

Five Key Trends to Watch In 2025



trend
report



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As 2024 came to a close, we asked our agency's strategists and culinary experts to share the trends that have been on their radar — not just those likely to have an impact on food and the culture surrounding it, but also those expected to have a profound impact on consumer behavior.

Together, we identified five key trends we think brands and businesses should pay attention to as we move into the new year. Let's just say, the future feels equal parts familiar and uncharted! Buckle up, because 2025 is bound to serve up bold flavors, big feelings, and a whole lot of innovation — in and out of the kitchen.

Key Trends

1



Humans Will Seek Humans

2



Newstalgia Will Help Us All Deal

3



Global Cuisines Will Influence Home Cooking

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GLP-1 Drugs Will Completely Change How We Eat, Eventually

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Gen Z Has Entered the Chat

Humans will
seek humans





A recent [Forrester report](#) revealed the percentage of millennials interested in branded content on social media went from 19% in 2021 to just 9% in 2024.

Within that same timeframe, the percentage of Gen X and older consumers plummeted from 45% to 17%. These same consumers are [increasingly turning to social platforms](#) rather than search engines for information and inspiration — they are seeking authentic human connection with creators and influencers over anonymous content. As a result, platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Reddit are supplanting Google as the default way to find what young people are looking for.

We believe that another factor driving consumers away from Google and content without a human presence is the increasing use of generative AI to create such content. Younger

consumers especially understand the lack of effort and therefore perceived value represented in this content, which is driving them to distrust anonymous, non-humanized sources. Furthermore, not only do they not trust generative content, [they are becoming increasingly hostile toward it.](#)

2025 will be the year in which authenticity will become the most valuable currency available to marketers. A clearer distinction will need to be drawn between what AI *can* be used for and what it *should* be used for, especially when it comes to winning the trust and loyalty of real, human consumers. Nameless, faceless brand content is out.

Here's what *will be in:*



Real human faces and voices

As consumers go to social media for community and connection, it will become increasingly important for brand content to feature real human faces and voices whenever possible.

Keywords vs. hashtags

As demonstrated on TikTok, keywords and clear descriptions of content are going to become critical in connecting with consumers on social media. Hashtags are increasingly ineffective at extending reach, often viewed as spammy, and are [on their way out](#). In fact, Threads, [with over 100M daily active users](#), doesn't even support traditional hashtags.

Content creators

Those who have a following, even a small one, and a history of creating relevant content will continue to gain traction. Consumers seek connection with creators who share their passion and can offer new perspectives. They'll even accept sponsored content from these creators as long as there is an established trust.

Personalization

This will remain a priority, especially when it comes to branded content. Consumers want a tailored experience, but the desire for privacy continues to be hyper relevant. Brands must find a way to personalize experiences in a way that feels natural and unobtrusive, like investing in AI data analytics tools rather than relying on AI to mass produce creative content.

Trust, transparency, and clear, simple brand communication

All of these will become increasingly important, especially when it comes to brand promises and policies. Business must walk the walk and talk the talk. If AI is being used in any sort of customer relations capacity, a human connection must be established immediately if anything goes awry.

Newstalgia will
help us all deal



trend
2

In times of social, cultural, and political uncertainty, people crave comfort.

Welcome to 2025! Whether through fashion, entertainment, music, or food, consumers will continue to seek out familiar, feel-good comforts to escape the mayhem. (90s resurgence, anyone?) However, consumers also inherently desire experiences that feel innovative and relevant. Enter newstalgia. Brands that can make the old feel new while also celebrating timelessness — grandma's recipe with a modern ingredient swap, that tech gadget that looks retro but offers modern functionality — will resonate with their consumers.



Here's what *will be in:*



Nostalgic flavors and textures with a modern or unique twist:

These will remain popular, especially in the snack and dessert categories (think root beer floats, malts, candy, popcorn). Textural characteristics — anything crispy, crunchy, creamy, fluffy, sticky, gooey... the list goes on — will play a key role in meeting consumers' growing demand for satisfying, feel-good, newstalgic experiences.

“Glimmers” or little luxuries

Consumers will continue to add moments of indulgence into their day in the name of self care. It's perfectly acceptable to enjoy an unhealthy snack or sweet treat simply for that ubiquitous feel-good factor. Just eat the Cheetos!

A back-to-basics approach to home cooking

We're already seeing this in the restaurant space (where many food trends begin), with chefs embracing classical cooking techniques

over the maximalist style that has been popular in the past. As consumers move into the kitchen to connect with friends and family and celebrate the homey aspect of making traditional foods, shortcuts or kitschy hacks will take the backburner

From-scratch education

As traditional foods become more mainstream, consumers will be hungry for solutions that teach them how to make these meals happen, from simple tasks like making rice to how to tackle newstalgic recipes. Because a broad swath of the Gen Z audience grew up on takeout and grab-and-go options, they will be the prime audience for how-to content rooted in the basics.

An uptick in “dopamine design” packaging

[Dopamine packaging](#) will especially be evident in the snacking category. Think engaging and enticing visuals, bold and bright colors, and a greater depth of field where all elements are working together to grab attention and elicit emotional reactions.

Global cuisines
will influence
home cooking

trend 3





In an era of growing environmental concerns, sustainable and more plant-based ingredients are becoming increasingly influential.

Consumers are incorporating more fruits, veggies, and grains into their home cooking not only because they tend to be healthier and more affordable, but because they often create less waste and require fewer natural resources to produce. As a result, they have also become more interested in and willing to try different or unfamiliar globally-inspired recipes, flavors, and restaurants that traditionally rely on these types of ingredients.

Together, sustainability and global favors represent a more responsible — and flavorful — way to eat. With

consumers perfectly poised to try new things that fulfill their cravings and their social and economical values, we predict that global flavors will become a central focus not only in restaurants and home kitchens, but grocery stores as well. Retailers will need to get more creative with their global and fresh product offerings in order to give hungry consumers what they're craving.

Here's what *will be in:*



Georgian cuisine

With many of their wines, breads and dairy products produced through traditional methods, Georgian-inspired restaurants have begun popping up, most notably in New York. A few mainstays of this type of cuisine include Khinkali, dumplings filled with meat or veggies and spices, Khachapuri, dough filled with melted cheese, eggs, and butter, and Pkhali, a traditional dish made with spinach and beets. We predict this cuisine will start to gain even more traction in 2025.

African cuisine

From spices to traditional rice dishes, African influences will continue to gain global traction. As chefs and home cooks alike become more comfortable with the continent's wide-ranging cuisine and sustainable practices, they'll begin to put their own individual spins on them.

Classic French, Mexican, and Portuguese cuisine

New restaurants with these influences have popped up on our culinary team's radar, which we predict will soon be reflected in home cooking and product innovation, especially as more traditional and root-to-stem cooking methods remain a focal point.

Fusion cuisine

A long-ago established trend is having a moment again, and we think it's here to stay. Dovetailing into the nostalgia trend, 2025 will bring more contemporary fusions that put a twist on traditional global fare and inspire culinary innovations. Consumers will be looking for ways to celebrate diverse, eco-friendly ingredients — all while enjoying bold, unexpected flavors that excite their modern palates.

GLP-1 drugs
will change
how we eat

eventually



trend 4

Trend 4: GLP-1 Drugs Will Completely Change How We Eat, Eventually

While GLP-1 drugs have been primarily a coastal trend, we see it moving inward as they become more readily available and information about their health benefits grows.

This shift will significantly influence eating habits and reshape the health and wellness food industry. Brands and retailers will not only need to be smarter about the food they produce in order to meet consumer needs, but they'll also need to be a transparent voice in a sea of misinformation that is likely to flood media platforms in the wake of GLP-1 adoption.



Here's what *will be in:*



Macros — they're not just for gym bros anymore

Due to the often rapid weight loss that GLP-1 drugs promote, those who take them need to add more macro nutrients (protein, healthy fats, and complex carbohydrates) to their diets. This means foods like cottage cheese, chicken, nuts, legumes, salmon, and avocado will be in high demand by more types of consumers looking to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

People will start consuming fewer calories

According to a [new report by Impact Analytics](#), thanks in large part to the uptick in GLP-1 drugs, calorie consumption is forecasted to decline by approximately 10 trillion kcal annually across the US adult population by 2030. This will further drive up the consumer demand for fresh, organic, plant-based, alternative dairy, and protein-based products.

Functional foods will evolve

In addition to macronutrients, demand for adaptogens and probiotics will continue to grow as GLP-1 drugs add a new chapter to the functional food narrative and emphasize the role of food in enhancing health and wellness.

Demand for healthy dupes will rise

In the face of a challenging economy and the desire to create meaningful, memorable restaurant experiences at home, dupe or copycat recipes have been escalating for a while now. We see GLP-1 popularity pushing this trend further into the healthy eating space — dense bean salad lovers unite!

Gen Z has
entered the chat

trend 5





Generation Z is experiencing the fastest-growing income globally.

With their global income [expected to reach \\$17tn by 2025 and \\$33tn by 2030](#), there is no denying that Gen Z is an economic force with their own objectives, unique opinions, and significant purchasing power (currently [\\$450 billion](#)). So what does this mean for the year ahead? It's high time that brands and businesses meet this generation where they're at, if they haven't started to do so already.

Here's what *will be in:*



Hyper-relevant email communication

Gen Z values simple, timely information and communication, especially when it comes to loyalty programs. In light of the [FCC's recent decision to enforce single-click opt outs](#), making it easier for consumers to end memberships and subscriptions, it is now more important than ever to ensure marketing messages are as valuable as possible to those who receive them. Email engagements that aren't hyper-relevant will always prompt consumers to hit "unsubscribe" (or, even worse, flag it as spam) and devalue the brand-to-consumer relationship.

Transparency

As mentioned in our first key trend, younger consumers are searching social media for information, not Google, and they are experts at sniffing out AI-generated content. In light of this shift, it is critical for businesses to offer transparent, human-based communication everywhere their brand shows up, or they'll risk losing the trust of this essential consumer base.

Budget meals

With the current political climate, Gen Z is seeking ways to stretch and save their money, which underscores the recent chaos cooking and semi-homemade trends. If your food brand or business isn't thinking about how you can play in this space, now's the time.

Spicy and swicy foods

While the sweet-and-spicy food trend has been on the global radar for quite a while, it flooded American restaurants, grocery stores, and TikTok feeds in 2024. Like it or hate it, we won't see it disappear any time soon! We predict this trend expanding more into desserts, packaged snacks/treats, and main courses in 2025. Be prepared and ready to react.

Need help *navigating* these trends?

Want to learn how you can put them to work for your brand or business? [Give us a shout](#) and we'd be happy to continue the conversation!





Thank *you!*

612.877.7620
hello@ingredient.mn

575 SE 9th St., Suite 100
Minneapolis, MN 55414

ingredient.mn

