DONUT Renaissance

Premium ingredients and novelty flavors fuel the craze

MATCHING GAME
Perfect coffee & pastry pairs

SPICE HACK
A new spin on sweet

Ad Boost
GET GOING ON FACEBOOK
The Rise of Donuts
Innovations in flavors, marketing and pricing turn the once-humble breakfast pastry into a showstopper.

IN EVERY ISSUE

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Kick up desserts’ flavor with unexpected spices.

Simply Sprinkles
Bring excitement to your products through vibrant colors and fun shapes that are all free from partially hydrogenated oils, artificial colors, and artificial flavors.

Reach out to your account manager for a sample of Sprinkle King Simply Sprinkles today!

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Cover photography by Tyllie Barbosa

Advertising on Facebook helps bakeries grab fans and boost customer loyalty.
The Heart of Dawn: Donuts

Ninety-seven years ago, Dawn Foods started with a simple mission: Provide the people of Jackson, Michigan with delicious donuts. Today, we are still as passionate about bakery; be it a birthday, a graduation party, or just coffee with an old friend—the treats we all make bring people together and make life that little bit sweeter.

While you can't beat a classic yeast-raised or cake donut, the continuing trend for gourmet donuts is certainly exciting. From innovative toppings and glazes to mashup formats like the Cronut®, the options to delight your customers seem almost limitless.

Top bakery items sold around Christmas:
- Cakes particularly red velvet and marble
- Brownies such as peppermint swirl brownies
- Specialty desserts like Yule logs

The holidays are coming—get ready!

1. Use premium ingredients in top-selling desserts and flavors to boost their profitability.
2. Run promotions across product categories, likes dessert cakes and minis, to encourage customers to try more of the bakery’s offerings.
3. Market single servings as luxurious treats or rewards, and wrap them in festive packaging.

Feed the Need for Indulgence

92% of consumers indulge in food more during the holiday season, with 86% saying sweets are their favorite indulgence.

78% of consumers are more likely to eat dessert when they want to treat or reward themselves.

More than 1/3 say they’re more likely to order desserts when they’re in small portions

Want more holiday tips and inspiration? Visit DawnFoods.com for staffing advice, recipes and more.

Eye on the Prize—And the Pies

More than 75% of shoppers plan to buy prepared foods during the holidays. Bakery pies and desserts are the most in-demand prepared items (54%).

Thanksgiving pie flavor favorites:
- 17% Other
- 36% Pumpkin
- 8% Chocolate
- 10% Sweet Potato
- 14% Apple
- 15% Pecan

FESTIVE FLAVORS

Here are the most popular—and profitable—desserts for your holiday menu.

Visit DawnFoods.com for staffing advice, recipes and more.
Most new recipes aren’t new at all. “A pound cake is a pound cake. A chiffon cake is a chiffon cake,” says Valerie Gordon, co-owner of Valerie Confections in Los Angeles. “What you can do is apply your own perspective and personality onto desserts.”

That’s what she did when she launched her eatery in 2004 with historic confectioner See’s Candies’ chocolate-dipped toffee inspired by an icon in 1941. Gordon isn’t the only one with an appetite for bygone sweets. At Astro Doughnuts & Fried Chicken in Washington, D.C., retro flavors take new form in a pineapple upside-down cake donut made with a brown sugar glaze, diced caramelized pineapple and pineapple-caramel drizzle. Ready to build a retro-inspired creation? Start by deconstructing classics and using garnishes that hint at the desserts’ traditional origins on Valerie Confections’ menu and website: “It’s all about getting to the heart of the dessert and really honoring the original,” she says.

It’s no secret college kids love free food. And some bakeries are using nontraditional methods to get their attention. Instead of word-of-mouth marketing, Legendary Doughnuts practices in-mall marketing. When new students at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, tour the area, guides bring them into the shop for a free donut. The freebies pay off; newcomers quickly turn into regulars. They’re drawn to the bakery not only by its good, solid values. “They care about where food is sourced from and they’re buying from people who have good, solid values,” says Manager Shari Watkins.

“Millennials are very conscious about sustainability; but they’re not afraid to pay a premium for quality coffee beverages. As with anything for this tech-savvy demographic, make beautiful coffee drinks to inspire social sharing. And don’t forget to recommend pairing these beverages to encourage sales.” – Ashley Greene Bernick

School’s in Session: Marketing to College Kids

Test these tried-and-true ways to turn students into loyal customers.

Use Local Ingredients

One of Metropolitan Bakery’s locations is on the edge of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and 80 percent of its customers are students. The restaurant found that using natural, locally sourced ingredients resonates with college students, who also appreciate indulgent sweets. “Millennials are very conscious about not buying foods that have artificial colors; but they’re not necessarily calorie counting,” says Manager Shari Watkins.

Free treats and amenities aren’t the only way to attract college kids. See how else bakeries turn students into loyal customers:

Best Practice

Caffeine Cash-In

Millennials are fueling unprecedented demand for premium coffee beverages. Forty-one percent of 25- to 39-year-olds drink gourmet coffee beverages regularly, according to the National Coffee Association of USA. Coffee shops shouldn’t be the only ones cashing in. Bakeries can attract more young customers and encourage them to spend more per visit by pairing desserts and pastries with high-quality brews and sophisticated coffee drinks. Here are five pairing ideas to sip on:

44% of U.S. coffee demand spending nearly $25 on coffee beverages. Retrospective flavors take new form in a pineapple upside-down cake donut made with a brown sugar glaze, diced caramelized pineapple and pineapple-caramel drizzle. Ready to build a retro-inspired creation? Start by deconstructing classics and using garnishes that hint at the desserts’ traditional origins on Valerie Confections’ menu and website: “It’s all about getting to the heart of the dessert and really honoring the original,” she says. — Matt Alderton

Does your bakery make a retro dessert? Share a photo on Facebook. @DawnFoodsNorthAmerica and use #DawnRetro.

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Metropolitan Bakery

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Metropolitan Bakery

Cater to the Crowd

When Metropolitan opened, it didn’t take credit cards. Over the years, that changed, partially to accommodate younger customers. “More often than not, students don’t have any cash and are buying a $2 item with credit,” Born says. Metropolitan not only offers price points students can afford but also strives to make both taking food to go and dining at the cafe personalized experiences. “Our staff is trained to try to immediately build a rapport—that matters a lot with younger age groups,” Born says.

— Erin Berenson

Raised on lattes and flat whites, college students will pay a premium for quality coffee beverages.

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A shorter roasting time for the beans creates a mild, fruity brewed coffee that pairs well with lighter desserts.

Iced coffee and danish

Usually brewed with a darker roast, iced coffee has a bold flavor that complements heartier pastries and rounds out a perfect on-the-go breakfast.

Espresso and double fudge brownie

Match the sharp, concentrated punch of espresso with intense, rich chocolate desserts.

Cappuccino and vanilla biscotti

The creaminess of espresso topped with steamed milk is perfect for dipping biscotti and other crunchy treats.

Cafe mocha and almond croissant

Avoid muting the drink’s sweet chocolate flavor by serving it with a mild pastry.

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Innovations in flavors, marketing and pricing turn a once-humble breakfast pastry into a showstopper.

By Kate Rockwood
Photography by Tyllie Barbosa

You could say the donut has become a canvas for innovation. — Darren Tristano, president, Technomic

Glazed, powdered and jelly-filled donuts are timeless, but the industry’s come a long way from offering just the classics. Today, artisanal bakeries are attracting massive crowds with innovative flavor profiles (like brown butter hazelnut), unexpected add-ons (think Cinnamon Toast Crunch™) and hybrid creations (Cronut®, we’re looking at you). But when—and how—did the bakery donut become so cool?

“The donut has always been an affordable indulgence for Americans, but over the past 10 years, it’s become much more premiumized into higher-quality and more inventive offerings,” says Darren Tristano, president of the restaurant industry research firm Technomic. “You could say the donut has become a canvas for innovation. We’re really seeing a donut renaissance.”

And the sky may be the limit to this trend. “I don’t think the donut craze is going to stop,” says Matt Fein, executive chef at Philadelphia’s Federal Donuts. The shop’s changing donut menu—which has included flavors like blueberry mascarpone, lemon meringue and grapefruit brulee—regularly draws long lines.

Take a look at the flavors and creations fueling the unstoppable—and profitable—gourmet donut craze.
5 DONUT TRENDS THAT GOT US HERE.

In 2013, New York Pastry Chef Dominique Ansel introduced a donut-shaped confection made from croissant-like dough and fried to perfection. Days later, long lines formed outside his bakery for the pastry. And when the eatery hosted a limited-time flash sale, offering to ship Cronuts™ across the U.S., the event’s webpage received 1 million views. Four years later, lines still run hundreds deep, and the once-exclusive indulgence has made it through the entire product life cycle: An imitation is going to justify that. "It’s a tropical fruit and not something that ever really caught on here," says Pastry Chef Darren Tristano, president of Technomic, who points to the growing use of Asian-inspired flavors and products like Korean jelly. Monitor local menu trends to see which global flavors are likely to please core customers. At Union Square Donuts in Somerville, Massachusetts, the flaky texture of toasted coconut donuts hit a home run with customers. Meanwhile, guava donuts struck out at Federal Donuts in Philadelphia. "It’s a tropical fruit and something that we really caught on here," says Pastry Chef Matt Fein. Test new flavors as limited-time offerings to hype up customers and hand out samples so they can try them without committing to a full donut.

With more high-quality ingredients going into artisanal donuts, protecting your margins may seem hard. But consumers are willing to pay more for trendy treats. "You’re seeing these price points elevating more toward where cupcakes are today: that $3 to $5 range," says Darren Tristano, president of Technomic. "So operators are able to increase the quality of the ingredients because the premiumized price point is going to justify that." Matt Fein, executive chef at Federal Donuts in Philadelphia, says his "fancy" donuts are often more profitable than basic varieties. Offer the flavors and textures dessert lovers want in innovative donuts that feature high-end ingredients, and they’ll be happy to pay more for them. Ready to upgrade to that small-batch maple syrup or Valrhona chocolate? Be sure to spotlight that ingredient on the menu, says Tristano. And don’t hesitate to tier pricing, so that donuts with greater labor or ingredient costs can command those higher prices.

Donuts satisfy more than a sweet tooth, and more bakers use savory ingredients and fillings for their creations. In 2016, New York’s Doughnut Plant adopted the trend with doughpods, yeast donuts filled with ingredients like avocado and potato. "There’s this early fascination with doughnuts—buyers who want something that’s a little out of the box," says Josh Danoff, co-founder of Union Square Donuts. One forward-looking trend is ethnically inspired flavors and products like Korean jelly. Monitor local menu trends to see which global flavors are likely to please core customers. At Union Square Donuts in Somerville, Massachusetts, the flaky texture of toasted coconut donuts hit a home run with customers. Meanwhile, guava donuts struck out at Federal Donuts in Philadelphia. "It’s a tropical fruit and something that we really caught on here," says Pastry Chef Matt Fein. Test new flavors as limited-time offerings to hype up customers and hand out samples so they can try them without committing to a full donut.

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More than half of consumers are interested in nostalgic desserts, according to Datassential. And nostalgia is the name of the game for this donut, featuring childhood breakfast favorites like Cap’n Crunch™, as seen in Portland, Oregon’s, Voodoo Doughnut creation, Captain My Captain, and Fruity PEBBLES™—on the menu at Doughnuttry in New York. Datassential research shows bacon mentions on dessert menus soared 137 percent over the past four years. And, bacon and donuts are a hot couple. The maple bacon donut is the best-seller at Union Square Donuts in Somerville, Massachusetts. “It’s like the best pancake breakfast that you’ve ever had—except you don’t need to use a fork and knife,” says Co-founder Josh Danoff.

The Cereal Donut

The Bacon Donut

The Donut Sandwich

The Savory Donut

The Cronut®

The Donut Sandwich

SURPRISING DELIGHTS

Which donut flavor is your secret hero—a surprising favorite that attracts customers to your bakery?

GLAZED OLD FASHIONED

MAPLE

DOUBLE CHOCOLATE

BLUEBERRY CAKE

POWDERED SUGAR

OTHER

26%

22%

14%

14%

4%

20%

Source: Bakers were polled for Donuts & Chicken, INGREDIENTS.com page in June 2017

“FANCY DONUTS ARE OFTEN MORE PROFITABLE THAN BASIC VARIETIES.”

—Matt Fein, executive chef at Federal Donuts in Philadelphia

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Learn the Ropes

Facebook's robust advertising capabilities can be intimidating. Here are three types of Facebook ad placements bakeries should consider.

1. BOOSTED POSTS: Paying to amplify the reach of organic posts, which Moulin does, is a great starting point. Boosting ensures posts appear more frequently in the news feed of a specific audience.

2. PAID NEWS FEED ADS: These ads target potential new followers. Paid ads include the bakery’s name, text, an image or video, a link to its website and a “Like Page” button.

3. RIGHT COLUMN ADS: Appearing in the margin of users’ news feeds, these only include an image, text and a website link. They’re most effective for bakeries that want to drive traffic to their websites. Facebook makes it easy for bakeries to choose criteria for whose feeds they populate, including both current and potential followers. For instance, an owner can place a wedding cake ad targeting 24- to 32-year-old men and women who are in relationships and within a 10-mile radius of the bakery.

Budget Wisely

Facebook uses an auction system that helps bakeries choose how much they’ll pay to reach certain audiences with each ad. Prices fluctuate according to the station, whereas with Facebook, you can see exactly how many people clicked through on a post.

Monitor and record top-performing ads to identify commonalities. For example, videos may outperform images, while posts that include questions may drive more comments.

Advertising on Facebook helps bakeries grab fans and boost customer loyalty.

By Erin Brereton

Turn Likes Into Sales

Roughly a year before opening French bakery and cafe Moulin, owner Laurent Vrignaud created a Facebook page to build anticipation. By the time the Newport Beach, California, eatery served its first baguette, construction photos and other updates had garnered 500 followers. Three years later, the bakery boasts more than 3,300 followers. But as Facebook’s algorithms changed, Moulin, like other businesses using the platform, found only a small portion of followers actually saw the restaurant’s posts in their news feeds.

“Facebook doesn’t show posts to everyone who likes your page,” says Janine Monico, vice president of SEOM Interactive. “It can be difficult to post frequently and expect results if you’re not putting money behind it.”

That’s why Vrignaud began paying to post—“the only advertising Moulin has ever done.”

“When’s incredible is that for just a few dollars, a lot of people will see [a post],” Vrignaud says. “Plus, Facebook shows you whether 900 people saw it organically, or 2,700 people saw it because you paid.”

According to Facebook’s scheduling tool, it’s an agile platform, so owners can easily throw in an extra ad or boost a post.

Advertising on Facebook opens the door to new followers. Paid ads include an image, text and a website link. For local businesses, you can’t beat that.

Budget Wisely

Facebook uses an auction system that helps bakeries choose how much they’ll pay to reach certain audiences with each ad. Prices fluctuate based on demand. For example, getting eyes on a pumpkin pie post in November will cost more than it will in July.

The good news is that no budget is too small—a major advantage Facebook advertising has over print ads, radio spots, TV commercials and other types of digital advertising. Businesses can set a daily budget or a lifetime budget, according to Monico. “For small, local bakeries, even $25 a month is not a bad budget,” Monico says.

Recipe: The Perfect Post

Bakery advertising takes time, something bakery owners don’t always have a lot of. Develop a monthly calendar that includes at least one post a week, Monico advises. Then, upload all posts—both paid and organic—using Facebook’s scheduling tool. It’s an agile platform, so owners can easily throw in an extra ad or boost a post.

When an organic post is performing well, Facebook alerts page administrators, giving them the option to boost those posts in real time. Set aside a few minutes every day or two to review page notifications to ensure the bakery responds quickly to activity.

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Recipe: The Perfect Post

“Bakeries are a visual medium,” says Bernadette Sharahan-Hans, director of operations at the Retail Bakers of America. “Using videos and pictures gives customers an idea of how talented they are, what they’re working on and how busy they are.”

BREVITY

Limit link titles to 25 characters and text to 90 characters to meet Facebook’s best-practice guidelines and avoid losing readers’ interest.

BAIT

Write calls to action that focus on customers’ needs—not the bakery’s. For example, accompany a picture of pie with “Need a last-minute dessert for Thanksgiving dinner?” rather than “Stop in for a great pie!”

Measure Success

“The biggest benefit of a social media strategy is that it’s all trackable,” Monico says. “[With a] radio ad, you just know how many people listen to the station, whereas with Facebook, you can tell exactly how many people clicked through on a post.”

Monitor and record top-performing ads to identify commonalities. For example, videos may outperform images, while posts that include questions may drive more comments.

Bakers wear many hats, and marketing isn’t always their primary focus. However, dedicating a small amount of time and budget to advertising on Facebook can pay off big.

Erin Brereton is a freelance writer in Chicago.
We’re obsessed with flavor. We’re also obsessed with discovering fine-flavor beans and crafting couverture chocolate that provides you with the tools to craft perfection. The art of chocolate making begins on the farm, cultivates in our factory and continues once it arrives in your kitchens.

Celebrate the art of chocolate making. Since 1868.

**CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE**

This is not your ordinary chocolate "chip" cookie. The fruity sour and malty tones of our 38% milk chocolate wafers balance out the fresh berry and deep chocolate intensity of the 64% wafers for a chewy and intense chocolate "chip" cookie; a step above the rest.

**Ingredients:**

- Unsalted Butter 340g
- Unbleached Pastry Flour 272g
- Pure Cane Sugar 204g
- Unbleached All Purpose Flour 102g
- Light Brown Sugar 204g
- Baking Powder 8.5g
- Free Range Eggs 120g
- Sea Salt 8.5g
- Guittard 38% Milk Chocolate 225g
- Guittard 64% Semisweet Chocolate 225g

**Method:**

1. Cream together the butter and the sugars on medium speed until light and fluffy.
2. Add the eggs gradually while mixing to emulsify. Scrape down.
3. Separately, whisk together the flours, baking powder and salt.
4. Add the dry ingredients and mix on low speed to combine. Scrape down.
5. Add the chocolate wafers to combine.
6. Refrigerate dough.
7. Roll into 80g logs and refrigerate.
8. Slice and separate onto parchment-lined sheet pan.

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**Boosting Menu Transparency**

Bakeries need to know which food claims resonate with their customers. That’s where, in Davidovich’s case, certifications come in. “Consumers may not understand everything about the certification, but they feel a greater comfort level knowing that there’s a higher level of scrutiny involved in making the product,” Fintz says. Many of Davidovich’s products are certified kosher and Non-GMO Project Verified, which attracts specific consumers. However, for bakeries targeting other demographics, certifications may vary or be unnecessary. The best way to collect this insight is through customer surveys.

**1. Educate Yourself**

“Artisanal bakers are artists, and they’re passionate about their products, but they have to dedicate time to understanding the market and getting educated on ingredients,” says Marc Fintz, director of business development at Davidovich Bakery, a Woodside, New York, operation specializing in all-natural bagels. Fintz recommends asking vendors for technical support and insight into consumers’ preferences. “They have technical people and educational programs,” he says. “They can help the small baker understand the ingredient, why it’s beneficial and the industry standard.”

**2. Know Your Crowd**

Before cutting certain ingredients entirely or seeking certification, thoroughly examine processes, sourcing and pricing. The bread Frogs Bakery sells at Los Angeles-area farmers markets and to wholesale customers is certified organic, but its pastries are not. “Bread is a very simple product; we use organic flour, salt water and an organic, natural starter,” says owner Marc Lory. “With pastries, you’re getting into complications because of two problems: the sourcing and the price. Lory provides the example of Frogs’ almond croissant, sold for $5. If the bakery made the croissant organic, it would have to raise the price to $8 or $9 to cover the ingredient costs. “Nobody would ever buy it,” Lory says.

**3. Start Small and Simple**

Whether bakeries decide to revamp recipes or better communicate the ingredients in current offerings, they need to think beyond menu boards. Lory maximizes his interactions with customers at farmers markets to explain its products’ quality. He also hands out samples and offers first-time buyers a discounted price. “It’s better than advertising,” he says. Be sure all customer-facing employees can answer questions about the menu and that the bakery’s website includes ingredient information. Vendors and certification organizations offer a variety of educational materials that can help.

**4. Talk It Up**

Now more than ever, consumers want to know what’s in their food. Wary of artificial ingredients, they’re examining labels and menus, seeking terms they recognize, as well as buzzwords like “all-natural” and “organic.” This is a huge opportunity for bakeries, but it’s also complex. These five tips can help owners identify what customers care about most, and offer it profitably.

**5. Don’t Underestimate Branding**

“The fruity sour and malty tones of our 38% milk chocolate wafers balance out the fresh berry and deep chocolate intensity of the 64% wafers for a chewy and intense chocolate "chip" cookie; a step above the rest.
ELEVATE AN ITALIAN CLASSIC: Simmer milk with Saffron and Cardamom before adding it into the dough of apricot panettone.

HEAT UP LEMON COOKIES: Add Ginger to dry flour mix before combining wet ingredients and lemon juice.

GIVE DONUTS A SAVORY, AROMATIC FLAVOR: Make a glaze from Matcha Powder confectioners’ sugar and whole milk. Glaze donuts and top them with black sesame seeds.

PERK UP BROWNIES: Incorporate Cayenne Pepper into brownie batter or icing to create belly-warming Mexican hot chocolate brownies.

BOOST CHOCOLATE COOKIES: Mix freshly ground Black Peppercorns, crushed Pink Peppercorns and cinnamon into flour.

MATCHA POWDER BOOST CHOCOLATE COOKIES: Mix freshly ground crushed and cinnamon into flour.

GINGER DESSERTS

Want more ideas? Check out our chai-spiced donut holes formula at DawnFoods.com/ChaiDonuts

Cater to consumers seeking exotic flavors.

SPICE UP DESSERTS