



2026 
FOOD
& DRINK
TRENDS

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Bidfood

How did we do this research?

Who did we speak to?



Bespoke survey with
NielsenIQ

**2,000 UK adults
who eat out of home**



Survey of **100 UK chefs
and catering managers**

Desk research

Food safaris



Consumers Are Cautious – **but Still Eating Out**

46% of consumers want to try the latest food trends

*This rises to **66%** for 18-34s*



What are the top 4 macro drivers of choice?



Value

75% of consumers describing themselves as 'very value-led'*



Quality

78% of consumers define themselves as 'very quality-led'*



Experience

unique experiences are particularly important to foodies and 18-34s**



Brand

64% of consumers recognise themselves as brand-led*

Source: *Lumina Intelligence UK-Eating-Out-Market-Report-2025 , **CGA by NIQ x Bidfood 2026 Trends Survey, Sample Size: 2007



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What are consumers expecting?

Meaningful value

Quality ingredients and service

Elevated and premium experiences

Brand collaborations and innovation

Source: *Lumina Intelligence UK-Eating-Out-Market-Report-2025 , **CGA by NIQ x Bidfood 2026 Trends Survey, Sample Size: 2007



The key emotions and occasions influencing choice?

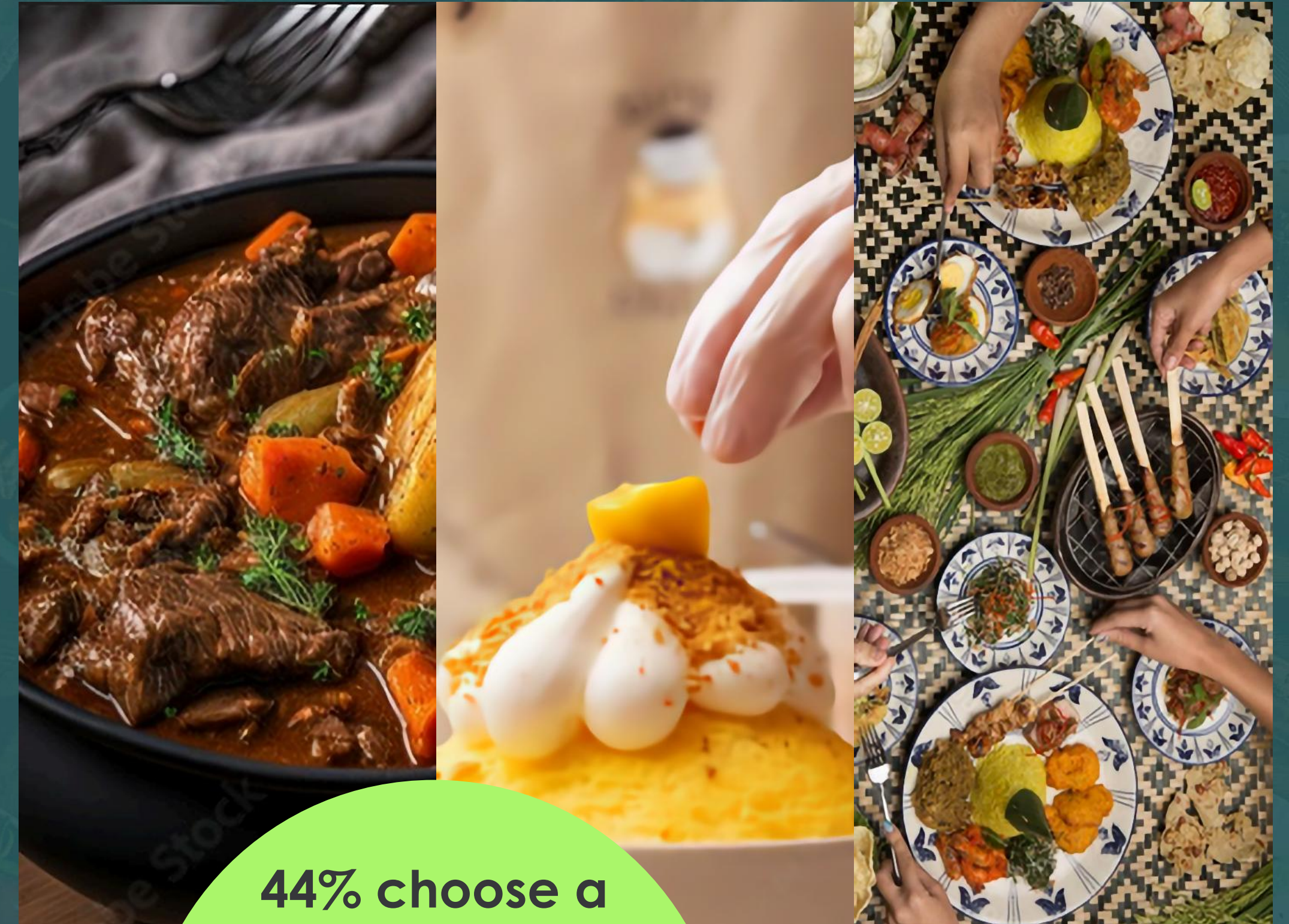
Emotions

- Comfort
- Tradition
- Adventure

Typical occasions

- Treat 59%
- Celebration 44%
- Social - seeing friends 48%
- seeing family 42%

Source: CGA by NIQ x Bidfood 2026 Trends Survey, Sample Size: 2,007



44% choose a venue that satisfies a particular feeling (e.g. comfort or reward)



The behaviours shaping food & drink culture

Health-Conscious Choices

Consumers are educating themselves about how food impacts their health

Community and Sharing

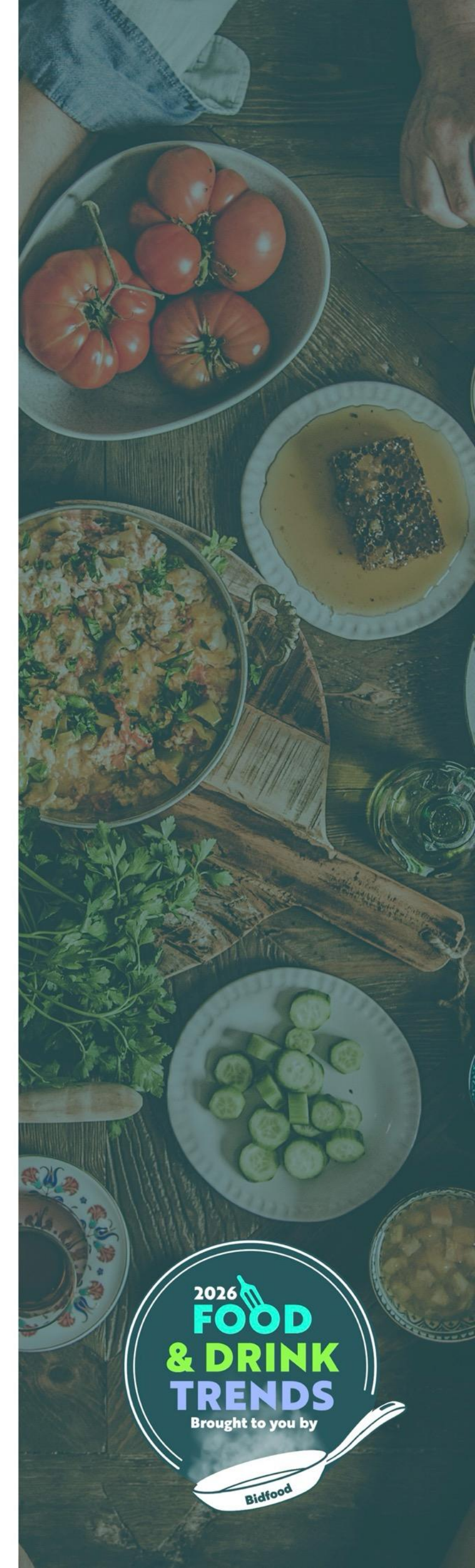
Creates connection seen through the high interest of small plates (73%), sharing platters (68%), group dishes (60%) and bottomless brunches (59%)

Alcohol Moderation Trends

Alcohol moderation is normalising, popularised by younger consumers, featuring creative expressions like zebra striping.

Social Media Influence

Drives food trend awareness and curiosity, accelerating trial and popularity.



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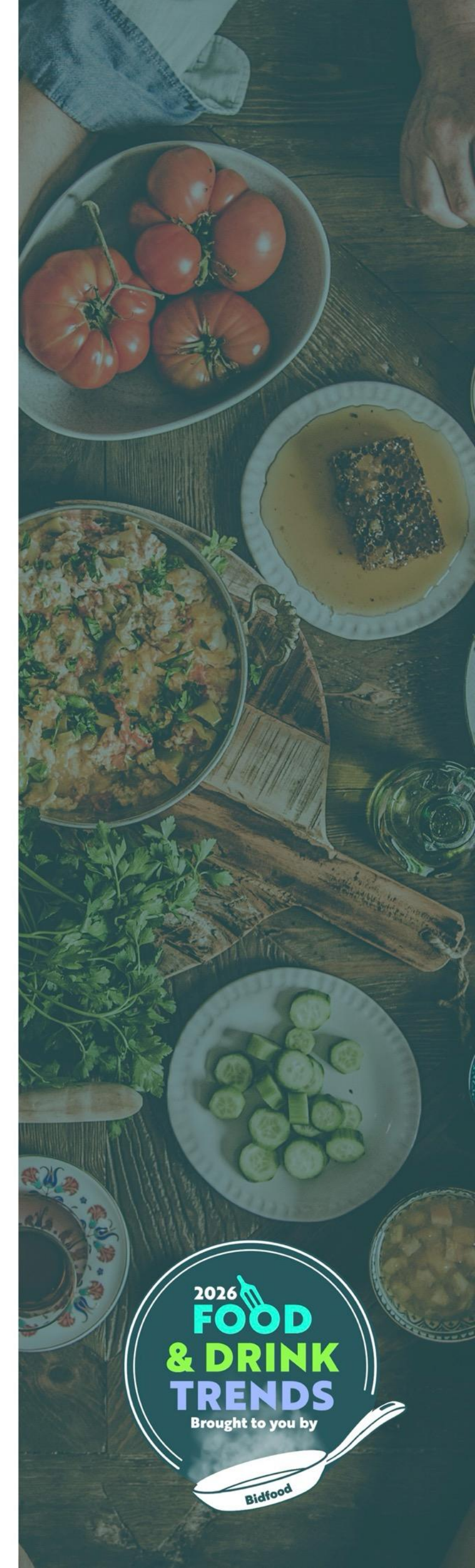
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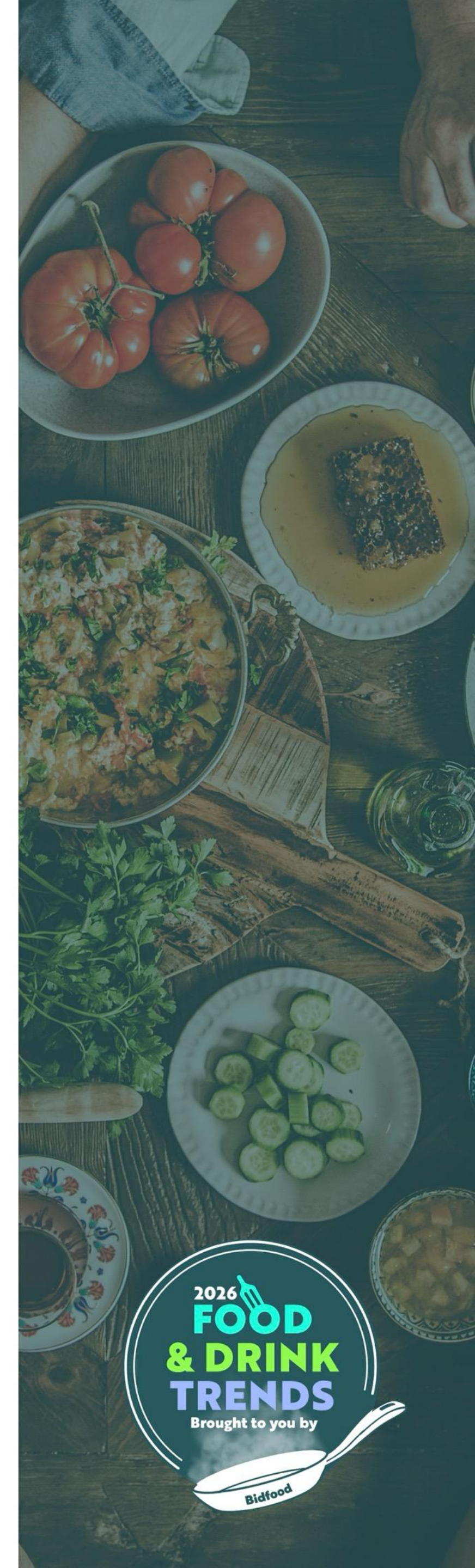
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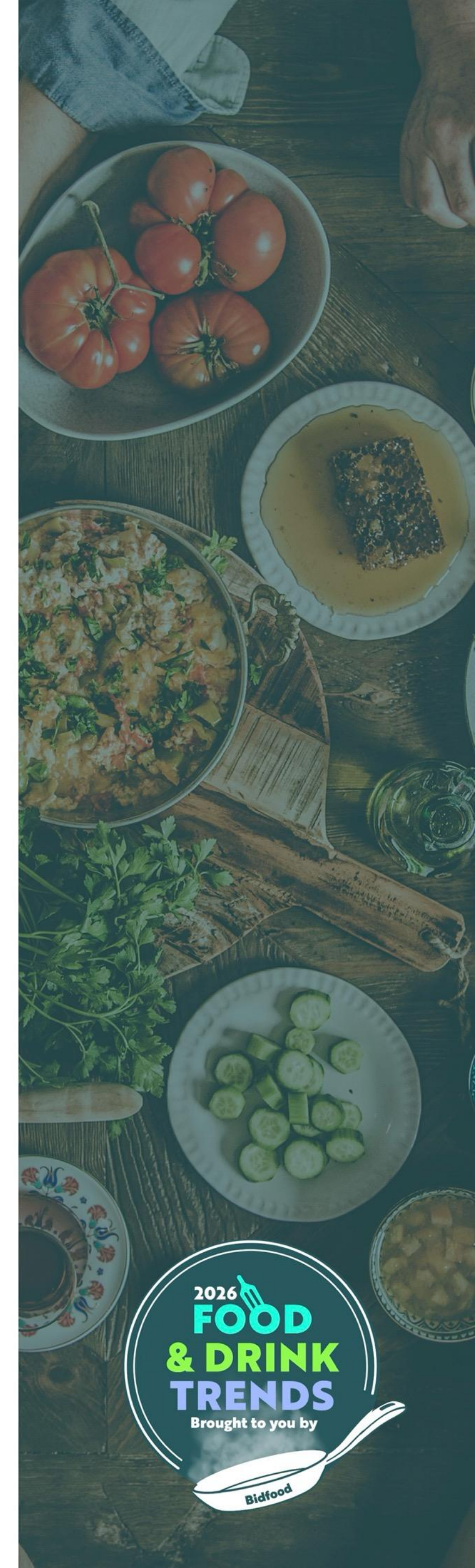
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Topped & Loaded...

52%

already eat topped
and loaded dishes

42%

agree these dishes
are value for money

Consumer appeal

Indulgent, generous portions that feel premium yet affordable

Loaded fries, hash browns and jacket potatoes

Innovative formats → topped mac & cheese 31%, naan wraps 28%, pancakes and waffles 27% and loaded dumplings 22%

Operator appeal

Low skill and easy to prepare

Premium on the go or dine in



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Whole Lotta Goodness...

Back to Basics

48%

of consumers have tried nutrient-dense foods (oily fish, berries and nuts) when eating out – and would like to try them again

47%

of consumers have tried reducing their UPF consumption when eating out - and would like to try this again.

Consumer appeal

A movement towards incorporating more wholefoods onto menus

Fresh, natural, high-quality dishes

Porridge bowls, Breakfast pots, Vibrant salads, Grain bowls, Chillies, curries and stews

Supporting health and wellbeing

Operator appeal

Boost transparency and build consumer trust





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Sweet Adventures...

Innovative and global sweet treats, or twists/fusions with familiar desserts.

59%

of consumers typically eat out for a treat

54%

of consumers explore new and unique cuisines and dishes when eating out

Consumer appeal

Visually striking, global desserts

Driven by on social media

Dishes like Basque cheesecake, Japanese cloud cake, Taiwanese souffle cakes, bingsu, croffles

Ingredients like Dubai chocolate, miso caramel, matcha, mango, yuzu

Aligns with sense of adventure, celebratory occasions, sharing and elevated experiences

Operator appeal

Limited-time offers, on-the-go and seasonal innovations





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Tea Tonic...

Reimagining classic tea concepts through innovation and exciting flavours

71%

of consumers
already drink tea

47%

of students are
interested in trying iced
tea

Consumer appeal:

Tea has evolved into a modern, refreshing, customisable drink

Young consumers and Gen Z

Bubble tea, fruit-infused iced teas make tea refreshing and visually appealing.

Flavours include yuzu and lychee, alongside trending tropical fruits including mango , passionfruit and coconut.

Operator appeal:

Spring/summer menus

Upsell potential

Alcohol moderation





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Reimagining a British Staple

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Fast Forward Flavours...

Ingredients that signal quality and premium experience

46%

of consumers agree that ingredients of good quality are important to them when deciding where to eat out

53%

of consumers would describe themselves as a foodie

Our top picks for 2026/7

Sweet

Miso caramel / Salted caramel / Pistachio / Hot honey

Savoury

Wild mushroom / Cauliflower / Grass-fed beef / Wild-caught salmon

Helps operators:

Reinvent a best-seller

Premiumise your menu

Appeal to foodies





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Flavours Less Travelled...

Interest in trying – very likely to try or likely to try in the next 1 to 2 years:

Malaysian
55%

- Bold, heritage-driven flavours (coconut, chili and tamarind)
- High appeal foodies and students
- Variety of familiar formats include curries, noodles, rice, flatbreads, puff pastry
- Top dishes include Nasi Lemak | Nasi Goreng | Satay | Rendang | Laksa

Korean
51%

- Bold and spicy flavours
- Popular with Gen Zs, students and 30 to 39 years
- Great for small plates and sharing dishes, street-food inspired options, on-the-go or on-site
- Top dishes include Fried chicken | BBQ | Bulgogi | Bibimbap | Plant-based dishes

South American:
Columbian 52%
Venezuelan 51%
Brazilian 48%
Peruvian 48%

- Small plates, social dining
- Comfort stews and home-style cooking, grilled meats
- Top dishes include Arepas – filled cornmeal pancakes | Stews like Feijoada (black bean and pork/beef) or Moqueca (Fish) | Lomo Saltado – beef stir-fry with rice and chips | Sweet snacks e.g. Pastel





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What this means for operators...

- ✓ **Deliver meaningful value**
- ✓ **Appeal to health-conscious consumers**
- ✓ **Add creative flair and attract foodies**
- ✓ **Draw in younger and treat seeking consumers with visually appealing drinks and global inspired desserts**
- ✓ **Combine comfort and familiar formats with adventurous options**
- ✓ **Offer a memorable experience**



The future of food is intentional

Success comes from **confident** choices that suit target audience and sector, applying them with intention and purpose.





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