

ELEVATE YOUR HOLIDAY DESSERTS with Global Inspiration

Consumers look forward to enjoying the flavors of the holiday season, but they also want something new. Incorporating global food and flavors is a strategic way to elevate your holiday menu and provide exciting items that consumers will love.

MARS
Foodservices



Caramel-Stuffed Brookie
made with DOVE® Dark Chocolate

With nearly half of consumers looking forward to ordering LTOs

during Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa,¹ it's the perfect time to roll out signature holiday offerings.

However, consumers are looking to switch things up and experience innovative menu items now that many are returning to foodservice.³

How can you deliver on the holiday desserts and treats consumers cherish but keep things fresh and interesting? By tapping into the global flavors trend. Global dishes are widespread on menus, most frequently represented in entrees, leaving enormous potential for innovative desserts.

Get ahead of this trend and capitalize on this undeveloped area by incorporating global traditions on your menu this holiday season.

Over
1 1/2

of consumers are extremely or very interested in seasonal desserts²

Nearly
1 1/2

of consumers are interested in global desserts⁴

Apple Pie Puffs made with TWIX® Cookie Bars



AROUND THE WORLD IN 4 DESSERTS

While consumers are leaning into flavors that are native to other places around the world, they are especially interested in being served new items in familiar formats.³

Here are four ways you can elevate desserts that consumers know and love with a global spin.



Click to explore
global desserts

1

ICE CREAM

2

CAKE

3

COOKIES

4

DONUTS



Salted Caramel Apple Donuts
made with TWIX® Cookie Bars



1

ICE CREAM

Ice cream is a fan favorite, loved or liked by 88% of U.S. consumers.⁴ So, it's the perfect treat to revamp with some global flare.



Click to explore
global desserts



Mochi | Japan



Kulfi | India



Dondurma | Turkey



1 ICE CREAM



MOCHI

Mochi | Japan

Traditionally eaten during the Japanese New Year, mochi is a rice cake that's often stuffed with ice cream or sweetened bean paste, providing endless variety in flavor.

Mochi has a projected

25%

4-year menu growth⁵



1 ICE CREAM

KULFI

Kulfi | India

A denser, creamier version of ice cream that is served on a stick like an ice pop, this treat mashes two trends—Indian flavors and hand-held treats—into one fun dish.

46%

of consumers who have
tried kulfi loved
or liked it²



1 ICE CREAM



DONDURMA

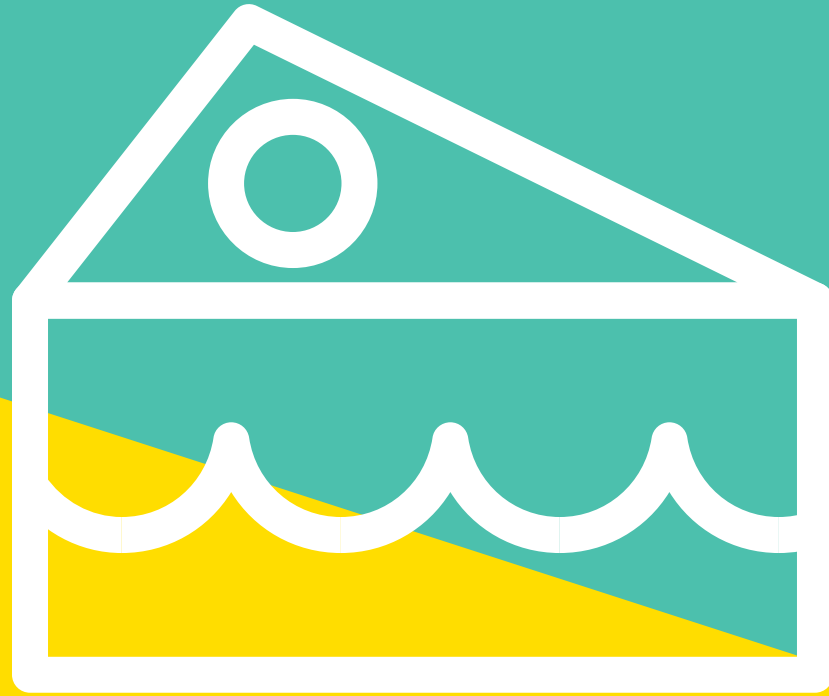
Dondurma | Turkey

Sometimes known as battered ice cream, this Turkish treat has a thicker texture than Western ice cream and can easily incorporate familiar flavors like strawberry or pistachio to make it more approachable.

1 in 4

consumers are
interested in trying
dondurma⁴





2

CAKE

Cake is another crowd-pleaser—79% of consumers love or like cake.⁴ An elaborate cake is a smart choice for operators because consumers want to buy food at restaurants that they can't recreate at home.



Esterhazy Torte | Hungary



Tres Leches | Mexico



Lamingtons | Australia



2 CAKE



ESTERHAZY TORTE



Esterhazy Torte | Hungary

A decadent cake with alternating layers of buttercream and hazelnut that is highly intricate—and Instagrammable.

Due to growing appeal

42%

of operators are interested in menuing esterhazy torte⁴

2 CAKE

TRES LECHES

Tres Leches | Mexico

This Latin American dessert is growing in popularity both in format and in flavor, as Mexican cuisine becomes a favorite across generations.

Tres leches has a projected 4-year menu growth of

31%⁵



2 CAKE



LAMINGTONS

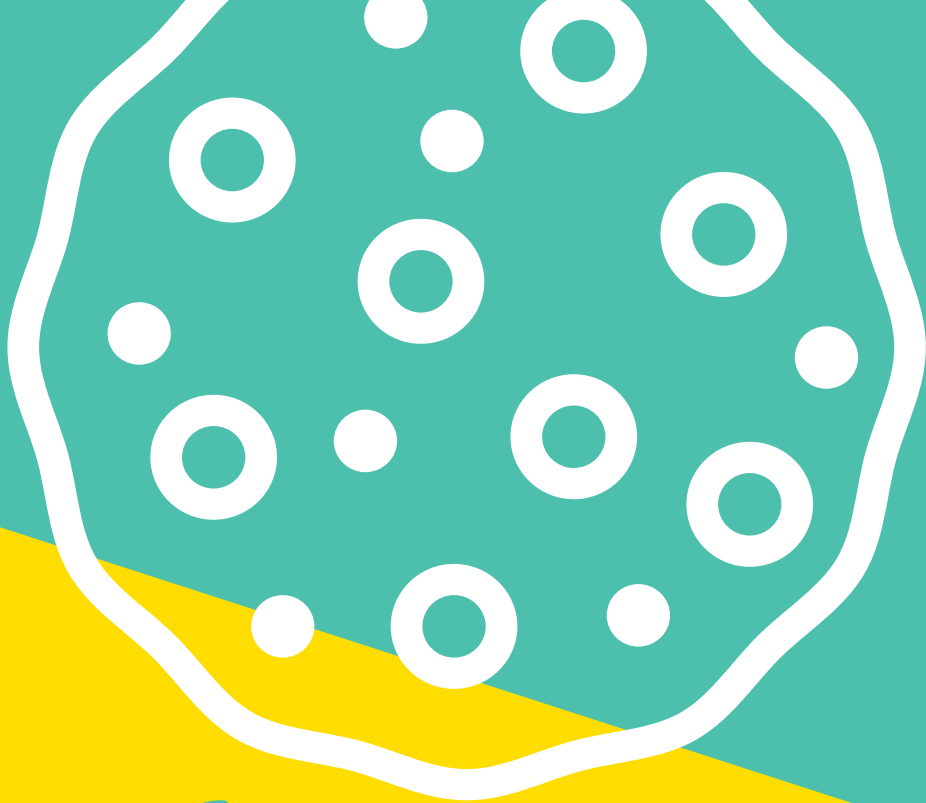
Lamingtons | Australia

Square pieces of cake coated in rich chocolate sauce rolled in desiccated coconut. Lamingtons are popular throughout Australia and New Zealand.

40%

of consumers are interested in trying lamingtons⁴





3

COOKIES

Cookies serve as a snack and as a dessert—68% of U.S. consumers said they snacked on cookies with or after a meal.⁶ So, operators looking to capitalize on growing snacking habits should incorporate global cookies into their holiday menus.



Click to explore
global desserts



Chebakia | Morocco



Melomakarona | Greece



Mbatata | Malawi



3 COOKIES



CHEBAKIA

Chebakia | Morocco

These rose-shaped fried cookies are soaked in honey and sprinkled with sesame seeds, and are typically saved for special occasions, making them perfect for the holiday season.

Interest in trying
chebakia is growing with
Gen Z appeal leading at

43%⁴



3 COOKIES



MELOMAKARONA

Melomakarona | Greece

Often referred to simply as Greek Christmas honey cookies, these sweet aromatic cookies are flavored with honey, cinnamon, orange, cloves and brandy or cognac.

73%

of consumers love
or like honey⁴



3 COOKIES

MBATATA

Mbatata | Malawi

Mbatata provide an approachable way to showcase sweet potato, a trending holiday favorite, complemented by warm spices.

Sweet potatoes have grown on menus, and

36%

of consumers love or like sweet potatoes²





4

DONUTS

Donuts, which are projected to grow 18% on dessert menus over the next four years, play well across dayparts and as a snack, providing ample opportunities for creative menuing.⁷



Gulab Jamun | India



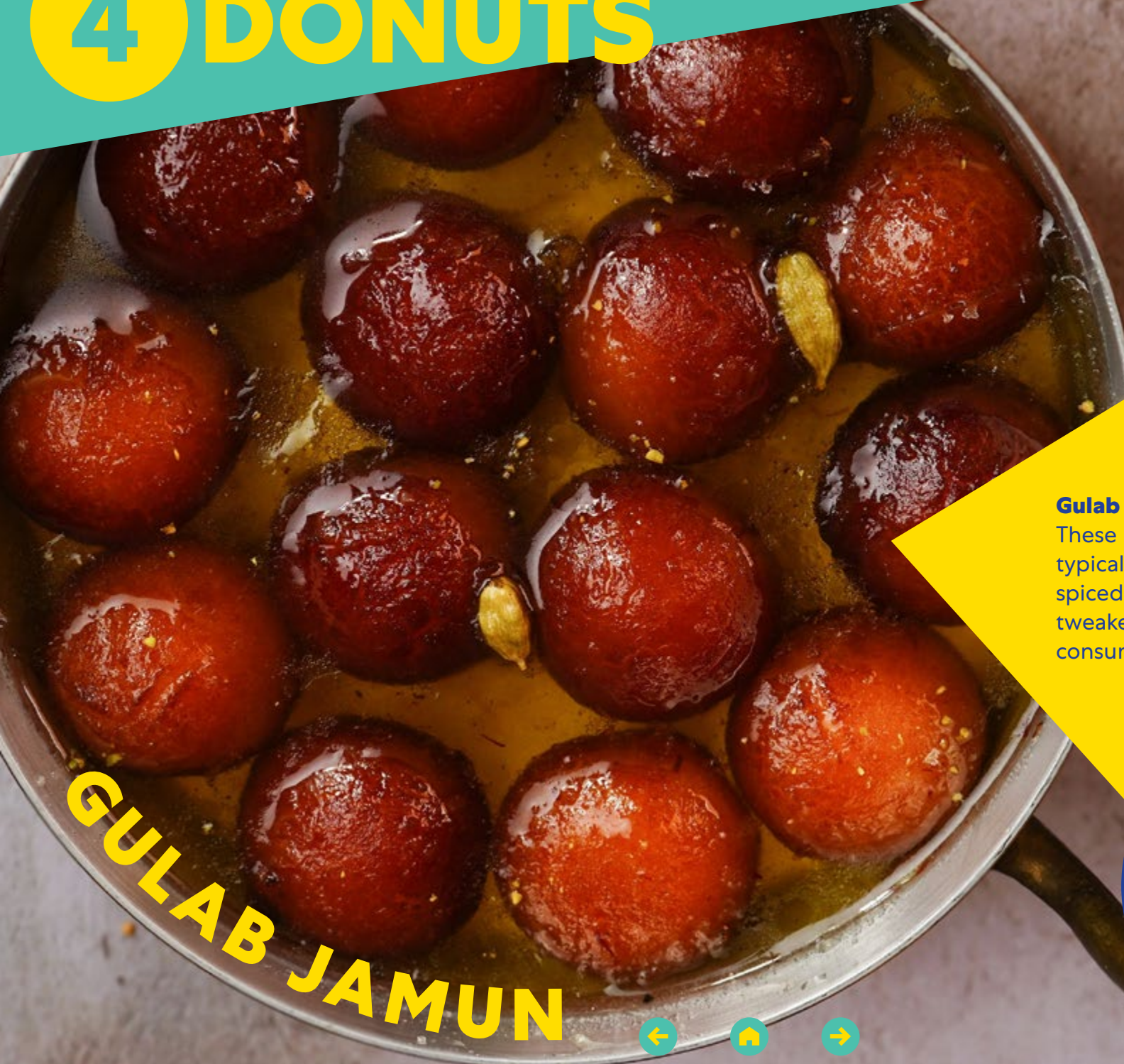
Picarones | Peru



Sopapilla | Mexico



4 DONUTS



GULAB JAMUN

Gulab Jamun | India

These little fried donuts are typically soaked in sweet spiced syrup that can easily be tweaked to feature flavors that consumers love.

46%

of Gen Z consumers are interested in trying gulab jamun⁴



4 DONUTS



PICARONES

Picarones | Peru

Made from squash and sweet potato, these crispy fried donuts are served with a syrup that's flavored with orange peel and cinnamon, making them perfect for fall menus.

1/3

of consumers are interested in trying picarones⁴



4 DONUTS



SOPAPILLA

Sopapilla | Mexico

These fried pastries aren't technically donuts, but they are similar in composition and versatility—traditionally flavored with cinnamon and sugar and drizzled in honey, they lend themselves to endless variation.

68%

of consumers who have tried sopapillas love or like them²



HOW TO MENU GLOBAL HOLIDAY DESSERTS

5 TIPS: Make global desserts more enticing and approachable to consumers with these five tips.

TIP
1

Lean Into Flavor

Even if the name of the dessert isn't well known, highlighting popular, well-loved ingredients can help. For example, sweet potato pie is beloved and associated with Thanksgiving and other fall holidays, so global desserts that contain sweet potato, like mbatata and picarones, are a good fit for a fall LTO.

TIP
2

Try a Sampler

Providing a dessert sampler is a great way to provide a shareable format that's less intimidating because consumers don't have to worry if they don't like something on the plate—there are other things to enjoy.

69%

of consumers chose
chocolate over peanut butter
when asked which they'd
rather eat for the rest of
their lives⁴

Boca Bites made with
SNICKERS® Bars,
TWIX® Cookie Bars and
DOVE® Chocolate



PUT A FRIENDLY TWIST ON GLOBAL DISHES WITH ICONIC BRANDS



TIP
3

When in Doubt, Go For Chocolate

Chocolate is the #1 dessert flavor nationwide,⁶ so take it to the next level with a global chocolate dessert. Whether that means including a chocolate sauce or replacing one ingredient, like raisins with chocolate chips, incorporating chocolate when it makes sense can make just about any dessert more appealing.

“Chocolate is a great platform for desserts, no matter what you add,”

according to Chef Mike Buononato, VP of Creative Food Solutions, a full-service food innovation consultancy.

“Mix the familiar with the new.”



Chocolate Dulce De Leche Cookies made with
M&M'S® Chocolate Candies and DOVE® Chocolate





Lemon Pavlova made with M&M'S® Red, White and Blue Chocolate Candies

TIP
4

Leverage Social Media

New flavors and dishes from around the world are converging due to social media, according to Chef Buononato, resulting in mashups and ideas.

“Global flavors are starting to merge together from different parts of the world, with people connecting through social media. There is a melting pot emerging with global flavors; for example, black sesame ice cream, matcha madeleines and Tajín covered candy.”

Chef Buononato advises that operators do research on social media to see what’s trending, highlighting TikTok, Instagram and Pinterest as platforms to watch.

“Operators need to be more active on social media, where new trends and buzz are happening every day,” he said. “This will make them one step ahead of the competition, giving them the ability to capitalize profit.”

TIP
5

Incorporate Branded Inclusions

Branded inclusions is a huge trend in desserts, and including ingredients that consumers love can help transform an exotic dessert into something approachable and even nostalgic. Using a favorite candy, like M&M'S®, to garnish can bring that nostalgic feeling to any dessert, according to Chef Buononato.

INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

There are so many opportunities to elevate your dessert menu this holiday season. By incorporating global flavors and dishes in consumer-friendly formats, you'll create desserts and treats that WOW!

Learn more about how Mars Wrigley-branded Candy Inclusions can drive engagement and profit for your operation.

Sources

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- 5 SNAP! By Datassential Data
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- 7 SNAP! By Datassential Dessert Varieties Instant Chart



Churro Bites made with
TWIX® Cookie Bars

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