

TRENDS

TO KNOW

JANUARY 2026

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Schreiber.

THE TREND

In 2026 and beyond, there are a number of key food/flavor trends to have on the radar. Basque cheesecake (pictured here), which is crustless and features an intentionally “burnt” top (making it less labor intensive to prepare than traditional cheesecake), made Datassential’s list of 2026 New Classics. According to their *2026 Trends Report*, 63% of consumers are interested in trying Basque cheesecake, and it’s up 280% on menus over the past 4 years (Menu Trends). Basque cheesecake can also be a vehicle for other New Classic flavors like ube (a purple, Filipino yam) that’s up 231% on menus over the past 4 years. Butter chicken, an Indian dish that stars a tomato and butter or heavy cream base, is another 2026 New Classic prime for mashups (think pizza, tacos, or burgers). Looking to the future, stracciatella cheese (the creamy filling inside burrata) is set to take off, too – it’s up 134% on menus over the past 4 years.

2026
FOOD &
FLAVOR TRENDS

DAIRY REPORT

Dairy is integral to many of Datassential's food/flavor trends for 2026 – think cream cheese in Basque cheesecake, or stracciatella cheese that can be showcased on pizza or flatbread. Flavor trends like ube can put a next-level twist on yogurt and lend it a bold color. Indian butter chicken, which includes butter or heavy cream, is starring in approachable mashups like burgers and tacos. Hot honey, another 2026 New Classic, can put an on-trend “swicy” spin on nostalgic creamy dips (like the pepper jelly and cream cheese appetizer). Additionally, texture is trending in food/beverages, and cheese notably plays a big role in textural experiences (cheese pulls, anyone?).

MENU INSPIRATION

UBE BASQUE CHEESECAKE

Bloom Bake Shop | Madison, WI
Garnished with rose petals.

HOW STRACCIATELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK PIZZA

Parlor Pizza Bar | Chicago, IL (HQ)
San Marzano tomato sauce, spicy soppressata, chili oil, shaved garlic, jalapeños, parmesan, and stracciatella.

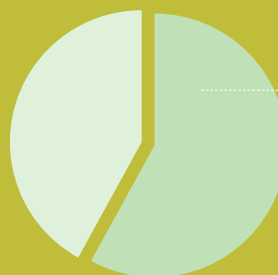
BUBBLE CHEESE MILK GRASS JELLY

Shuyi Grass Jelly & Tea | Falls Church, VA (HQ)
Rich and creamy cheese, brown sugar bubbles, and signature grass jelly.

TACO

Masti | Atlanta, GA (HQ)
Indian pancake or paratha bread stuffed with a choice of butter chicken, minced and spiced chicken, or grated paneer.

DATA FILE



58%

OF CONSUMERS
ARE INTERESTED IN
TRYING STRACCIATELLA

Datassential's 2026 Trends Report

TREND STAGE

ADOPTION



By definition, many of Datassential's cutting edge food and flavor trends to know for the future fall more to the Inception stage of the Menu Adoption Cycle (MAC), while most of the 2026 New Classics are Adoption level. New Classic flavors often move faster than formats, as can be seen with hot honey, which is in Proliferation now. Notably, Basque cheesecake, ube, and birria are all in Adoption currently, but rapidly moving along the MAC.

Datassential's 2026 food/flavor trends offer many opportunities for the dairy industry. Basque cheesecake and ube are both taking off on menus and can be paired for a social media-worthy concept. Trending flavors like lemon pepper can add interest to cheese, while stracciatella cheese, the creamy center of burrata, is prime for leveraging on items like pizza.

Indian butter chicken that's made with butter or heavy cream can also star in approachable burger or taco mashups.

KEY TAKEAWAY