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SUMMER SNAPSHOT 2021



Noticeboard



Selfridges launches in-store garden centre

Selfridges has launched garden centres at its stores in London, Manchester and Birmingham in an attempt to capitalise on the pandemic-driven gardening boom.

The luxury department store said the new garden centres form part of a creative theme for the year called Good Nature, and are a response to recent Horticultural Trades Association figures that showed that over 3 million people started gardening in 2020 as a result of more time spent at home since the first lockdown.



Unilever reveals 'world's first' paper-based laundry detergent bottle

They plan to debut the bottles in Brazil by early 2022 for our OMO brand and are also piloting the technology to create paper-based hair care bottles.



Sainsbury's has partnered with Italian restaurant Carluccio's to launch a new concept at its superstore in Shires Retail Park, Leamington Spa.

The new Carluccio's Counter is set to open at the store from 24 June. The format will be similar to a supermarket deli and will feature an array of freshly-made takeaway options such as pasta bakes, pizzas and rotisserie chicken.



Crown Decorating Centres has brought back its "Kick out the Can" scheme.

Which encourages retail customers to bring in any paint cans from any UK manufacturer so that the can and contents can be recycled.



Time's up for Pimm's o'clock as drinkers prefer Aldi version.

Aldi beat both Pimms and Aperol in blind taste tests in which consumers rated the flavour, "mouthfeel", appearance and aroma of each drink. More people picked it as their preferred drink compared to Tesco and Pimm's, with 45 per cent saying it was their favourite of the three.

COLGATE TARGETS PLASTIC REDUCERS WITH LAUNCH OF ALUMINIUM TOOTHBRUSH.

The new aluminium toothbrushes use 80% less plastic than a regular manual one due to replaceable heads and reduces 151% more bacteria for a whole mouth clean.



Asda to launch packaging-free zones across more stores, allowing shoppers to fill bottles and jars from home



Shoppers will be able to bypass plastic bottles, boxes and shrink-wrap, instead dispensing goods produced by household-name brands into their own containers.

Demand has been so great in Asda's Middleton store that sales of some goods have outperformed packaged products, the supermarket chain said.

Home Improvements

2020 was the year no one expected. We all spent much more time indoors due to coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, and that was reflected in the number and type of home improvements we made last year. The journey to creating a home that's great for both work and play is only just beginning, as more than half of us are planning to improve our homes in 2021. So, whether you're interested in unique home improvements like a 'cloffice' or extra space to work out in, or you're simply looking to update your interior décor – here are four key trends to look out for this year.

A PLACE WITH MORE SPACE



The pandemic has changed UK homeowners' priorities when it comes to what we want from our homes. Lots of us want to add space to our homes in 2021, and jobs such as building an extension, adding bespoke storage and knocking walls down to create an open plan, multi-functional space are amongst the top jobs planned. The race for space isn't limited to our existing properties either; 25% of UK residents want to move to a bigger property in the next year, whilst 29% want to move to a property that has more outdoor space. Potential buyers are willing to cough up the cash for a home that has the extra space, too. Features promising privacy add the most value to your property, with homeowners expecting to pay around £14,000 more for a self-contained annex. Smaller upgrades are also highly desired – a vegetable patch could get you over £6,000 more for your home.

SHINY NEW OFFICES



55% of the UK worked from home in 2020, but many of our home office set-ups didn't inspire productivity. 41% of those working from home told us they didn't have a proper desk, and 24% said they were embarrassed by their background on video calls. So, it's no surprise that 38% of us want to improve our home offices in 2021. The number of 'home office' jobs posted on Rated People more than doubled in 2020 and 43% of UK residents say they plan to work from home more than they did before (even if COVID-19 were to completely disappear), so we're definitely expecting this trend to continue into 2021 and beyond. When it comes to home office design, our analysis of home offices on Instagram reveals that Scandi styling was increasingly popular in 2020, and neutral colours, house plants and simple furniture are shaping up to be key trends for 2021.

RESPONSIBLE LIFESTYLES



57% of UK residents told us they wanted to be more eco-friendly in 2021 – whether that's recycling more, eating less meat, or making home improvements to make our homes more eco-friendly or more energy-efficient. Government initiatives such as the Green Homes Grant are helping homeowners to improve their homes in different ways, and in 2020, uPVC windows and doors, roof insulation and solar panel installation were amongst the top 15 eco jobs posted on Rated People. This year, another 4% of the UK say they plan to apply for the Green Homes Grant, to help them complete green upgrades.

GARDENS GALORE



Our gardens were a sanctuary for many of us in 2020. 39% of us got more into gardening during lockdown, and 64% of UK residents now say they wouldn't buy a home if it didn't have any outside space. Many of the top gardening jobs completed in 2020 also made their way onto gardening wishlists for 2021. 47% of UK residents are planning improvements for their gardens this year, and the top jobs that gardeners are keen to tackle are: planting new flowers and trees, creating a vegetable patch; and installing a new shed, fencing and external lighting.

CHANGES AT HOME

A house isn't just a place to live any more – it's your office, your gym, yoga studio, and more – and people are looking to create homes that reflects this. Here's how...



HALLWAYS

"The change in the way we design our homes could start from the very entrance, which we expect to take on a different, much more important form as parcels and groceries that are delivered all need to be handled differently," explains Elicyon's Charu Gandhi. Will we all want an area where we can store goods on delivery, that can then be safely taken to a utility room or space to be disinfected? Where possible, many of us will want dual entrances into our homes even more so now than before. A secondary entrance or boot room that leads directly into a utility space will become coveted real estate.

'A private exercise space has always been an important consideration in many of the homes we design, but lockdown has certainly placed more emphasis on specific features within a home gym over others. For example, virtual training sessions have soared during this time, which means a good screen (which can be hidden away) is essential and excellent speakers are even more important for online personal training sessions, classes such as Peloton, and exercising with friends online,' Millier's creative directors revealed. "We are currently designing a basement gym for one of our clients who has amended the brief to have more access to fresh air and natural light. An entire side wall of the room is glazed and can be completely opened up into a light well with a green wall, a water feature and ample fresh air. It is a great way to make a basement gym space feel light, healthy and connected with nature and the outside world which is essential as we are now spending most of our time at home."



KITCHEN PANTRIES

'With families cooking more together, I suspect kitchens as the heart of the home will become even more central' agrees Elicyon's Charu Gandhi. The storage of food, dry goods, and space for the fridge and freezer may all take priority and mean our kitchens become bigger, taking up more space within our homes. This could mean a bigger focus around pantry design.



AT-HOME GYMS

HYGIENE IN DESIGN

TOTO, the Japanese bathroom manufacturer is seeing increased demand in Europe during the pandemic for its contemporary toilets and WASHLET™ shower loos. Gaining popularity in UK homes, the smart sanitaryware is also used in some hospitals for its self-cleaning ability and hygienic design and technology, which can prevent germs spreading.



HOME SPAS

Bathrooms have long been a space to escape to after a tough day but that desire is becoming greater. Hayley Robson, Creative Director, Day True, says 'We will now start see the importance of home spas to allow us to fully relax and de-stress. Adding a steam function to a shower area, or removing the shower all together and opting for a large luxurious bath can provide different ways to relax with water.' 'The main bathroom, sometimes redundant with the introduction of more en-suites, may transform into a home gym-cum-spa space to fully maximise every square inch. Our health, wellbeing and especially mental health are all elements that our homes should provide a remedy for.'

HOME
TRENDS IN
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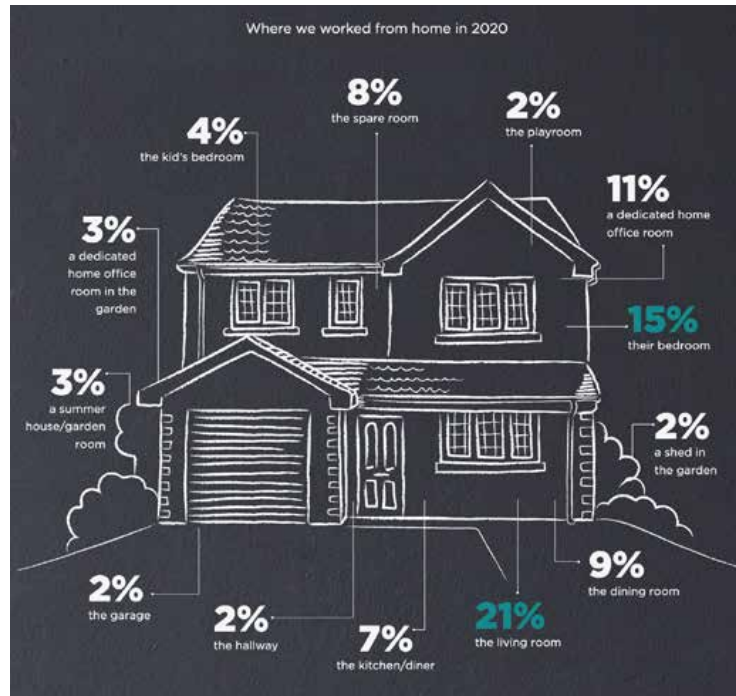


SOURCE: www.livingetc.com

Home Office

THE REALITY OF WORKING FROM HOME

Last year, more than half (55%) of the UK worked from home. To adapt to this unprecedented way of working, employees and employers up and down the country transformed different areas of their homes to accommodate remote working.



BALANCING WORK AND HOME

Although working from home has its benefits, it can also make separating work from home life a challenge. Lots of us had to create makeshift office spaces in the rooms we'd usually relax in, so many of us had a less than perfect home office environment. In 2020, 57% more home improvement jobs mentioning 'home office' were posted on Rated People compared to 2019. In 2021, 43% of UK residents plan to work from home more than they did before (even if COVID-19 was to completely disappear) and 38% of us want to improve our home working environment this year. We predict home office improvements will be one of the biggest trends for 2021.



FOCUS
ON..

Multi-functional spaces will also be the key to home layouts. We'll start to see the incorporation of desks and workspaces into bedrooms and living rooms as part of the norm, because even those who continue to work in an office will likely have more flexibility to engage in remote work. Creating multiple workspaces throughout the home means that two people can work from home at the same time without bothering each other. Multi-functional spaces that work well were key, transforming kid's rooms and master bedrooms with desk areas, in order to have multiple study areas, so more than one person can work at a time.

STYLISH DESK CHAIRS

From now on, Stylish desk chairs will reign. As more and more people introduce home offices into their decor, expectations for stylish and ergonomic desk chairs will be on the rise. If you're introducing a desk into your living room, you don't want your chair to look like it came out of a corporate office. We'll see manufacturers catering to home office buyers looking for chairs that will fit in with their aesthetics and give users the comfort they need.

In the last 30 days, new chairs were the most commonly purchased piece of home office furniture - proof that a comfortable seat is key. A style that puts form on par with function.



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In the Home



Knotted Light Fixtures

"We've always believed a statement light fixture can tie any space together, and one trend we've loved lately is light fixtures using braided and knotted textiles. They are the perfect addition to a neutral space, because they offer plenty of natural, organic texture and visual interest while staying within a neutral palette. They offer a hint of coastal aesthetic." - Andrea Goldman

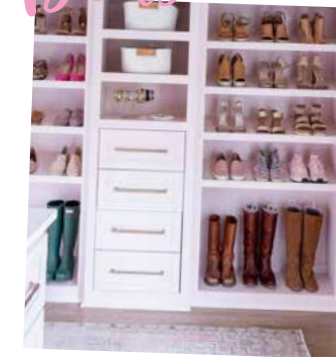


Pantone 2021 Colour of the Year: Ultimate Gray and Illuminating

"The Pantone Colour of the Year reflects what is taking place in our global culture, expressing what people are looking for that colour can hope to answer. As society continues to recognise colour as a critical form of communication, and a way to symbolise thoughts and ideas, many designers and brands are embracing the language of colour to engage and connect." - Pantone Colour Institute's Laurie Pressman

"Millennials may have named the colour, but for this designer, blush tones are now considered a neutral. I expect to see more of this in 2021 in spaces that used to be reserved for white paint only." - Lori Paranjape

Blush



INTERIOR TRENDS IN 2021..

Earthy Palettes and Textures

"We'll see lots of earthy palettes and textures in 2021. Think the continuation of plaster and travertines, lots of rattan, camels in lieu of gray, and deep, neutralized hues like olive green and burnt orange." - Gillian Segal



COMBINE CHECKS AND STRIPES

Everyone's two favorite patterns combine for this fun new trend that mixes the classic check and stripe with new-season colours. Mix and match patterns in different scales to create the right balance. In this bedroom the delicately patterned cushions and eiderdown soften the effect of the stripes and checks on the wall and bed.

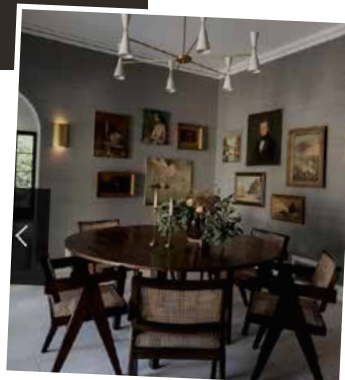


BIDETS

"Believe it or not, bidets will be popular. The toilet paper gate of 2020 scared us all, and lately my design firm has been getting a couple of inquiries about our thoughts on bidets." - Tiffany Leigh

Old-World Influences

"I believe design should be timeless! So what is 'in' is that old-world aesthetic that never gets old. Darker, moodier rooms, old oil paintings mixed with a modern light fixture to the tune of not being able to place what era the room is from - that's how to achieve timelessness; mix and match eras!" - Joyce Downing Pickens



Dress up with statement headboards and canopies

With the rise of the boutique hotel and its trending look in residential design, the headboard has become a brilliant focal point in bedroom decor,' continues Martin Waller. 'Look to the Firmdale Hotels for inspiration on using brave colour and pattern and have fun coordinating your headboard with a wallpaper or throw. Don't be afraid to choose a more outlandish style as this only adds more character. See it as art above your bed.'



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Retail trends

HOW COVID HAS CHANGED THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE?

Here are some emerging trends that reflect the way we are shopping and will continue to shop in 2021 and beyond:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues online a MORE human experience



AI has been present in retail developments for many years, and of late we have seen more examples of seamless integration. Both online and in-store, AI has created the opportunity to remove pain-barriers and clunky transactions in favour of an enhanced and personalised shopping experience.

Could AI become the entire foundation for the ways in which we shop, socialise, work, rest and play? One of the biggest retail headaches to solve in online shopping: returns? An estimated 30% + of all purchases are returned, with many of those returns being linked to fit and sizing. Organisations like TrueFit, Bold Metrics and Fit Analytics are collaborating with brands such as ASOS and Adidas to make millions of sizing recommendations every month.

With the growth of BOPIS (Buy Online Pay In Store) and more consumers wanting to receive greater service when they do visit traditional stores, the bricks and mortar store opportunity will need to sit as an added value differentiator for those that have already done so much online.

Smaller format stores enhancing discovery and service



Retail stores are restructuring post-pandemic, during a time when even more department and larger format stores are struggling and closing.

The reinvention of physical retail is one which must ensure that it serves a purpose beyond that of the pure sales opportunity that is now available 24/7 online.

Creating smaller, more affordable to run sales outlets that can deliver on service rather than a warehousing of goods, can showcase concepts, provide human service and engagement opportunities and if appropriate, house experiences and social occasions - e.g. arts, activities and hospitality.

Social media has driven online discovery apace and DTC brands have benefited from influencers and micro-influencers creating attention and sales for brands that might not have reached full audience potential without that channel.

Even fashion was one of the most affected sectors for sales in 2020 and saw consumers become more intrigued with new and unfamiliar brands (44% of millennials and Gen Z tried new brands last year, according to McKinsey)

The threat of ongoing store closures



It is predicted that store closures could continue after brands like Debenhams and Arcadia have left high streets for good, and amidst giants like Marks & Spencer fulfilling store closure programmes.

The pressure point of an upcoming review of unpaid rent may also be the tipping point of further store closures.

The independent reports that a moratorium preventing commercial landlords from evicting tenants unable to pay their rent will come to an end on 30 June, and the British Retail Consortium (BRC) anticipates this might create a 'tsunami of closures' if more is not done.

The BRC's survey reports that 80% of tenants said some landlords have given them less than a year to pay back rent arrears and without action, the end of the moratorium could see thousands of shops close.

The disparity between different towns and cities, behaviour across various demographics and pace of change when it comes to omni-channel may highlight the need for a localised approach to retail from the national brands. If physical stores are to survive, the same attention to detail that we see demonstrated from AI enhanced online experiences must be applied - the pressure is on for the continued rethink of retail spaces.

Smaller towns are seeing sales return sooner than big cities



The retail landscape will also see more balance in where we return to shop, with smaller towns and cities benefitting faster, linked to the amount of people working locally rather than commuting back into bigger cities.

As many consumers are still staying away from physical shopping, the same also goes for places of work (UK's Google's Covid-19 Community Mobility study reported -29% against baseline for workplaces and -12% against baseline for retail and recreation)

Cities like London are finding that recovery is more sluggish than in some of the smaller towns, particularly in the North, in places such as Huddersfield, Blackburn and Middlesbrough.

With bigger centres reliant on office workers returning to drive the recovery in spend there is a clear divide between towns and cities since non-essential retailers reopened.

Towns like Basildon and Birkenhead have enjoyed the benefit of spending rebounds whilst larger cities like Manchester and Birmingham have struggled (Spending data tracked by Centre for Cities).

RETAIL TRENDS IN 2021..

Online is here to stay



In the UK, the ONS also reported that all retail sectors had seen a fall in their proportions of online sales as physical stores re-opened during the month of April; total proportion of sales online decreased to 30.0% in April 2021, down from 34.7% in March 2021. Whilst there might be a slight shift of sales back to traditional bricks and mortar, most are anticipating that omni-channel shopping will continue to be a significant part of the retail mix - with major brands like John Lewis Partnership and Marks & Spencer highlighting this in turnaround strategies to streamline stores and invest more in developing their digital offers. Research from Natwest Bank into how consumers would continue to shop post lockdown reported that 32% of consumers surveyed said they expect to continue with new e-commerce habits in the future, with that figure rising to 40% in 45-54 year-olds.

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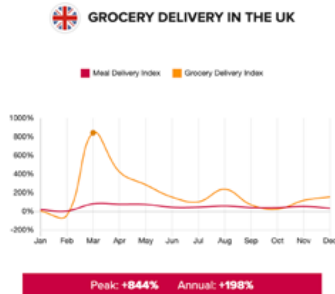
SOURCE: www.forbes.com

HOW COVID-19 IS CHANGING THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY

1. SHOPPING HABITS

Will the world ever go back to 'normal' food shopping?

COVID-19 created massive spikes in online grocery delivery. In the early stages of the pandemic, F&B supermarkets and grocery stores across Europe were closed as people were instructed by Governments to stay indoors. Consumers stopped going out, eating out and visiting packed supermarkets and other F&B outlets. But consumers still needed to eat, and with the new normal of confinement, consumers turned to online grocery in massive volumes.



WHAT THE DATA INDICATES

Consumers turned online in massive volumes to satisfy their needs. This will re-structure the F&B industry in different ways.

RE-THINKING REAL ESTATE If online grocery shopping continues to grow, fewer consumers will have reasons to visit supermarkets. Which questions the value of big supermarket real-estate and the logistics that supplies them.

RE-THINKING MARKETING With the in-store 'stumble upon' marketing method for new products diminished, F&B will need to pivot hard to creative online marketing methods to bring new products and brands in front of consumers.

BACK TO BASICS Having the best and freshest range in-store will soon be matched by the need to have the best delivery and fulfilment services. Consumers will want groceries on their terms – not the suppliers.

THE LONG AND SHORT If home delivery continues to grow, companies can expect a push for regional fresh products matched by a desire for foreign delicacies. This means supply chains will become more of an issue as fresh products, for example, require efficient organisation.

2. DINING OUT

Will consumers bounce back to old dining habits post-COVID?

The early stages of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic led to an 80% reduction in F&B open rates in some markets. Restaurants, bars, cafes and eateries were forced to turn customers away. But that story is changing, now that vaccines and warmer Spring weather is bringing hope of easing lockdown restrictions. Food aggregators and food delivery services stepped in early to fill the gaps. Across Europe, existing and emerging food delivery services mobilised to keep consumers connected with F&B outlets.

EATING IN BY ORDERING OUT

Percentage of internet users aged 16 to 64 who have used an online service to order takeaway food for delivery during summer 2020.



SOURCE: you and us 2020. Figures represent the findings of a broad global survey of internet users aged 16 to 64. See globalinsider.com for more details.

WHAT THE DATA INDICATES

European Consumers feel like they cannot replicate the eating out experience, online. With a continued lockdown-and-lift rhythm, this is a chance for the industry to recuperate, but also provides a challenge.

MORE THAN A MEAL The lower number of food delivery orders in Europe demonstrates that F&B provides an experience on top of a meal or drink - an experience that cannot be replicated at home.

CITIES ALIVE AGAIN? If a mass vaccination of European populations in 2021 creates the circumstances for F&B reopening, then expect a snap back in behaviour as consumers re-visit bars, cafes and restaurants leading to a revitalisation of cities that spent 2020 in lockdown.

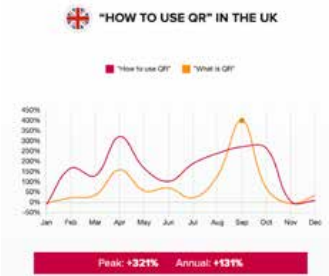
MANAGING THE NEW NORMAL A return to normal is no guarantee and the F&B industry should plan for a new normal that involves snap shut downs. The entire F&B supply chain may have to re-think its mid-term future.

3. TECH LED RECOVERY

What is needed for tech to bring innovation to F&B?

The shutdown of conventional means to acquire food and beverages created a need for more consumer tech. This opened the door to long-term innovative alternatives even after the crisis. Mobile-first tech has already shaken up multiple other industries. Mass market F&B chains have offered mobile and app first offers, discounts, ordering and payment functionality for some time. But with COVID-19 forcing an open ended approach to customer service, new tech solutions could offer the way forward for F&B in Europe.

Hygiene reasons at restaurants and shopping areas caused a noticeable growth in QR technology, which had been a latent tool in the European market. The use of QR Codes is just one example of a payment tool that grew noticeably as a result of COVID-19.



WHAT THE DATA INDICATES

Consumers and employees alike were forced to familiarise themselves with new technical features in 2020. This means they will expect and welcome these benefits in the future, opening up possibilities for digitally-driven efficiency in service and logistics areas.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS Consumers have had a taste of how mobile led solutions can innovate in the F&B industry. From check-ins, to ordering to payments – The role of cash for tips and service will need to catch up.

ONLINE SIZZLE The dining and F&B event will extend to a pre and post experience that lives online. Pre-order, meal kits, post payment loyalty etc. – more and more of the F&B industry will need to work online.

DIGITAL REVOLUTION Prior to COVID-19, parts of the F&B industry were mainly face-to-face, traditional and in some instances, inefficient. A new normal logistics chain is needed to bring bars, clubs and restaurant supply into 2021.

SOURCE: www.reply.com

Covid-19'S Impact On Food & Beverage Industry

IMPACT
TRENDS IN
2021..



The At-Home Experience

For many apparent reasons, we've seen a shift in the market to at-home experiences with meal kits and take-and-bake items rising in popularity. As consumers have grown more accustomed to these newer formats and increased confidence in their cooking skills, this food industry trend should continue for the foreseeable future. However, the desire for healthfulness and visibility as to where their food and beverage ingredients come from is also increasing in importance. Restaurants are innovating, but with a slower transition back to full capacity, home cooking will remain popular. However, meal kits from chefs and other foodservice operations will still have a place with consumers.



FAD DIETS TO FOOD FACTS

There has been an increased focus on healthfulness over the past ten years that's likely linked to the growing number of consumers who say that they're following a specific diet - some of which fall squarely in the category of "food fads." A recent year-end survey revealed "plant-based" and "gluten-free" top the list of diets heard about most in the news (22% and 16%). There are also evidence-based diet trends that truly do have staying power.

WASTE-FREE

The COVID-19 pandemic caused businesses to abruptly close which left them with masses of food that were wasted. Morrisons were a notable exception to this when they reportedly saved 100 tonnes of food from going to waste with Too Good To Go partnership. Too Good To Go fights food waste primarily through their app, that connects users with stores and restaurants that have unsold surplus food at the end of the day. Two million boxes of unsold food have been saved in the UK from well-known food retailers including Morrisons, Yo Sushi, Costa and Paul.

The pandemic has made more consumers aware of how much they waste. According to a survey that Too Good To Go ran, "nine out of 10 adults are more aware of how much food they are wasting during lockdown and over a third are throwing out less food than before the COVID-19 crisis struck"



Refocusing On Health And Wellness

Consumers are reading labels and still care about what's in their food, regardless of their dietary preferences. Plant-based items will continue to be a current, relevant food trend into 2021, as 28% of people said they have been eating more protein from plant sources during the pandemic.

Building on a growing interest in health food products with natural - and fewer - ingredients, consumers will start to look for labels that go far beyond the government-required information to detail the product's environmental and social impact.



Finding The New Comfort

It's understandable that people increasingly turned to comfort foods over the last year. In fact, 1 in 4 consumers claimed eating more nostalgic, feel-good dishes² and 15% have eaten more indulgent and treat foods.¹ Many of the comfort foods on the rise in Q3 of 2020 were easy, grab-and-go items. For the upcoming generation of consumers, "comfort" will mean a lot more than mac & cheese and burgers - it can mean global flavors, new brands they grew up eating, and healthy options that make them feel better. If food service operators, food manufacturers and food retailers alike are going to succeed in 2021, it's important that they respond accordingly.

What are consumers most looking forward to from restaurant food that they haven't been able to get from home since the pandemic began?¹

33%

Craving specific dish from certain restaurant

32%

Variety; more options than I have at home

30%

Craving dishes that are hard to make at home

21%

Global foods and flavors

20%

Craving indulgent foods

FEWER PEOPLE AVOIDING SUGAR

Because of COVID-19, we've also noticed certain beverage trends emerge. The most notable being fewer people are avoiding sugars like they have been in the past. Currently, 74% are trying to avoid or limit sugars, compared to 80% in 2019. The top ways they are doing so is by drinking water instead of caloric beverages (60%) and limiting consumption of certain foods and beverages (42%).

While the food and beverage industry is always dynamic, the challenges we've all faced over the last year have accelerated, amplified and altered many of the consumer food trends on the horizon. With the right partners like DFA Ingredient Solutions, you can react quickly to emerging food and beverage trends and go to market with innovative products and recipes. Many of our offerings can help with consumer food trends like cleaning up labels or replacing sodium with ingredients like ASCENTRA®. SOURCE: DFAingredients.com



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Eating out

How COVID Changed Restaurant Design Forever. From more spacious layouts to cozy enclosed booths, new trends in restaurant design will help diners feel safer - and they'll look great, too.

When restaurants first welcomed diners back during the pandemic, aesthetics took a back seat to survival; makeshift tarps provided separation between tables, and bike lanes became dining rooms. But as the new normal has become a reality for operators, COVID-19's influence is already noticeable in design choices for both outdoor and indoor dining - and it likely will be for years to come. We asked hospitality and design professionals for their tips and predictions for what's next in pandemic-responsive restaurant design.

FOCUS
ON..



BOOTHS WILL MAKE A COMEBACK

"In major markets across the last few years, we've seen a move toward a lot of comfort-based restaurant design, like cushy seating and wraparound banquettes," says Dr. Stephani K. Robson, who teaches hospitality design at the Cornell School of Hotel Administration. "I think guests are going to be a little leery of absorbent materials, so we're going to see design become more sanitizable." Robson doesn't envision a bleak, Formica-only world but instead predicts the return of sleek, high-backed booths, which easily meet safety guidelines when five feet tall.

SECTIONED-OFF WILL BE THE NEW NORM

"Designers are used to separating spaces with lighting and finish changes, but now we've got to think about making [those separations] more physical," Robson says. "Breaking the dining space up into smaller sections- similar to what we saw in the '70s [à la nonsmoking and smoking sections] - so there is more containment and fewer people will help. Plus it's a bit cosier."



DESIGNERS WILL LEARN TO SAY IT IN STYLE

"There's a temptation to just download the CDC poster [about safety guidelines] and tack it up in the restaurant," Robson says, but savvy operators seize the opportunity to show care for guests by creating custom messaging and signage in their own voice that jibes with the concept of the restaurant.

BRING YOUR RESTAURANT'S "BEFORE TIMES" VIBE OUTDOORS

Plexiglass will certainly do the trick for social distancing, but unless it's meticulously and constantly cleaned, it risks looking greasy. Robinson encourages operators to create "an outdoor space that's a little bit more special" and embodies the style of decor indoors, be it rustic or modern, by repurposing elements like drapery, bookshelves, and planters as separators, depending on what feels on-brand for your business.



DESIGN TIPS

1. Bring in a lot of natural light.
2. Open-air spaces will be preferred over air-conditioned rooms, so investing in an outdoor cooler is a good idea.
3. Choose material finishes cleverly so that surfaces can be sanitised regularly without easy wear and tear.

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SOURCE: www.foodandwine.com

9 LOCKDOWN FOOD AND DRINK TRENDS THAT ARE HERE TO STAY:

TRENDS IN 2021..

1. COOKING IS THE NEW COMMUTE

Of the tens of millions of us who've spent the majority of the year working from home, three-quarters say cooking dinner now provides the break between working time and home life. Where once the journey from the office to the front door would punctuate the day, that role is now being fulfilled by time spent at the chopping board.



4. FOOD FOR FREE

From blackberries to sloes, many of us are foraging again, with UK social media interest up 89% on the year. This is likely due to it's family-friendly nature - it's healthy and fun, it keeps the children occupied, it happens outdoors and it comes with a large dollop of nostalgia.



7. AT HOME BARISTAS

for a nation of coffee-house lovers, popping out for a coffee has been a challenge this year. So we've become baristas at home, with sales of 'bean to cup' coffee machines up 64% at John Lewis, and coffee beans by 44% at Waitrose.



2. ASIAN ESSENTIALS

Store cupboard essentials from Asia are the fastest growing of our Cooks' Ingredients range. They're as tasty as they are versatile, and have been popular over lockdown. Chinese rice vinegar is up 194%, mirin rice wine is up 188% and Japanese rice vinegar is up 180%.



5. JAM JARS AT THE READY

Preserving, potting and pickling are growing trends, with searches for 'pickling' up +222% on Waitrose.com and UK social media mentions of preserving and fermenting are up by 28%.



8. SLOW COOKING SPEEDS UP

More home working has super-charged the trend for slow-cooked meat, with searches 46% up on waitrose.com and sales of oxtail up a hearty 258%. Slow-cooking cuts are great value, foolproof, and can deliver deceptively fancy results.



3. BUYING BRITISH

Homegrown produce is the preference, bolstered by growing awareness over provenance and farming standards from overseas and a desire to support our nation's farmers. This trend extends to British seafood where sales have tripled over the last six months.



6. LOW AND NO

Many of us used lockdown to drop our alcohol intake, and 18% plan to continue trying more low-alcohol or alcohol-free drinks or mocktails to reduce alcohol consumption. Low and no sales at Waitrose are up 22% on the year, with the range broadening to include further non-alcoholic versions of our favourite tipples.



9. WINTER ROSÉ

Versatile, foodie-friendly and with the ability to take us straight to Provence in a sip, pink is officially the drink for all seasons. Autumn 2020 sales were up 57% on the year with this trend set to grow for 2021.



Covid Entrepreneurs

Six food & drink startups that launched in the pandemic:

Take, for instance, the record growth last year in UK distilleries. A record number were registered in 2020 – growing by 124, up 28% on 2019, according to HMRC data. That was despite the closure of bars and pubs – a blow to booze that was barely cushioned by the growth in grocery sales. But the pandemic hasn't created adverse conditions for all areas of the market. As this feature shows, hygiene, health (both physical and mental) and new shopping habits are ripe areas for new business.

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Spruce DTC eco-cleaning products

Launched at the start of 2021, Spruce ticks two boxes: it taps the huge demand for cleaning products, but crucially it's sustainable - made from food-grade and cosmetics-grade ingredients and packed in refillable aluminium bottles, with refills (wrapped in paper) delivered direct to the consumer.



Weezy Rapid-delivery convenience operator

Co-founder Alec Dent and Kristof Van Beveren decided to set up the rapid grocery delivery app in autumn 2019. At the time "on-demand grocery services weren't much in favour" among startups, Dent says.

Weezy began operating its hyper-local service in August, promising residents of Fulham and Chelsea delivery within 15 minutes – for a £2.95 fee and no minimum spend. It offered about 1,200 SKUs from wholesalers and local bakers and butchers, with fruit & veg from New Covent Garden Market.

There are plans for 40 more sites by the end of 2021. Now more than ever, Brits won't want to be "a prisoner" to supermarket delivery slots, Dent says. "Having an on-demand service will be extremely valuable."



Inn Closed-loop online grocery

Stuck at home and not eating out, consumers have "seen how much quicker our bins fill up with packaging waste" says Nick Lawson, co-founder of closed loop online grocer Inn.

Covid has also sparked much grander revelations. "There's a realisation the way we've always done things is not the way we need to do them now," Lawson adds.

Inn launched in August 2020, delivering products in up-cycled hessian coffee sacks, with liquids in plastic spout pouches. Customers distil them into their own containers. Empties are collected by Inn, cleaned and disinfected ready to go out again.



Emmunity Health & wellness soft drinks brand

The pandemic has driven huge interest in food and drink products that support the immune system. Like the launch of Emmunity, a soft drink that claims to "harness the healing and immunity-boosting benefits of nettle". Yes, stinging nettle - which has been used in traditional medicine for centuries.

The brand is the creation of chemists Roy Lamb and Nasir Isaji, who mixed the weed, also known as *Urtica dioica*, with the likes of chamomile, cucumber, dandelion and thyme. The result was Wild Strawberry and Gooseberry variants, which vow to "flush toxins from your body".



FiveDinners Anti-food-waste meal planning

FiveDinners is an online meal-planning service with three aims: to help its subscribers reduce food waste, save money and - most importantly - reduce stress.

It's the brainchild of Theo (pictured) and Anna Michaels. Each week, the site creates a recipe plan for five family-friendly dinners. Sent to subscribers on Thursday in time for the following Monday, it's accompanied by a single shopping list of all ingredients needed for the week ahead.

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SOURCE: The Grocer.co.uk

The Gardening effect

The gardening trends that bloomed during the pandemic are here to stay. Seed sellers are reporting blossoming demand for seed orders that matches the florid increase they saw last year.

COVID-19 has transformed the gardening industry – so what are the new trends?

Almost three million new British growers have sprung up this year, according to research from The Horticultural Trades Association (HTA). Nearly half of these new gardeners are aged under 45.

As you might expect, many of these new growers said that the lockdown gave them more time and energy to immerse themselves in a new passion for growing. The National Allotment Society also reported a rise in the number of people joining their local council's waiting lists for plots during the lockdown, proving that this is an urban as well as a rural trend.

Not only does the gardening industry have more customers, but growers as a whole are spending more as they stock up their horticultural armoury.



The HTA Garden Retail Monitor found that sales of gardening products were up 34%, 17% and 19% in June, July and August respectively in UK garden centres, compared to the same time last year. On average, individual customers were spending 35% more on gardening products.

Sales also surged in bedding plants (29%), seeds (59%) and gardening equipment (51%), while garden leisure categories were higher than in August 2019.

For fruit and veg lovers, the lack of fresh produce was particularly grim. So individuals and those sharing community gardens decided that growing and harvesting their own fresh food would be a no-brainer. In fact, seed producers reported a massive rise in sales during lockdown. And in March, the Royal Horticultural Society said visits to their web pages with advice on growing vegetables had more than doubled compared with the same time last year.

In fact, some 67% of UK gardeners say they're eco-conscious and 46% of this group already use organic fertilisers.

This is also a growing trend. The 2020 Organic Market Report revealed that the organic market had seen an eighth year of strong growth. It grew 4.5% in 2019 to reach a record £2.45bn.

Multiple seed sellers are reporting blossoming demand for seed orders that matches the florid increase in orders they saw last year just as state-ordered lockdowns were starting when some seed sellers sold more seeds than in any spring prior.

As homebound green thumbs turned to horticulture once more, Missouri-based Baker Creek Seeds has had to shut down its website three times due to overwhelming demand. The company said it is selling six times more seeds compared to their average busy season. Last year, the company told the Washington Post, they saw "the largest volume of orders we have seen" just as shutdowns began.

"Even with machines, we can't pack them fast enough," Kathy McFarland, who handles public relations for Baker Creek, told Civil Eats.

Talking to Iowa Public Radio, Nikos Kavanya, a seed purchaser for Fedco Seeds, said the last time demand for seeds was this high was during the "Y2K" panic in 1999, when people believed the start of the new millennium would cause a mass disruption of society. "Y2K was this little blip compared to this," Kavanya said.

MARKET GROWTH...

The wave of new gardeners has led to retail sales growth in the gardening industry, while other types of consumer goods, like clothing and home furniture, saw declines during the pandemic.

According to a survey from Axiom Marketing, half of respondents who garden said they do it as a reason to get outside and relieve stress. Some started their gardens to have security in their own food supply, especially at the beginning of the pandemic when grocery store shelves were empty.

"There are certain very stabilizing forces in gardening that can ground us when we are feeling shaky, uncertain and terrified. It's these predictable outcomes and predictable rhythms of the garden that are very comforting right now," Joel Flagler, a professor of plant biology at Rutgers University, told Agweek Magazine.

The Axiom survey said they planned to garden the same amount, or even more, in 2021.

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Garden Features

The pandemic has influenced garden trends in a big way - because a summer spent at home rather than abroad means we're channelling all of our efforts into making our home spaces the best that they can be.



GARDEN BAR

Pubs and bars have been sorely missed, but many made do by creating their own, and why stop in 2021? Searches for garden bars have sky rocketed by 122% over the last 12 months, research from Made.com revealed. Aside from offering cheaper drinks and later closing, it also gives a convenient option for those days when pub gardens are fully booked.

With their finger on the pulse, Habitat have revealed their affordable outdoor bar option, which they call the Beach bar Gazebo.



Outdoor pizza ovens

The pandemic has made chefs of us all and we're ready to embrace some home-made, stone-baked pizzas this summer. Built to last, great for entertaining, a great heater too for cooler month plus a stunning focal point, outdoor pizza oven searches have grown by 243% over the past year.



Backyard cinemas

Lockdown has forced a lot of people to make their own entertainment and make their spaces multifunctional, and one thing that isn't going anywhere in 2021 is the garden cinema. Searches for garden projector have grown by a massive 400%. Get the popcorn ready!



Hanging Egg Chairs

In terms of garden furniture, we're going to be seeing a lot more hanging egg chairs in the months to come. One of the main garden trends for 2021, these must-have comfort additions offer a cosy place to unwind with a book or a tipple,

giving full-body support and allowing you to take the weight off your feet. It's no wonder searches for outdoor hanging chairs have grown by 234% over the past year.



Water Features

We're also seeing an increasing number of brands responding to the demand for affordable water features.

Said to soothe the mind with the constant trickle of water, the increase in popularity could be down to the growing awareness of wellness.

Luxe canopies and gazebos

Chic outdoor coverings will be all the rage for 2021, as another way to extend our living spaces. Dani Taylor from Cox & Cox predicts that 'gorgeous canopies and gazebos will be a big trend this year - not only for their practical uses against the elements, allowing us to use our gardens for longer periods of time, but also because they make the outside space work as an extra room.'

'Filling them with lots of pillows and rugs, and adding fairy lights and festoons give them a glamorous, luxe resort feel - or even create a great den for the kids to play in!' she says.



GARDEN TRENDS IN 2021..

GARDEN OFFICES

After a year of working from our home office spaces, and with most offices not open just yet, we're all desperate for a change of scenery and some time outdoors.

Enter the garden office, with searched for garden office pods up by 174% over the past year.



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SOURCE: Livingetc.com

Garden planting

Garden trends 2021: stunning new looks for flowers, landscaping and outdoor accessories...



Wild gardens

Chris Packham has inspired us to ditch the lawn mower, encouraging a more relaxed, and certainly more straightforward approach: just let it grow! This method is very much in tune with the latest trend of wild gardens - where nature is permitted to take charge. Emma Bond, founder of Bath Garden Design, says, 'As we have been limited in our travels and even visiting the countryside, we crave a connection with birds, insects, wild flowers and nature.'

'There has been a huge uptick in sales of bird feeders, bee hotels, wild flower turf and seeds as well as natural perennial planting. This is easily achieved in any size of garden and has huge stress-busting benefits. Watching nature unfold around us is an antidote to the difficult times we find ourselves living in.'



Instagram-friendly veg

Growing your own veg is perhaps one of life's greatest, yet simplest pleasures, so it's no surprise that the trend to do so will continue in force. Last year, Suttons, one of the UK's leading seed companies, sold over 2,000% more seeds during the spring. 95% of which were for edible plants! Don't forget that vegetables can be lovely to look at too - think ruffled cabbages, bright red tomatoes and flowering beans.



MEDICINAL PLANTS

Healing plants are a big theme this year; plant camomile and mint in window boxes or in pocket planters on a wall to make your own infusions. Get to know medicinal plants at the Chelsea Physic Garden (chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk) or check out the queen of things herbal, Jekka McVicar (jekkas.com). She has the widest selection of varieties online.



UNUSUAL HERBS

Don't have the space for raised beds? Don't worry! You can still grow delicious herbs from a container, or even on a sunny windowsill, to make your meals extra special. Most of us have heard of (or grown) the classic sorts like basil or parsley, but 2021 is the year to enter pastures new in the herby world and try out something different! How about this mushroom plant from Suttons, which sports spinach-like foliage with a distinct umami taste, and pretty blue flowers in the warmer months? The 'Hot & Spicy' variety of oregano is one to try, too - to give dishes an extra kick. Head over to our guide on how to create a herb garden for more ideas.



MINDFUL WATERING

'The trend for sustainable living is becoming increasingly important as people become more conscious of their effect on the planet,' says Chris Wood, Horticulture Expert at Waitrose. 'People are becoming more aware of how much water they use in the garden, how they protect plants - reducing or removing the use of chemicals - and how they compost.'

Chris explains: 'One way to do this is to look for plants which don't need as much water - looking for varieties that are more resistant to drying out. For example, grey foliage plants that you'd see by the seaside. People with flowerbeds can also apply mulch to flower beds and borders as it helps to retain the moisture in soil, leading to the use of less watering.'



PLANT TRENDS IN 2021..

Buying plants online

For the first few months of 2021 at least, we're predicting that the demand for online plants will show no signs of slowing down. In fact, it will likely increase'.

'Last year we sold more plants online than ever before and people are going to be turning to web-based plant sellers to supply their gardens, ready for the summer'.

Some of us will always prefer a trip to the garden centre over a screen-based browse. However, Chris says, 'As there's still so much uncertainty regarding what we'll be allowed to do week to week, ordering plants online to be delivered straight to your door is a great, Covid-safe alternative.'

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SOURCE: Gardeningetc.com

Digital Garden

BEST GARDENING APPS UK 2021

People all over the UK are harnessing the power of online resources to boost their beautiful gardens. There are a ton of effective apps for both iOS and Android phones and tablets. They can help you identify wildflowers, weeds, and plants, connect you with other gardeners and provide you with valuable tips and tricks. Some of our favourite gardening apps UK for 2021 include:

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Garden Answers

- There are tons of plant identifying apps out there, but we love the ease and simplicity of Garden Answers. It does what the other apps do, but it does it a lot better! Identify more than 20,000 species of plants with just a wave of your phone.



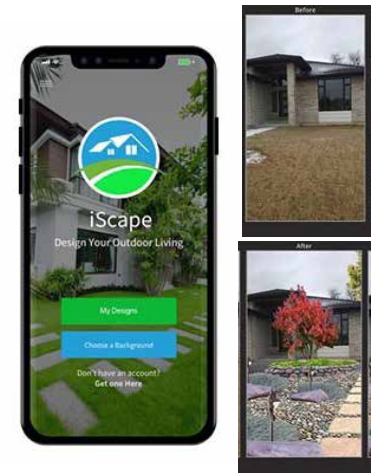
BBC Gardeners' World Magazine

You likely already read the BBC's Gardeners' World Magazine and follow their tried and true advice. Now you can use their digital edition, take advantage of all of their tips, design ideas, and wisdom from Alan Titchmarsh.



MySoil

- Learn all about your soil and its unique blend of minerals, the organic material present, and pH level. This intuitive app can help you make the most of your soil and learn more about the soil types in your region. MySoil is an invaluable tool for any British gardener.



iScape

- Need some hints and ideas for landscaping your garden? iScape helps you visualise the results of your garden landscaping before you start digging new beds or making permanent changes.

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SOURCE: Gardeningetc.com

The Rise of Cycling

MARKET
GROWTH...



The report reveals the remarkable extent of the cycling boom seen in the UK in 2020, suggesting a step-change for the cycling sector which will define its growth for years to come. The surge in sales from Q2 2020 is unprecedented in modern times.

With demand at times outstripping supply and hence raising prices, the report indicates that market growth could have been even higher had more stock been available. Between April and September 2020 the UK cycling market saw a 27% rise in sales volume and a 26% increase in average prices, compared with the same period in 2019.

Cycling during the pandemic lock-down reached its high point between mid-April and mid-June, regularly exceeding 250% of normal pre-COVID levels, according to Government data analysed in the report. Under COVID cycling also broadened its market penetration, with Sport England survey data showing participation rising from 16.5% to 18% of the population: an extra million cyclists on the road.

This was reflected both on bike shop floors and online. Retailers saw an influx of new, first-time customers, especially amongst the under 35s, some reporting a new-to-existing customer ratio higher than 70-30.

The Bicycle Association (BA), the national trade association for the UK cycle industry, has released a new "COVID Impact" report on the UK cycling economy, covering sales from January to October 2020.

Key findings include:

- Retailers have seen sales grow by 60% since March 2020
- E-bike sales more than doubled
- One pound in every five spent on bicycles during the pandemic was spent on e-bikes.
- The UK cycling market is expected to be worth £2.2 billion by the end of 2020.

The COVID impact report also illuminates the rising importance of electric bikes. E-bikes were already a major growth segment before 2020, and COVID-19 turbo-charged this trend with a 92% year-on-year rise in e-bikes sold, and a value increase of 118%, between April and September 2020. One pound in every five spent on a bicycle during the pandemic was spent on an e-bike.

The impact report notes a major shift towards online sales, with the value of direct online sales more than doubling across the April-September period compared with 2019, while in-store sales fell.

Executive Director of the Bicycle Association, Steve Garidis, said:

"The Bicycle Association has long made the case that the cycling industry should be seen as one of national strategic importance. In 2018 we released research calculating its considerable economic contribution - worth at least £5.4b per year to the UK economy. Covid-19 has shown just how true this is - bike shops were recognised as essential businesses able to support key workers needing to travel safely, and cycling was promoted as one of just a handful of accessible ways for the population to stay fit and sane during multiple lockdowns."



LONDON

The introduction of a number of "cycling superhighways" in London over the past few years has expanded segregated cycling facilities, while routes on existing roads have improved user safety. The addition of temporary cycling lanes could help link these existing facilities together, to provide a convenient and comprehensive cycling plan for London.

To support this goal, in May 2020 the government established a £250 million emergency active travel fund, kept bicycle shops open, and issued £50 bicycle repair vouchers to encourage people to cycle. The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, is aiming to have 80% of journeys be made by foot, bike or on public transport by 2041. A key element of the program, known as Streetspace, is the construction of a "strategic cycling network, using temporary materials". The intention is for changes to become permanent fixtures, accommodating a projected 10-fold increase in cycling.

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Let us know what you would like to see next time...

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