

# THE FLAVOR & FARE OF MEXICO

## OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE SPACE

### 2023 TREND REPORT BITE



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With millions of people in the United States today identifying themselves as Mexican immigrants or Mexican Americans, we're seeing the next generation of younger chefs and brands creating modern takes on Mexican cuisine—while also incorporating their family's recipes and ancestral ingredients. The Hispanic population and Mexican food market continues to grow, providing an opportunity to introduce more people to culinary traditions and flavor profiles—while considering how to add a modern twist.

#### *Innovation Themes:*

*Cactus Creations • Spiced-Up Chocolate  
Salsa Macha • Latin X Superfoods*



*The U.S. Hispanic population reached 62.1 million in 2020, an **increase of 23%** over the previous decade.*

*Source: Pew Research*

*Mexican food is the **second most preferred** by Americans after Italian and surpassing Chinese, Mediterranean, and Japanese (sushi).*

*Source: Beyond Borders Gazette*

## Cactus Creations

Cactus (also known as nopales) is being increasingly used as a meatless alternative in modern Mexican dishes with a soft and crunchy texture and similar flavor profile to a slightly tart green bean, asparagus, or green pepper.

Cactus can make a dish aromatic, tangy, or savory. From grilled to smoky flavors, it can absorb fresh ingredients and seasonings.

### PRODUCTS OF NOTE



#### TIA LUPITA CACTUS TORTILLA CHIPS

Varities include sea salt, habanero, hot sauce, chipotle and salsa verde

**380% GROWTH**

*Salsa macha grown on US menus over the past 4 years.*

*Source: Datassential, US Chains & Independents*



**LOS TACOS NO. 1 (NYC TAQUERIAS)**  
OFFERS GRILLED CACTUS TACOS made with homemade seasoning recipes from chefs in California and Tijuana, Mexico.

## Spiced-Up Chocolate

While spicy chocolate has been introduced to consumers over the years, authentic Mexican brands are experimenting more with chocolate and spice to create new sweet and spicy flavor combinations.

Take traditional desired bases, coffee, candy, and ice cream, and add hints of sweetness (chocolate, cinnamon) then heat (cayenne, habanero, jalapeno).

### PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**CHAMPURRADO IS A BON APPETIT RECIPE THAT IS A TYPE OF ATOLE**, a hot Mexican drink thickened with masa, chocolate, and spiced with cinnamon and just a pinch of cayenne.



**GOOD CLEAN FUN HABANERO SEA SALT** is a sweet and spicy chocolate bar.  
Ingredients: Milk chocolate (sugar, cocoa butter, powdered whole milk, cocoa mass, sunflower lecithin, vanilla), sea salt, and habanero pepper

## Salsa Macha

Salsa macha is a fried chili oil with garlic, nuts and seeds. As a traditional Mexican condiment, younger generations are creating modern and new variations.

Add a fresh take to a cultural staple through texture (chunkier) and flavor blends (chipotle, morita, and pasilla chiles with coffee, guajillo, cherries, and cacao).

### PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**MASIENDA'S PURA SALSA MACHA LINE** is a collection of three twists on the spicy topping: chipotle, morita, and pasilla chiles with the added kick of coffee; another blends guajillo, cherries, and cacao nibs to create a hot-sweet-smoky condiment.



**SALSA COMPANERA HAS A SLIGHTLY CHUNKIER TEXTURE** due to the addition of sunflower, sesame, and pumpkin seeds alongside the usual peanuts.

## LatinX Superfoods

Latin-founded brands are leveraging superfoods and ingredients that their ancestors used, creating a modern twist by introducing new grains, seeds, and fruits that offer enhanced flavors and nutritional benefits.

Within this microtrend, we're seeing lots of locally inspired ingredients and whole grains.

### PRODUCTS OF NOTE



**THE PINOLE PROJECT, A FAMILY-RUN OATMEAL BRAND, SPECIALIZES IN THE AZTEC SUPERFOOD PINOLE, A GROUND HEIRLOOM CORN SOURCED FROM OAXACA, MEXICO** A packet of Pinole Chia Oatmeal includes non-GMO heirloom corn, chia seeds, cinnamon, raw vegan cane sugar, and gluten-free oats, offering gut-friendly prebiotics that can aid in digestion.



**LLAMALAND ORGANICS CEREALS AND SPREADS** feature lesser known superfood ingredients like arracacha (the “white carrot” of the Andes), sacha inchi (known as the “nut of the Incas”), and camu camu, one of the world’s most abundant sources of natural vitamin C.



# THE TAKEAWAYS

Mexican immigration and acculturation demonstrates how the next generation will introduce modern takes on Mexican cuisine, while still incorporating their family's recipes and ancestral ingredients.

- Experiment with cactus (napiers) as a meatless alternative. Play with the texture and form along with its ability to take on both fresh, bright ingredients as well as more grilled, smoky flavors.
- Spice up traditional chocolate with authentic Mexican profiles for a hot and sweet culinary experience.
- Add a fresh take to salsa macha by exploring chunkier forms or unique flavor blends.
- Leverage Latin-inspired superfoods and ancestral ingredients to create a modern twist by introducing new grains, seeds, and fruits that offer enhanced flavors and nutritional benefits.



## SOURCES

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