

# A YEAR OF INNOVATION IN CHOCOLATE CONFECTIONERY, 2021

Ethical values have soared in profile across chocolate innovation, as seasonality – and novel flavours and textures – inspire launches.



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# Report Content



- What we have seen
- Our pick of the most innovative launches in this review
- Other innovative launches
- Innovation opportunities in chocolate confectionery

## EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA (EMEA)

- Europe retail market overview: chocolate confectionery, 2021

### **Europe: consumers want chocolate brands to take an exciting and bold approach to flavour innovation**

- Flavour innovation is essential in the chocolate category
- Hazelnut remains the most popular flavour and orange sees an increase
  - Graph 1: chocolate launches, by top 10 flavours, Feb 2019-Jan 2021
- Chocolate brands innovate around citrus flavours
- Brands continue to explore alcohol-themed chocolates
- Brand innovation/renovation: Nestlé gives its After Eights a sophisticated edge with a new G&T flavour

### **Europe: chocolate brands strive to improve their ethical credentials**

- Sustainable cocoa production remains a significant issue for consumers
- Chocolate launches with ethical claims continue to expand
  - Graph 2: chocolate launches, by selected ethical claims, Feb 2016-Jan 2021
- Chocolate brands diversify their ethical commitments
- Brand innovation/renovation: Tony's Chocolonely continues its mission to create 100% slave-free chocolate

## Middle East & Africa

- African chocolate brands highlight cocoa origin

## ASIA PACIFIC (APAC)

- APAC retail market overview: chocolate confectionery, 2021

### **APAC: chocolate brands take a braver approach to exciting flavours and textures**

- Chinese consumers are curious about chocolate with innovative flavours and textures
- Chocolates with smooth texture claims continue to see growth in launch activity
  - Graph 3: chocolate launches, by top 10 textures, Feb 2019-Jan 2021
- Chocolate brands stimulate the senses
- Brand innovation/renovation: Snickers Crisp arrives in China in a localised format

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## **APAC: the consumer appetite for high quality chocolate sparks innovation**

- Premium chocolate has strong appeal among Chinese consumers
- Premium claims are more common in the APAC region
- Chocolate brands tap into the demand for premium products
- Brand innovation/renovation: Nestlé expands its premium Kit Kat Chocolatory range in Japan

## **Australia and New Zealand**

- Plant-based chocolates adopt additional ethical and quality-focused features

## **THE AMERICAS**

- Americas retail market overview: chocolate confectionery, 2021

## **North America: chocolate designed for seasonal holidays was a big deal in 2020**

- Holiday-themed chocolates are in demand
- Seasonal chocolates are prevalent in North America
  - Graph 4: chocolate launches, by seasonal claim and global region, Feb 2020-Jan 2021
- Different holidays inspire limited edition flavours and formats of chocolate
- Brand innovation/renovation: Hershey's releases build-your-own chocolate for Christmas

## **North America: chocolate brands innovate around reduced sugar content**

- US consumers are cutting back on chocolate to avoid sugar
- Sugar-related claims are on the rise as average sugar content dips
  - Graph 5: chocolate launches, by sugar claims, Feb 2016-Jan 2021
- Chocolate brands use natural sugar substitutes
- Brand innovation/renovation: Jojo's adds two new guilt-free chocolates to its portfolio

## **Latin America: brands tap into consumer demand for natural and healthy chocolate**

- Natural and healthier chocolates have strong potential
- Chocolate launches with natural claims are emerging in Latin America
  - Graph 6: chocolate launches, by natural claim category, Feb 2016-Jan 2021
- Chocolate brands innovate around natural and healthy ingredients
- Brand innovation/renovation: Nut Me! launches all-natural chocolate clusters with functional benefits



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