

TRENDS

TO KNOW

JULY 2026

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



YOUR ROADMAP TO BUILDING PREMIUM BURGERS

THE TREND

Premium cheeses are one of the most impactful ways to elevate a burger – 87% of consumers say the type of cheese makes them more likely to buy a burger, and 32% would pay more for a burger featuring a specific type of cheese. (Datassential's *Burger Keynote*). The cheeses gaining the most ground on burger menus currently skew premium: brie is up 27% over the past 4 years and beer cheese is up 86% (Datassential One). The Purchase Intent for burger limited-time offers (LTOs) featuring aged cheddar or parmesan notably score seven points above baseline, too, demonstrating how elevated cheese offerings can move the needle (Datassential One). Beyond, cheese, other ways to communicate to consumers that a burger is premium can be through the meat (wagyu is up 52% on burger menus over the past 4 years), the bun (challah is up 25% over the past 4 years), and/or trend-forward toppings like black garlic ketchup or kimchi.

DAIRY REPORT

Premium cheese doesn't just round out a burger — it's what consumers are actively seeking: 47% say they're interested in next-level cheddar options like white, smoked, sharp, and aged cheddar (Datassential's *Burger Keynote*). Brie cheese is also trending on burgers and can be paired with premium patty meats like wagyu and innovative condiments like black garlic ketchup or gochujang ketchup to further communicate “premium” to customers. Globally-inspired spins on burgers can also lend them a premium connotation – think, for instance, Mediterranean-inspired burgers featuring yogurt-based spreads like tzatziki or whipped feta.

MENU INSPIRATION

BURGUNDY BEEF BURGER

Chomp Kitchen & Drinks

| Warren, RI (HQ)

Smash patty with Muenster, brie, and Boursin cheeses, crispy fried onions, and red wine- and Cognac-braised beef on toasted challah.

21-DAY DRY-AGED BUCKATABON BURGER

Buckatabon Tavern & Supper Club

| Wauwatosa, WI

Butter-basted, dry-aged, USDA prime chuck patty, dijon, bacon, gruyère, black garlic ketchup, roasted mushrooms, caramelized onions, and pickles on a toasted Parker House bun.

UN-BRIE-LIEVABLE BURGER

Beerhead Bar & Eatery | Cleveland, OH

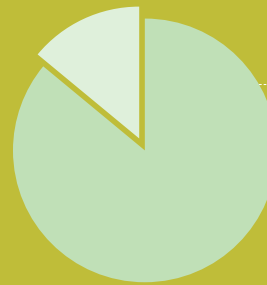
Brie cheese spread, bacon jam, and arugula on a brioche bun.

BULGOGI KIMCHI CHEESE BURGER

BBBop Seoul Kitchen | Dallas, TX

Beef smashburger with griddled onions, kimchi, bulgogi glaze, American cheese, special sauce, and house pickles on a brioche bun.

DATA FILE



86%

OF CONSUMERS LOVE OR LIKE BURGERS

Datassential One

TREND STAGE

UBIQUITY



Burgers are a well-loved comfort food and in Ubiquity on the Menu Adoption Cycle (MAC), making them a perfect vehicle for safe experimentation with earlier-stage ingredients. Trending premium patty options like wagyu are elevating burgers along with next-level toppings like black garlic ketchup, kimchi, and premium cheeses like brie. From the bun to the patty to the toppings, they all come together to communicate to customers a premium take on burgers.

Consider how every element of a burger, from the patty to the bun to the toppings, can elevate it to a premium status. As consumers increasingly associate premium ingredients with value (Datassential's *The Value Equation Report*) and seek out more elevated burger experiences, capitalizing on trending meats like wagyu, buns like brioche or challah, and/or cheeses like brie, for instance, can be key differentiators.

KEY TAKEAWAY