

A deep dive into dipping

Exploring the latest food trend



Enriching flavours

Food dipping is and will continue to be a popular trend. A wide variety of flavours are suitable for dips and people are always on the lookout for unique, surprising and, preferably, natural ingredients. This is why dips have become such a rich source of inspiration and innovation for a broad range of food products.

A trip through the dip

This e-paper is designed to take you on a journey into the world of dips. We look at the food trends underpinning the growing interest in dips, discover which cuisines are dominating, and inspire you with various popular examples. As a partner in taste, we'll help you explore your opportunities for product innovations.

The market value of dips

There is a significant demand for dips in the European food industry. Recent research by Euromonitor has showed that sauces, dressings and condiments* represent a market value of some 130 billion euros in 2019, with an annual growth of three percent expected in the coming years.

** A condiment is the collective name for supplementary food that changes and/or enhances flavour. Examples include mustard, tomato ketchup, mayonnaise, Worcester sauce, soy sauce, sambal, chutney, piccalilli, herbs in general, marinades and herb vinegar.*



“42% of consumers prefer new flavour combinations in dips and spreads.”

MINTEL, MARCH 2019

Sauces, dressings & condiments

Market value: USD 132.4 billion



About dips and dipping



Dips add flavour, texture and a hint of fun to daily food products such as sandwiches, snacks and vegetables. While sauces, spreads and dressings can all be used as dips, we generally only call them dips when food is actually dipped into them or they are scooped up in small portions. The definition of dipping therefore relies more on the use of a product than on the product itself.

It's in the moment

Sauces that were traditionally used to prepare food or served with meals are becoming ever more popular as dips in a wide range of variations. Obvious examples are mustard, ketchup and mayonnaise, while sweet chilli sauce is served both with Asian dishes and deployed as a dip for savoury snacks. The difference is in the moment.

The same applies to **dressings**. Used to garnish and add flavour to products like hamburgers and salads on the one hand, dressings also serve as an accompanying dip for cucumber, carrot and cauliflower.

Spreads are prepared like a paste, syrup or liquid and can be sweet or savoury. In general, people use a knife to apply spreads on bread or crackers, for example. But when a cracker, carrot or pita bread is used to dip or scoop, the spread is transformed into a dip. This creates a whole new range of opportunities for the likes of salsa and hummus.

How the world dips

The Spanish have their tapas, the Italians antipasti, the Brits finger food and the Middle East loves a mezze. In each case, the table is filled with a selection of hot and cold dishes and a variety of colours, aromas and flavours. Dipping brings together the best of each of these worlds.

Dips are versatile condiments that are perfect for sharing. Conversation flows more easily when everyone gathers around the mezze or snacks. There's also a wide range of food products that can be used as dippers at the table: vegetables, fruit, crisps, bread, seafood, crackers, cheese, meat products, pizza and so forth. As well as making dips suitable for carnivores, vegetarians and vegans alike, they also fit most supermarket categories, from fresh produce to snacks.

A snack platter is very popular in today's food culture. With a wide variety of dippers and dips everyone can snack to their heart's content.



How food trends are determining the success of dips

Dipping is in fact a sum of many different food trends – and that explains its popularity. Consumers are always looking for surprising, multi-sensory experiences, while the demand for easy-to-use products is also growing. Add into the mix the way the boundaries between snacks and meals are fading, with traditional meals increasingly replaced by multiple smaller meals throughout the day. Here's a short overview of the relevant food trends.



1 The return of the dip

Dipping was a major trend in Western Europe in the 1970s, and now we're seeing its return. According to trend bureau Bloom, this is no coincidence: there is a distinguishable wave determined by the current zeitgeist and rhythm. Like in the seventies, we are now in a so-called 'yellow' zeitgeist, dominated by our emotions and free spirit; a peak period for senses and experiences.

This also means we greatly value spending time together and sharing. An intimate, full table with a plethora of dishes or snacks with dips is in line with this attitude. On the other hand, the yellow zeitgeist goes hand in hand with personal freedom. And dipping facilitates this by allowing us to mix and match what we prefer to eat ourselves.

The versatility of dips has soared since the previous 'yellow wave'. Although classic dips like mayonnaise remain popular, we see a shift in the ingredients used in dips.





Clean label

Clean (and clear) labels have become the new standard. This has added a new dynamic to existing condiments such as ketchup and mayonnaise that previously relied on product familiarity and consumer habits. Leading brands have introduced new varieties: products with less salt and sugar or a lower fat content, vegan varieties and even egg-free mayonnaise, to name a few.

TIP FOR THE DIP

Aim for basic recipes and transparency. Be clear about the origins of the ingredients.

3 Focus on health

Consumers continue to value the health aspects of food and various innovations are helping ensure the dip category makes progress in this respect too. The plant-based trend, for instance, has become fully embedded in dipping. It started with guacamole and salsa, bringing the avocado to the peak of its popularity. Now we're shifting toward Middle-Eastern cuisine with hummus as its star. High in protein, the chickpea is today's culinary hero.

Food manufacturers mainly benefit from innovations when health is combined with other product benefits, like ease-of-use.

TIP FOR THE DIP

There are major opportunities for dips based on natural ingredients that make consumers feel good. This do-it-yourself guacamole set by Dutch supermarket chain Albert Heijn is fully aligned to current trends, combining fresh ingredients with ease-of-use and a unique flavour.

4 Snackification

The border between snacks and meals is fading. Traditional meals are increasingly replaced by snacks at various times throughout the day. People are busy and often on the move, while the number of single-person households is rising. Instead of taking time to make a meal, we increasingly opt for to-go meals or simple snacks. Ready-to-eat, but spruced up by a dip – which is seen as an acceptable treat. Small meals that fit into our personal diets.

TIP FOR THE DIP

Make it as easy as possible for consumers. Packaging plays a major role. Ready-to-eat concepts are a fine example, as are packets with pre-sliced vegetables, meat and crisps with ready-to-eat dip. No cutlery or dirty hands required.



5 Food as an experience

Experience remains a major aspect in food as the well-filled tables full of smaller snacks reflect. With good company, afternoon drinks can easily become an evening meal. In addition, consumers are looking for products with exciting flavours that offer a multi-sensory experience. And don't forget that dishes should be instagrammable too. Based on all these needs, a clear preference for premium and niche product categories can be identified. Consumers look for gastro dishes they've seen in restaurants, while interest has also shifted to ethnic cuisines and sauces. Spicy flavours are hot, exotic ingredients are hip.

TIP FOR THE DIP

Where a hearty pasta sauce may be a risk for some diners, dips can offer a wealth of surprising, unique and unusual flavours in small and manageable portions.

Read more about how trends develop
at www.euroma.com/trends



Popular cuisines for dip inspiration

Dips are more than an extra. They are a phenomenon that reflects a culinary culture. Many cuisines involve the dipping tradition and each region has its own variations, but some cuisines are more suited to dipping than others. We're currently seeing a shift in the popularity of various cuisines. We moved from Mexican salsa to guacamole, and now we're heading for Middle-Eastern cuisine, with products like Moroccan harissa. And it's great to see that Mexican cuisine is still going strong too!



Mexican cuisine

Mexican cuisine is all about sharing food, allowing everyone to prepare according to their personal taste. Tacos are never served ready-to-eat, but diners are given a selection of toppings such as sauces and salsa and other condiments like coriander.

Freedom of choice

The cuisine became popular because it offers a freedom of choice and due to the experimental nature of the tortilla. This resulted in a great many varieties, the most common being tortilla chips with guacamole or tomato salsa. Other examples include spicy mole sauce or habanero pineapple chutney, all hailing from Mexico.

The power of pepper

Peppers play a big role in Mexican cooking. This special focus on the wide variety of peppers has now also reached the Western world. A guacamole is made with jalapeno, pineapple is matched with habanero, and chipotle chillies are perfect for making a smoky-flavoured sauce.

Middle-Eastern cuisine

Middle Eastern cuisine is tremendously popular, with Israeli food being especially on the rise. Traditionally, the Middle-Eastern diet features many plant-based dishes, with vegetables, fruit and strong spices dominating an authentic menu. Meat is a less common ingredient – fully in line with today's trend.

Infinite variation

Middle Eastern cuisine offers an infinite variation of dips. A perfect example is hummus. Where chickpea dips are even eaten warm or as breakfast in Israel, they have gained popularity in other countries too. It's a great basis to play with, and can be supplemented by ingredients such as pomegranate, sweet potato, curcuma, ginger and pumpkin.

Trendy dips

The aubergine dip known as baba ganoush and the capsicum-walnut dip called muhamarra are also increasingly on trend. Middle-Eastern labneh, a dip based on strained yoghurt, and the fiery green sauce schug are other interesting condiments for the snack table.



Harissa dips

Harissa, also known as North-African sambal, is a hot sauce made from peppers, tomato, cumin, coriander and garlic. It is such a common product in Morocco that every household has its own unique recipe.

Ready to dip?

A dip adds a special touch to any kind of gathering. Like to discover the added value it could offer your product? Euroma would be pleased to bring a wide variety of tastes to the table.

Our in-house solutions vary from dry mixes and pasta concentrates to ready-to-eat dips. We're looking forward to make your product ready to dip.

Let's get in touch!

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