

## TEMPTING BITES FROM OUR 2017 SEASONAL FOOD SURVEY

### My Christmas, with a nod towards tradition...

Christmas has always been the season to eat, drink and be merry – whatever the latest food fad. But even in this bastion of tradition, there are signs of change in what we eat and drink and how we enjoy the big day. As in the rest of the year, a key driver shaping change is a lack of time, time to spend shopping, preparing, cooking and even eating our festive food.

Around 1 in 4 of us are choosing to get all, or part, of our festive grocery shop on-line<sup>1</sup>, Party Food must be ‘quick and easy to prepare’<sup>2</sup> to avoid being stuck in the kitchen and, when it comes to the Christmas lunch, the focus is more around what we *want* to eat rather than what *should* be on the plate

### Yorkshire Pudding – the new Christmas meal trimming...

Not as many of us are buying a whole turkey, with 1 in 3 choosing a Turkey Crown: quicker to cook and easier to carve, a similar proportion - 1 in 3 - were happy to use granules to make the gravy. More surprisingly 2 in 3 planned to serve Yorkshire Pudding with their festive meal<sup>3</sup> - only considered ‘madness’ by half of over 55-year-olds and those in the Midlands and North.

### The great sprout myth...

There are some traditions we seem keen to hang onto. It may be one of the few times in the year when we buy Brussels Sprouts, but only 9% claimed to ‘*hate sprouts and never cook them*’. Instead of boiling them to a dire puree, 1 in 4 planned to steam them for as short a time as possible, while a similar proportion would serve with bacon.

### Bake Off is for other people...

Not very many were planning to make their own Christmas Pud this year<sup>4</sup>, despite 3 in 4 claiming they were going to serve a pudding. So much for the legacy of Great British Bake Off! We were not much keener on making our own Christmas Cake and Mince Pies<sup>5</sup> and it remains over 55-year-olds who were the most likely to reach for their aprons. But there were regional differences at play here: half in Scotland intended to make their own Christmas Cake, with the same proportion in the South West planning on making their own Mince Pies.

---

<sup>1</sup> Increasing to 35% amongst 18-34 yr. olds

<sup>2</sup> *What are the important factors in choosing party food*: Quick and easy to prepare was the most important driver of choice for 45%.

<sup>3</sup> 63% planned on serving a Yorkshire Pudding with their Christmas Dinner

<sup>4</sup> 10% planned on making their own Christmas Pudding

<sup>5</sup> 35% planned on making their own Mince Pies, 30% their Christmas Cake

### I'll stick to what I know – and M&S...

We may be aiming to think ahead by pre-ordering on line, but most of us still like to visit a store to see what's on offer and cherry pick our own festive food. With all the main supermarkets offering an extensive premium range, most of those we surveyed were happy to stick to their 'normal' supermarket for the bulk of their festive food and felt that there was certainly little to choose between the retailers when it came to who offered the best Brussels Sprouts, Blue Stilton or festive alcohol. However, Marks and Spencer maintain its halo effect when it comes to the festive shop, particularly when it comes to buying all the trimmings. Despite only 12% planning to buy the *bulk* of their festive shop in M&S (the same proportion as Aldi), 1 in 3 felt that it was M&S that sold the best Turkey, Mince Pies, Christmas Pudding and Party Food and almost half felt that they offered the best Pigs in Blankets and Christmas Cake.

### Spending with care...

And, while 1 in 5 expected to spend more than £200 on this year's festive grocery shop, almost 1 in 4 anticipated spending less than £100. While this amount clearly depends on household size, it could also be a sign of continuing austerity, a response to a growing desire to kick back from the rising commercialisation of the season or a simply an unrealistic goal. We plan to find out what they actually spent – and how satisfied they were - in the New Year.

**For more details about this Festive Survey and our Consumer *i* panel, contact Alison Eddershaw:**

[Alison@cambridgemr.com](mailto:Alison@cambridgemr.com)



Follow us on Twitter  or Instagram 

**Cambridge**  
MARKET RESEARCH

#### Test Details:

Survey dates: 16<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> November

Total Sample size: 296

Who took part: We used our Consumer *i* panel for this Survey asking shoppers across different ages, socio demographic groups and regions to tell us about their Festive Grocery Shop.