of looking after our gut, it's not surprising that 40% of respondents also say they like to choose foods that 'keep their gut healthy'. There is more awareness of the link between a healthy gut and mental wellbeing. Food can not only help our digestion, it can also lift our mood.

As a result, prebiotics (that boost your gut bacteria) are catching on, especially prebiotic shots and



THERE IS MORE AWARENESS OF THE LINK BETWEEN A HEALTHY GUT AND MENTAL WELLBEING. FOOD CAN NOT ONLY HELP OUR DIGESTION, IT CAN ALSO LIFT OUR MOOD

flaxseed to sprinkle over porridge. Food and drinks containing probiotics (that contain good gut bacteria) are also popular. Waitrose is making this easier for customers by expanding its Gut Health range to include even more tempting options, from kefir yogurts to berry granola, apple and pear juice, fruit smoothies and fig, pumpkin seed and quinoa bread.

The more food-adventurous among our respondents are already on board with this trend. Apple cider vinegar is having a moment, delicious drizzled over salads or added to water for a refreshing tonic. Sales of fermented food and drinks such as kimchi (a Korean pickle) are up by 25% and kombucha (fermented tea) by 20%. A 2022 hit has been our launch of Real Royal Flush, an innovative new kombucha fermented into a sophisticated non-alcoholic sparkling wine, now a fixture at many a dinner party.

Another interesting consequence of our increased interest in health is that fat is back – or rather, good unsaturated fats found in plant oils, nuts and seeds, as opposed to saturated fats found in red meat, dairy and processed food. Cue the return of flavoured fats such as Cooks' Ingredients frozen miso and smoked butters – your jacket potato will never be the same again.

And for busy people who want to be healthy but crave convenience, we've also got that covered. In January we were the first major food retailer to team up with Mindful Chef to offer affordable, nutritionist-approved recipe boxes.

Hot health ingredients of 2022...

Thrive frozen ready meals
+131%
Healthier ready meals are a midweek go-to.



Waitrose Gut Health Natural Kefir Yogurt
+51%
Driven by the rise in gut health awareness.

Essential Waitrose Chilled Oat Drink
+46%
Alternative milks are still trending upwards.



Waitrose Ginger Shots
+24%
An instant hit of antioxidants and immune- and gut-boosting ingredients.

Multivitamins
+19%
People are moving back to multivitamins rather than specific vitamins for ease.

Sports nutrition
+14%
People are hitting the gym again after the pandemic.



Health drinks with added protein and whey
+12%
Body-boosting refreshments for post-workout.

Stress and sleep products
+8%
Partly driven by growth in magnesium supplements as people look to counteract tiredness.

Trend six

GLOBAL CITIZEN

The effects of climate change were felt closer to home, making us more aware of where our food comes from

This was the year that climate change became impossible to ignore. With extreme weather affecting all four corners of the world, from the destructive heatwaves of India, the UK and Europe to the devastating floods of Pakistan, shoppers in 2022 grew more conscious of the wider world and how we all have an impact on it.

“These events have exposed more people to the reality of where their food comes from,” says James Bailey. “Just reading about sunflower oil shortages this spring, or why wheat has doubled in price, raises awareness.” More than a third (36%) of our survey respondents tell us they are now ‘extremely concerned’ about climate change.

“The Partnership has always been and will always be a very purpose-driven organisation,” says Bailey. “I think for food businesses this will become increasingly important as consumers learn more about the cost of cheap food and its impact on the environment. The food system is responsible for maybe one third of all climate change and a halving in global biodiversity, yet one third of all the food produced is wasted.”

GOING GLOCAL

People are becoming more aware of the ‘carbon counts’ of food, judging how far it has flown to get here, whether it uses lots of water or if it burps out greenhouse gas methane. A new buzzword is Glocal, the term for thinking globally but eating locally. This is marked by an increasing interest in locally grown food and drink, such as Mermaid, Tarquin’s, Salcombe and Hattier Egremont rums and gins which hail from Devon, Cornwall and the Isle of Wight.

While price is understandably a governing factor in choosing which product to buy, more respondents are also interested in taste and quality. They want to know the story behind what they’re buying, and if the workers were paid fairly (22%) or the animals were looked after (28%). We have been busy in this area, pledging a series of groundbreaking initiatives.

One key priority is animal welfare. We have gone further than industry standards and pledged that our dairy cow herds can roam freely for more than half the year in grassy fields. And we have supported UK pig

farmers who, struck by rising costs, have been struggling to stay afloat. “We work with 250 dedicated farms that are able to rear and look after the pigs to our standard of ‘outdoor bred’,” says James Bailey. “This year we’ve invested more than £16 million into fair pricing and challenged other supermarkets to do the same for theirs.”

It’s not just about happy animals, but happy people, too. This is the key message in the Waitrose and John Lewis Partnership’s ‘Working in Partnership for a Happier World’ 2022 pledge. By treating its Partners fairly and inclusively, the business will be more productive and collaborative, which in turn will help do its bit to create a better society. Reacting to the cost of living crisis, the John Lewis Partnership is helping Partners over the Christmas period by offering perks including bonuses and free lunches.

ACTION ON PACKAGING

Sustainability is also a priority. When it comes to packaging, we’re still on target for all our own-label food packaging to be recyclable, reusable or home compostable by 2023. It’s a concern that’s very much top of your minds too – more than a third (35%) of survey respondents said they are prepared to put things back if there is too much packaging.

Continuing the fight against single-use plastic, this year we banished coloured milk bottle tops for easier-to-recycle clear ones. We also worked with fashion designer Anya Hindmarch, one of the first anti plastic bag campaigners, to create a longer-lasting bag for life.

Last but not least, we’re using our Hampshire farm, the Leckford Estate, as a test bed for regenerative farming, a way of growing food that also boosts the environment. Here we aim to trial new innovations to help us become net zero by 2035, including a groundbreaking biomethane facility that will capture methane going into the Earth’s atmosphere (from animal manures, for example) and use it for biofuel.

We’re only just getting started, but our efforts are already being noticed. In February this year, we came joint first in Which? magazine’s list of most sustainable supermarkets, which looked at emissions as well as plastic and food waste.



Zero

Sales of the world’s first carbon neutral potato, Root Zero, have grown steadily in the first six months.

2

wrap-free bouquets eliminated single-use plastics for Mother’s Day.

550k

beauty product empties diverted from landfill through the John Lewis BeautyCycle scheme.

40m

fewer bags estimated to be produced annually by removing 10p bags for life.

22.18%

reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across our operations.

“WE WORK WITH 250 DEDICATED FARMS THAT ARE ABLE TO REAR AND LOOK AFTER PIGS TO OUR STANDARD OF OUTDOOR-BRED”

JANUARY

#Regenuary

We've all heard of Veganuary, but what about #Regenuary? Campaigners think that concentrating on not eating meat is distracting us from tackling the most urgent climate problem: the impact all our food choices have on the planet, meat or not. UK farming is a major driver of biodiversity loss, so Regenuary wants to encourage people to choose seasonal produce from farms that have lower (or more beneficial) environmental or social impacts for a month.

FEBRUARY

#GratedEgg

Ever wondered what it was like to shave an egg? Well, thanks to some creative bloggers, you need wonder no longer. Grated boiled egg recipes, including mashed avocado on toast topped with a fluffy cloud of egg, took off on social media in February, and the hashtag #GratedEgg racked up over 32 million views on TikTok.



MARCH

#StanleyTucci

Stanley Tucci's much-anticipated series **Searching For Italy** finally aired in the UK in March. The A-list actor, who became a viral hit in lockdown posting weekly Quarantini cocktails, travelled the country uncovering the secrets of Italy's regional dishes. The series renewed our wanderlust after two years of travel disruption, and it also renewed our love for Italian cuisine. Searches for cacio e pepe, a cheese and pepper sauce recommended in one episode, were up 150%, and spaghetti alla carbonara up 52%. The hashtag #StanleyTucci clocked over 114 million views on TikTok.

APRIL

#DIYEasterTree

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas – but at Easter. Waitrose saw a year-on-year rise in Easter-themed crackers and wreaths as people embraced this holiday period to entertain friends and family after years of lockdown. But it was the Easter tree that captured most people's hearts. Pinterest saw a 102% year-on-year growth in searches for 'DIY Easter tree', while John Lewis also saw an uptick, with sales up 65%. TikTokers took the celebration one step further, digging out their festive tinsel trees.

THE YEAR IN #HASHTAGS

Take a trip down social media memory lane...

MAY

#HealthyCoke

When influencers began sharing videos of sparkling water with balsamic vinegar and swearing it tastes just like the real-deal Coca-Cola but healthier, many were sceptical. Which only added to the hype – at the last count, the trend had racked up over 87.2 million views on TikTok.



JUNE

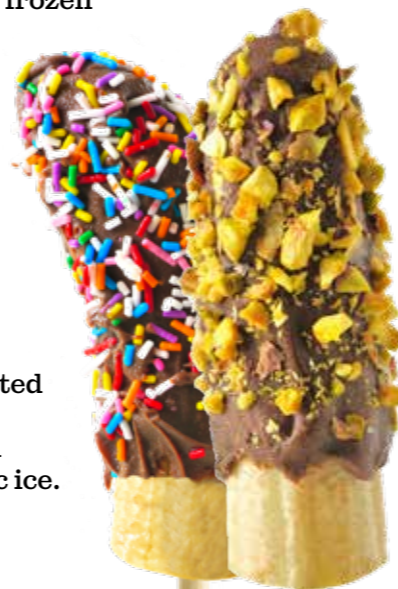
#Marmalade

Who knew Paddington Bear and our late Queen shared a love of marmalade sandwiches! Searches for marmalade rose by 46% in the week after the Platinum Jubilee, when Her Majesty mischievously revealed she kept a sandwich in her handbag. It touched a nation, so much so that grieving crowds outside Buckingham Palace momentarily started leaving Paddingtons and sandwiches among the floral tributes before her funeral.

JULY

#FrozenFruit

As the UK sweltered in record-breaking 40°C heat, searches for frozen fruit started to climb, particularly for frozen watermelon, peaking in July with a 116% increase on the previous month. Frozen bananas were also a social media hit, especially dipped into melted chocolate and on a stick for an alternative choc ice.



AUGUST

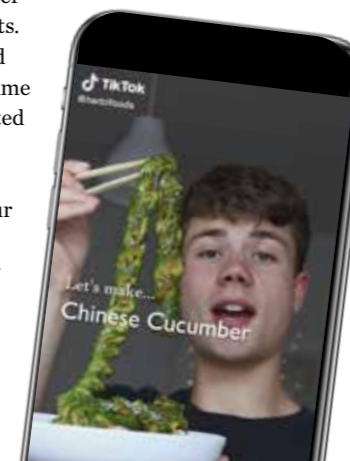
#Buttertok

When butter prices soared in the summer, people took to social media to post DIY butter recipes, chefs rushed to show how it could pep up almost any dish and influencers spread butter onto charcuterie boards and called them 'butter boards'. #Buttertok was born and we were treated to a whole new world of flavours, from Marmite to sundried tomato, seaweed and even chocolate, delicious on toast!

SEPTEMBER

#Cucumber Salad

2022 saw the humble cucumber catapulted into the culinary spotlight with an explosion of Asian-inspired salads marinated in spicy sesame soy dressings. But it was how the cucumbers were presented – cut into Slinky-like spirals – that took social media by storm with over 256 million views on TikTok. To try the trend, cut the ends off a cucumber and place it between two chopsticks (to prevent you slicing all the way through the cucumber). Cut down the length of the cucumber at a 45° angle. Flip over and make straight cuts. Pour a mix of crushed garlic, soy sauce, sesame oil, rice vinegar, toasted sesame seeds, red pepper flakes and brown sugar over your cucumber and leave in the fridge for a few hours to infuse.



OCTOBER

#PumpkinSpice

The Americanisation of Halloween shows no signs of slowing, with the rise of pumpkin spice – a mix of cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg and sometimes cloves or allspice (and curiously, no pumpkin). It started off as a flavouring for pumpkin pies but now appears in all manner of Halloween treats. While some loathe it, many more love it. In fact, pumpkin spice season kicks off every summer with the numbers of people searching for it online increasing by 174% (August-September). It then shoots up again by another 83% (September-October). Wondering what all the fuss is about? Try a more sophisticated take with John Whaite's pumpkin spice latte cake recipe on waitrose.com.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN DRINKING

Drinks with a kick, sustainable tipples and speaking wine – cin cin!

This year the trend for 'mindful drinking' gathered pace with people choosing to drink less but better alcohol, or none at all. In fact, 30% of our survey respondents confirmed they bought low and no-alcohol drinks in the past 12 months. "Just like we're seeing with food, people are becoming more discerning about their drink choice," says Pierpaolo Petrassi, Waitrose Partner & Master of Wine. It's led to the rise in premium spirits, including aged drinks such as whisky, brandy and rum, which offer more complex flavours and a more satisfying sip.

R&TS ARE THE NEW G&TS

Big on the bar scene and hopping over onto our drinks trolleys is white rum – we have seen a 107% uplift in sales. In fact, the UK is now officially the third largest rum market in the world. The reason for its success? Because it's so versatile – you can mix any kind of rum with anything, from Coke to coconut water, not forgetting the all-important splash of tonic.

BOOZE FROM THE BIN

In the fight against food waste, watch out for an explosion of innovative new sustainable drinks brands using leftovers. Toast's pale ale is brewed with stale bread from bakeries, Discarded's grape-skin vodka uses fruit recovered from winemaking, and Dash Water adds wonky veg to its spring water (up 247% year on year). Expect to see more 'drinkventions' as brands look for ever-more sustainable tipples to tempt us.

LE VIN IN A TIN

Canned drinks have been trending for a while now, but wine in a can was always a slow burner as challenges in production often meant the taste could be patchy. Not any more. As bigger wineries get on board and new techniques are mastered, there is now a wider range of qualities, grape varieties and styles. "This small category is quite exciting and buoyant," confirms Barry Dick, Waitrose Partner & Master of Wine. "Convenient and sustainable, aluminium cans are easier to recycle than glass, and lighter to transport. They're a perfect grab-and-go drink or for when you don't want to open a full bottle of wine."

THE FUTURE'S FIZZY

As more people look for non-alcoholic drinks, they're turning to sparkling water, but dressing it up in new and inventive ways. Add a drop of Angostura cocktail bitters or a dash of 'posh squash' to your drink – sales are up by 4%, with elderflower and raspberry and lemon cordials leading the way. Or try the viral TikTok trend and mix in a spoonful of your favourite jam for a fruity hit. Alcohol is also getting in on the act with hard seltzers. Sales of White Claw – fizzy water, alcohol and a hint of fruit – are up by 93%.

IRISH WHISKEY

After decades in the doldrums, Irish whiskey is now seeing a resurgence, with an 8% uplift in sales. It is cleaner and lighter in taste than its smokier, peat-flavoured Scotch whisky rival, so it's great for mixing and the perfect soulmate to ginger ale. All this has made the drink a hit with millennials (aged between 26-41) who are driving this trend.

WINE LABELS THAT TALK TO YOU

Not sure what a wine tastes like? Or what food to pair it with? QR codes are the new way for wine and spirit brands to suggest pairings or cocktail recipes. Some go even further. 19 Crimes, with a name inspired by the British convicts transported to Australia for a life of hard labour, has labels that come to life to tell you about the history of the wine, using Augmented Reality.

AS SEEN ON THIS YEAR'S BAR TROLLEYS – RUM AND TONIC, SPICY ROSÉ AND BOOZE FROM THE BIN



PIERPAOLO PETRASSI

Partner & Master of Wine

"Just like with food, people are becoming more discerning about their drink choice.

Shoppers are thirsty for information: to learn about the origins of what they're drinking, the people behind it and how it might be helping the planet."

Move over gin... Hello tequila!

Is our obsession with gin over? "We're seeing a decline in gin compared to 2019, in particular in flavoured gin which was a big trend five years ago," says Waitrose Partner & Spirits Buyer John Vine. And the new contender snapping at its heels? "Tequila – sales have doubled in size (up 116%) from 2020 to 2021."

AND THE WINE BOTTLE OF THE FUTURE?

According to Barry Dick, there will be subtle changes to the materials used in wine packaging, as well as to our buying behaviours. "The role of ancillary packaging, such as the plastic capsule that covers a cork-stoppered glass bottle – in truth, these don't do much other than make a bottle look attractive, so their role will be questioned."

We're already seeing more sustainable innovations such as lighter-weight wine bottles, as well as glass bottles being produced using renewable energy. Our buying repertoire will change too as we feel more confident to buy wine in cans and boxes, motivated by their lower carbon footprints as well as the much improved quality and choice of these formats. "It means we will be much more mindful about keeping wine in a glass bottle for those really special occasions," adds Barry.

SPICY ROSÉ

It was the viral TikTok hit of summer – add a few slices of jalapeños (fresh or pickled) to your favourite rosé for a surprisingly refreshing, slightly spicy summer drink. Online searches for jalapeños spiked in July, up by 40%.

CORKS INSTEAD OF SCREWCAPS

Corks are set for a big comeback. While we favoured screw caps back in the 90s due to the unreliable performance of corks, larger cork producers have now found a way round this. Corks have an almost impossibly positive role on the environment. Among a myriad of good news stories, they actually soak up CO₂.



1

Postbiotics

As people become more interested in gut health, we will see a new biotic on the block: postbiotics. But what do all of them actually do, and why are they so special? Very simply, prebiotics help feed the beneficial bacteria – called ‘probiotics’ – inside your gut. You can encourage this by eating more probiotic fibre (such as our Gut Health bread and kefir). Probiotics then create certain compounds which help promote good physical and mental health. These compounds are called ‘postbiotics’ and they work in tandem in pre and probiotics in helping support the immune system.

2

Frauxmage

Vegan cheese has come on in leaps and bounds in recent years. Leading the pack is plant-based cheesemonger La Fauxmagerie whose artisan varieties made using traditional techniques are equally as superior to their non-vegan versions. You can find mould-ripened Truffle Camemvert, Shoreditch Smoked and the Clapton Chive in 18 Waitrose stores – as well as Fondue and Faux Brie nationwide at Christmas.



3

Cristalino tequila

Sometimes all it takes is a new way of doing things. This is certainly the case for cristalino, hailed as the ‘next big thing in tequila’. Like many aged tequilas, cristalino is matured in the usual way, but then it is filtered to remove the colours as well as some of the stronger woodier notes picked up from the oak barrel. The result is a drink that is clear, crisp and slightly sweeter but still retains the character of an aged tequila.



4

Simplified menus

The age of the extensive crowd-pleasing menu is coming to an end. As supply chain and food waste issues come to the fore, streamlined menus will become commonplace, as more restaurants concentrate on offering a more considered choice of quality dishes and ingredients cooked well.

5

Croissant cubes

It’s been a few years since the world was hit with cronut fever, the donut-croissant hybrid from New York pastry chef Dominique Ansel. Now, cubed croissants are set to take the cronut’s crown. These flaking buttery squares were the brainchild of Swedish baking supremo Bedros Kabranian, who came up with the idea a couple of years ago.



FUTURE TRENDS

Our experts predict the next big crazes in the world of food and drink

6

Coffee-less coffee

We’ve had meatless meat, milkless milk and fishless fish... The next thing to have a sustainable makeover is coffee-less coffee. With scientists warning that coffee plants are extremely susceptible to climate change, a number of start-ups are racing to find acceptably authentic and drinkable alternatives. Seattle-based company Atomo is first off the block with its beanless cold brew. Meanwhile a number of coffee alternatives closer to home include Whole Earth’s Wake Up coffee drink.

7

Cognitive nutrition

Many studies have shown that a poor diet, especially one high in sugar, can affect our mood and lessen our alertness and memory function. As we continue to prioritise our mental wellbeing, protecting our brains will become just as important as perfecting our bodies. This means an increased focus on ‘brain food’ such as fatty fish like tuna and salmon, blueberries, broccoli, kale, spinach, pumpkin seeds, dark chocolate and rocket to improve memory and focus.



8

Ancestral eating

Ancestral eating is simply about eating like your grandparents used to, a return to homely, organic, unprocessed and unrefined food of old. It’s partly a reaction to over-the-top eating experiences that have led people to look back at their own heritage or the heritage of others, but it’s also a response to the uncertain economic times we are living in. Grandma knows best, and she often knows the thriftiest ways to cook. On Pinterest, searches for traditional recipes are on the up – traditional Norwegian food by 120%, authentic Filipino cuisine by 35% and traditional South African cuisine by 150%.

9

Deep fake meat

When vegan brand Biff’s launched its fake chicken wing this year, it drew headlines. Made from jackfruit, mushrooms and carrots, it features a spear of sugar cane that forms the ‘bone’, drawing discussion in the vegan community about how realistic mock meat needed to be. But in the race to fake it, this is seemingly the tip of the iceberg, as companies pursue not only taste but texture.

10

Locavore

Hailing from San Francisco, ‘locavore’ is a term used to describe a trend for people buying products grown as locally as possible to minimise their carbon footprint. Locavores buy meat, vegetables and dairy produced in their region and the strictest will even stick to a 100-mile radius. Going full-on locavore would be hard for most people, but all signs show that counting carbon calories is filtering into the mainstream. In fact, 22% of our survey respondents said they now consider the number of air miles a product takes to get to the shelf.



WAITROSE

& PARTNERS



[WAITROSE.COM/FOODREPORT](https://www.waitrose.com/foodreport)