

# What's Cooking in Canada: 3 Recent Food Trends

Published  
July 2017

Few things change as rapidly, and as often, as Canadian food tastes and preferences. Here's a look at three trends that are here to stay, including insights on how your brand can get involved today and prepare for the future.

**F**resh off the... stove, here's a look at how Canadians are thinking about multicultural cuisines, healthy eating, and food consumption and waste.

## #1: Appetites for multicultural flavours is growing

Canada embraces a wide diversity of culture with [one in five people being foreign born](#). A recent Ipsos study among approximately 2,100 self-identified multicultural Canadians estimated that there are 8.2M multicultural Canadians—and that number is projected to increase to 12.6M by 2031.<sup>1</sup> This growing segment of the population is having major effects on food and beverage trends throughout the country.

With a purchasing power of \$100B annually, multicultural Canadians are hugely important to the food and beverage industry; they also spend 1.5X more on consumer goods than the general population.<sup>2</sup> As with the country

think with 

as a whole, health and wellness are big priorities for this population segment. More than half of multicultural Canadians read the nutrition facts tables (NTFs) on food and beverage packaging, with nearly seven in ten indicating that doing so influences their decision to buy a product.<sup>3</sup>

One reason this group scrutinizes nutrition labels is because they're doing a lot more cooking in than dining out: 67% of food and beverage occasions are sourced from home.<sup>2</sup>

Multicultural Canadians are also inspiring the palates, appetites, and behaviours of the country as a whole. Canadians are searching for new flavours at increasing rates. For example, "ramen" searches in Canada have almost tripled since 2012.<sup>4</sup>

### Some Trending Foods



Ramen  
Pho

Shawarma  
Halal

Ipsos FIVE data shows that per capita consumption of Ethnic Foods is growing at 3X the rate of Total Food. This demand for unique and ethnically inspired flavour profiles is a call to action for brands to expand their portfolios to be relevant to Canadian consumers.

## #2: Increased commitment to healthy eating

The health food craze in Canada is no fad diet. These days Canadians are more and more interested in eating and staying healthy. In fact, 49% say they are more interested in consuming healthier foods than they were two years ago.<sup>5</sup> Even the government is getting in on the action. Canada's [New Food Guide](#) emphasizes plant-based proteins and other natural foods.

To raise their food IQs, Canadians go online. More than half (54%) have used online sources to increase their awareness of the benefits of healthy foods.<sup>5</sup> They're searching for health information, recipes, tips, and ingredients.

Modern consumers are all about these supercharged, functional foods:<sup>4</sup>

### Some Trending Foods



Apple cider vinegar  
Turmeric

Probiotics  
Kombucha

### #3: Canadians are creatively combating food waste

Another hot topic in Canada is the flip side of delicious food consumption: food waste. Up to [\\$31B of food is wasted every year in Canada](#) and it's estimated that 47% of that happens in people's homes.<sup>6</sup> It's a serious enough issue that the government, businesses, and now consumers are committing to find ways to reduce waste.

As awareness of the issue grows, so does Canadians' urgency to doing their part. Right now, 79% of Canadians are currently taking steps in their households to reduce food waste.<sup>3</sup>



44%

of Canadian customers are **more likely to purchase a brand** that's committed to reducing food waste.

For some Canadians, it's all about getting creative with the extra food they have in the fridge. Whether it's homemade leftovers or food they carted home from a restaurant in a doggie bag, Canadians are looking for ways to [creatively repurpose food](#).

For others, mindful, sustainable consumption is the best path forward: 44% of online Canadians are more likely to purchase a brand that's committed to reducing food waste.<sup>5</sup>

## Crafting the perfect recipe to connect with hungry Canadians

Does your brand have a right to play in these trends? Get creative and find ways to tie your brand into the things Canadians care about. Here are some ideas:

### Things you can do now

*Educate:* Find ways to show consumers the functional and environmental benefits of your products and brand. If your brand has made commitments to the things Canadians care about, tell your story!

*Create content:* [Create relevant content](#) that shows consumers creative ways to use your products. Think leftover repurposing videos, superfood recipes, or ethnic food cooking tutorials.

*Test and learn:* Use [Google Trends](#) to learn more about trends for your specific category. Play around with different content and [keywords](#) to learn what's resonating with consumers.

### Things you can do down the road

*Organize:* [Structure your brand teams](#) to stay ahead of the curve on long-term consumer trends. Build agility into your business model to be able to action those opportunities quickly.

*Innovate:* Influence product roadmaps to include more diverse ethnic innovation for the Canadian market.

This is an exciting time in Canada as mindful food consumption is increasingly important to consumers. Get clever and have fun tapping into Canadians' desire to eat healthfully, sustainably, and multiculturally.

## Sources

- 1 StatsCan, Canada, 2011, multicultural Canadians is defined as those who identified using country of origin or ethnic identity and defined as Central/South American/Caribbean, Mexican, Middle Eastern, East/South East Asian, South Asian, Other South Asian/South East Asian, Other.
- 2 Ipsos, "Environics Research Group," 2015.
- 3 Ipsos Five, R12M Ending December 2016, Canada,
- 4 Google Trends, Food & Drink Category, July 2016–July 2017, Canada.
- 5 Google Consumer Survey, April 2017, Canada, n=1000 online Canadians 18+.
- 6 Value Chain Management International, "27 Billion Revisited, The Cost of Canada's Annual Food Waste," 2014