

OCTOBER 2022

# Next Gen Spicy

---

Spice up your offerings with ethnic flavors and new peppers, salsas, hot sauces and condiments that amp up heat & play into global cuisine trends.





Photo Credit *Flamin' Hot Cheetos® Grilled Cheese with Gouda & Arugula*

# Spicy is one of the hottest trends today.

**As spicy ethnic flavors become more available to U.S. consumers, spicy becomes more familiar, more personalized and more craveable.** This modern spicy revolution comes from the rising cultural diversity in the U.S. in addition to consumers' growing knowledge of what spicy means.

## 3 IN 5 CONSUMERS LOVE/LIKE SPICY



With a growing diversity of Hispanic, Asian, Black and multi-cultural citizens comes a predisposed preference towards spicy food—with 68 percent of Asian-American consumers saying that they love/like spicy food and 59 percent of Black and Hispanic-American consumers saying the same.

(See data on page 3.)

## POPULAR AWARENESS

The term “spicy” now appears on 71 percent of U.S. menus. With this increased exposure to spicy flavors, U.S. diners have discovered that spicy is so much more than just an intense burning sensation. Spicy can have varying heat intensities, some being extremely mild, plus nuanced flavors such as sweet, spiced, smokey, herbaceous and/or vegetable flavors. In fact, most consumers prefer mild to moderate heat levels.

# 71%

### OPPORTUNITY

Consider expanding your spicy arsenal to include some earlier-stage hot sauces, peppers and salsas to keep your menu items and retail products interesting and up-to-date on the latest cuisine trends.







# Setting the Spicy Table

BY DEMOGRAPHIC & DISH TYPE

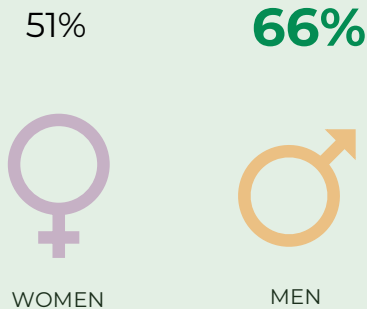
# Americans love spicy.

Hot sauce usage and the preference for spicy flavors has increased since 2019<sup>1</sup>. **Fifty-seven percent of consumers love/like hot sauces and use them on a wide variety of foods<sup>2</sup>**, and usage is up nearly 30 percent since 2019<sup>1</sup> and expected to grow steadily over the coming years—culinary teams, operators and product developers, take note.

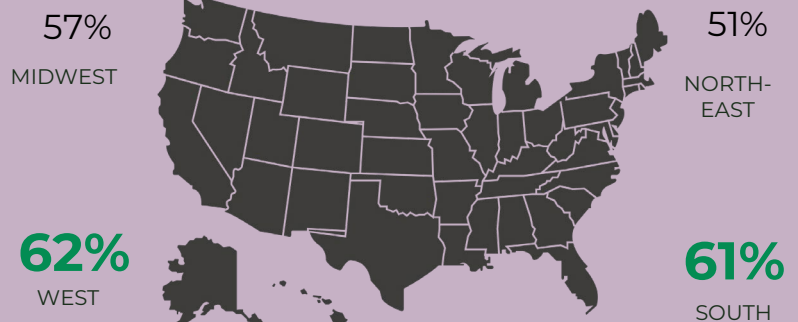


## DATA DIVE: % who love/like spicy by demographic breakout<sup>2</sup>

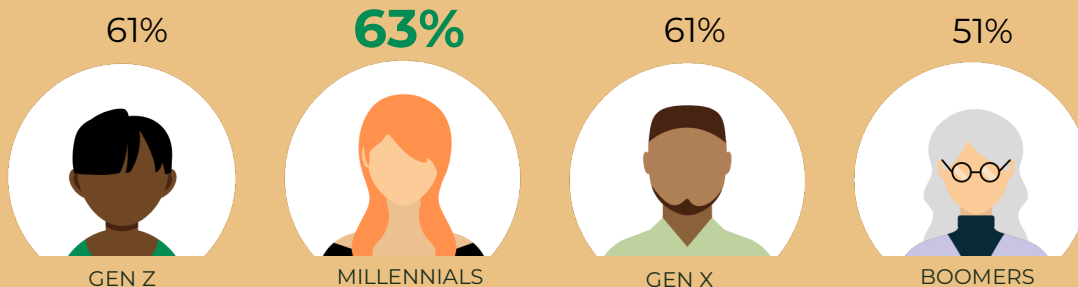
### GENDER PREFERENCES



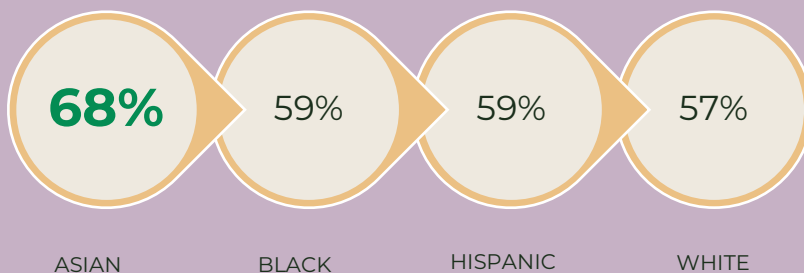
### REGIONAL PREFERENCES



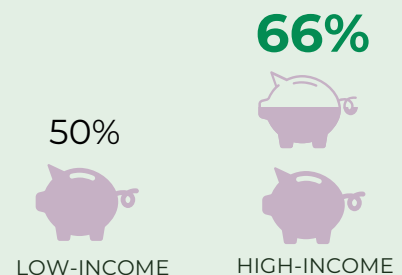
### GENERATIONAL PREFERENCES



### CULTURAL/RACE PREFERENCES



### INCOME PREFERENCES



<sup>1</sup> Source: Technomic, Ethnic Report 2021

<sup>2</sup> Source: Datassential 2022








# Preferred spice level differs by dish.

Animal protein dishes are most likely to be preferred either at an extremely spicy or very spicy level, which makes sense given its more neutral base flavor. On the other hand, consumers are less apt to prefer spicy versions of plant-based and seafood dishes.

## EXPERT INSIGHT

In addition to discovering the different types of spicy flavors and knowing their preferred spice level, consumers are applying these personal spice preferences when ordering at restaurants and purchasing retail goods.

## DATA DIVE: Consumer preferred spice level by dish

	 EXTREMELY SPICY	 VERY SPICY	 SOMEWHAT SPICY	 NOT VERY SPICY	 NOT SPICY AT ALL
<b>OVERALL</b> Consumer Preference	5%	10%	<b>29%</b>	27%	<b>29%</b>
<b>ANIMAL PROTEIN</b> Beef, Chicken, Pork	6%	14%	<b>33%</b>	25%	22%
<b>VEGETARIAN &amp; SEAFOOD</b> Plant-Based, Vegetarian, Seafood	4%	10%	27%	26%	<b>30%</b>

# But First, Let's Talk Traditional Spicy

PEPPERS & HOT SAUCES



## Peppers add a backbone of flavor, while their seeds can add a kick of heat.

Non-spicy traditional “bell peppers”, green and red peppers are well-loved by all consumers and increase consumer familiarity of peppers in general.

With its mainstay awareness of 93 percent and wide affinity, it comes as no surprise that nearly half of Gen Z, Millennial and Gen X consumers love/like jalapeño peppers.

Spicy serrano peppers (on average with about a [3x higher Scoville rating](#) than jalapeños) are most appealing to Millennials and men, who in general enjoy spicy foods more than the average consumer.



# 85%

of menus feature **bell peppers** and over 2 in 3 consumers love/like them



# 93%

of consumers know **jalapeño peppers** and 49% love/like them

### ★ OPPORTUNITY

With mass awareness and high consumer affinity across generations, jalapeños are a safe spicy ingredient. Consider utilizing [red jalapeños](#) as a familiar yet less common alternative.

### DATA DIVE: Loved/liked peppers by demographic breakout

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	GEN Z	MILLENNIALS	GEN X	BOOMERS
Bell Pepper	67%	65%	<b>69%</b>	48%	63%	<b>74%</b>	<b>74%</b>
Green Pepper	67%	<b>70%</b>	64%	50%	64%	<b>73%</b>	<b>73%</b>
Red Pepper	61%	<b>63%</b>	61%	48%	59%	65%	<b>67%</b>
Jalapeño Pepper	49%	<b>56%</b>	44%	47%	<b>54%</b>	<b>54%</b>	43%
Chipotle	38%	<b>44%</b>	34%	34%	<b>48%</b>	42%	30%
Poblano Pepper	25%	<b>26%</b>	25%	17%	<b>28%</b>	<b>28%</b>	25%
Serrano Pepper	24%	<b>27%</b>	21%	16%	<b>32%</b>	27%	18%



**Hot sauce is a well-loved way consumers add heat to their food—and variety is the name of the game.**

**57%**

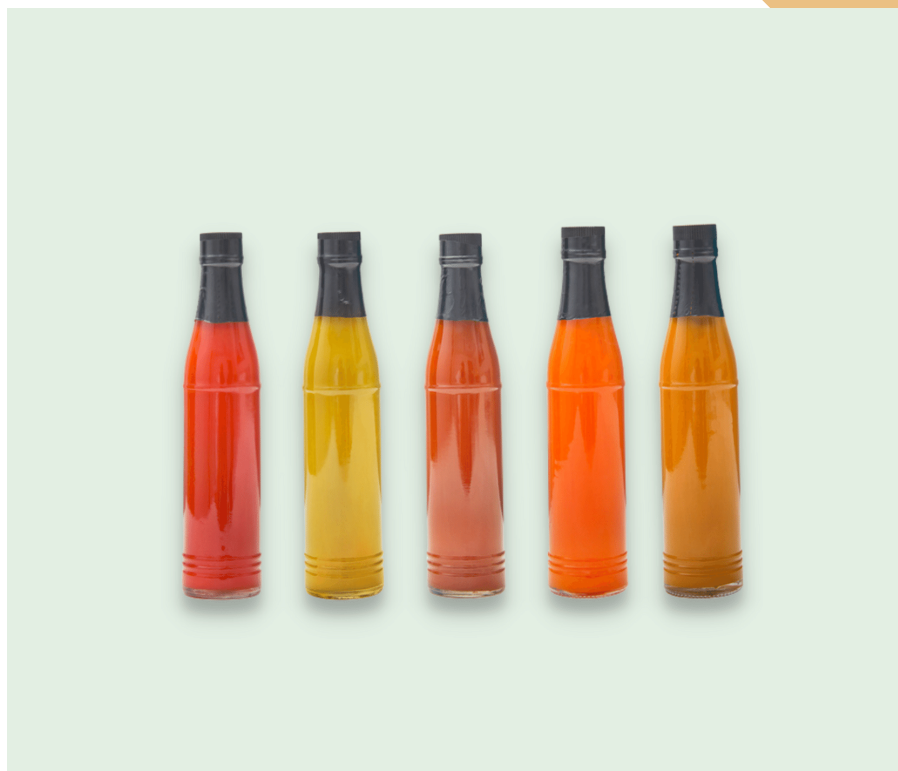
of consumers **love or like** hot sauce

**33%**

of restaurant **menus** feature hot sauce

**+60%**

**growth** of hot sauce on menus, past 10 years



**DATA DIVE:** preferred heat/spice level for condiments

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	GEN Z	MILLENNIALS	GEN X	BOOMERS
The spicier/hotter the better	12%	<b>15%</b>	8%	<b>16%</b>	14%	12%	6%
Moderately spicy/hot	28%	<b>33%</b>	23%	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>	27%	24%
Spicy/hot balanced by sweetness	21%	21%	<b>22%</b>	23%	<b>24%</b>	20%	19%
Mildly spicy/hot	22%	20%	<b>24%</b>	17%	20%	<b>25%</b>	23%
Not spicy/hot at all	17%	11%	<b>23%</b>	13%	10%	15%	<b>28%</b>

**EXPERT INSIGHT**

Contrary to popular belief, 72 percent of Boomers prefer some sort of heat/spice level—with nearly a quarter favoring a moderately spicy/hot heat level.



**OPPORTUNITY**

Consumer heat/spice level preference is all over the board. When offering hot sauces, consider adding hot sauces with a variety of heat/spice levels to ensure you're providing condiments for all diner likings.





# Offering a variety of hot sauces can increase your bottom line.



18%

Of consumers say they are more likely to **dine more frequently at restaurants that offer their preferred hot sauces**

Step up your hot sauce game and it could pay dividends. Consumers say they would be **more likely to be loyal to a restaurant, recommend it their friends and family and visit more frequently if their favorite hot sauces are offered.**

15%

Of consumers say they are **more loyal** to restaurants that offer their preferred brands of hot sauces



1 in 5 consumers say they are more likely to **recommend** restaurants to friends/ family that have their preferred hot sauces

## EXPERT INSIGHT

One in five may seem like a small percentage but considering the cost of marketing and the value of recommendations, the potential of earning 20 percent word of mouth is quite significant.

## DATA DIVE: Consumer attitudes toward hot sauce

	TOTAL
I like when <b>restaurants</b> have multiple hot sauce options available	45%
I often add hot sauce on my food when eating meals <b>at home</b>	42%
I love when a <b>restaurant</b> has a house-made hot sauce	39%
I have brands of hot sauces that I prefer and tend to use most – <b>at home &amp; restaurants</b>	39%
I often add hot sauce on my food when dining at <b>restaurants</b>	32%

A bowl of dumplings is shown with steam rising from it, set against a dark background. The dumplings are in a white bowl with a brown rim, and the steam is white and wispy. The background is dark and textured.

# The Next Generation of Spicy Has Arrived

MAKE IT GLOBALLY-INSPIRED





# The secret is in the salsa.

A whopping **75 percent** of consumers love/like salsa, and there are endless varieties beyond classic table salsa. Gen X is especially keen on salsa in general and are most likely to enjoy established varieties like *salsa verde* and *pico de gallo*. Younger generations are more likely to love or like emerging salsa varieties such as *salsa roja*.



3 out of 4 consumers  
**love/like** salsa

**37%**

of restaurant **menus**  
feature salsa



Photo Credit *Salsa Criolla: Aji peppers, green peppers, red onion, cilantro, lime juice, vinegar*

## DATA DIVE: Loved/liked salsas by demographic breakout

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	GEN Z	MILLENNIALS	GEN X	BOOMERS
Salsa	75%	72%	<b>76%</b>	66%	76%	<b>77%</b>	75%
Salsa Verde	46%	<b>48%</b>	45%	42%	50%	<b>51%</b>	40%
Pico de Gallo	46%	44%	<b>47%</b>	43%	51%	<b>52%</b>	39%
Salsa Roja	24%	<b>26%</b>	23%	27%	<b>32%</b>	24%	16%
Salsa Criolla	9%	<b>10%</b>	8%	<b>11%</b>	<b>11%</b>	10%	5%

### EXPERT INSIGHT

The growth of salsa is incredibly notable with red salsa up 39 percent and green salsa up 21 percent over the past four years.

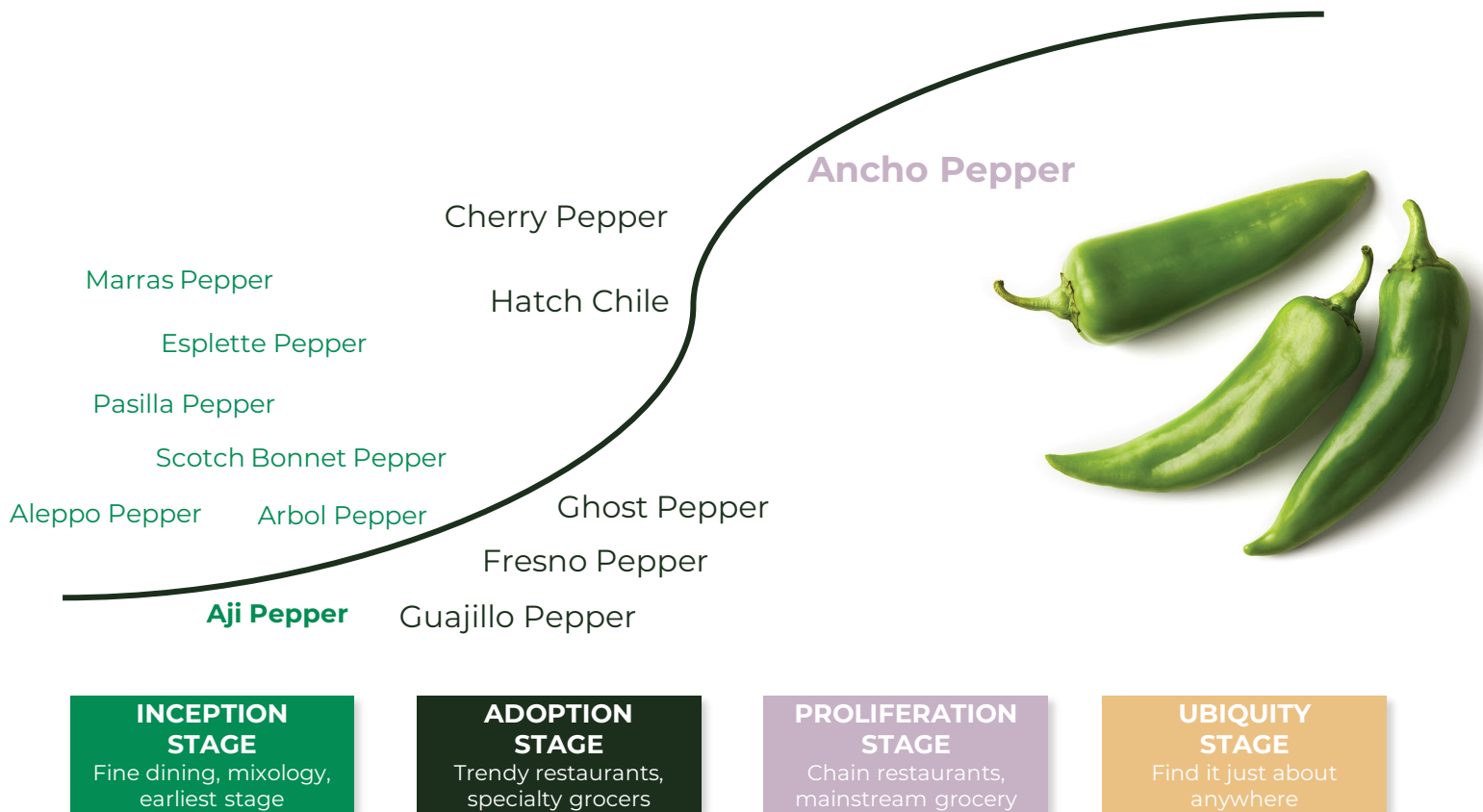


### OPPORTUNITY

Consider serving *criolla salsa* for your more innovative customers.



# Global Peppers By Trend Stage



Source: Datassential 2022

## SELECT THE RIGHT PEPPERS FOR YOUR AUDIENCE

### Decision Tree Guide

What kind of taste experience are your customers looking for?

**Cutting edge** and seeking the newest taste experiences.

**AJI PEPPER**



[Aji Pesto Culinary Paste](#)

**Late adopter** but still interested in trying trendy tastes.

**ANCHO PEPPER**



[Ancho Orange Ready-To-Use Sauce](#)



Don't sleep on unique ethnic ingredients that add heat and global flavor.

Street Vendor Pushing Food Cart In Bangkok, Thailand

**+31%**

Of consumers would like restaurants to offer **more globally-inspired** foods/beverages

Source: Technomic, Multi-Cultural Report 2022

Nearly half of consumers have eaten a global dish in the past two weeks, and even more have gone out of their way to try a new global food. As interest in global items continues to expand, look to different cuisines' unique take on spicy to keep offerings fresh and inspired.

Source: Datassential 2022

## Our Favorite Spicy Global Ingredients

### CONDIMENTS, PASTES, SAUCES & SEASONINGS



Ethiopia = Awaze Spice Paste



India = Cayenne, Spicy Chutneys



Indonesia = [Sambal](#), Sriracha



Israel = [S'chug](#) (Skhug, Zhug)



Italy = Calabrian Chili Paste, Pepperoncini



Jamaica = Scotch Bonnet Chili Sauces



Japan = Rāyu, Shichi-Mi Tōgarashi



Korea = Gochujang, Gochugaru



Mexico = Cayenne, Tajin



Morocco = [Harissa](#)



Peru = [Aji Pesto](#)/Sauce/Pepper



Philippines = Spicy Banana Sauce



Portugal = [Piri Piri \(Peri Peri\)](#)



Spain = Paprika



Thailand = Nam Prik Kapi, Spicy Curries



Yemen = [Zhug](#) (S'chug, Skhug)



## Take inspiration from around the globe when creating your next spicy offering.

Millennials are especially interested in globally-inspired hot sauces, with Mexican-style and Asian-style spicy global condiments most appealing across all consumers.

### DATA DIVE: Consumer preference for spicy global condiments

% OF CONSUMERS THAT ENJOY...	TOTAL	GEN Z	MILLENNIALS	GEN X	BOOMERS
<b>Mexican-style</b> spicy condiments (Tajin, <a href="#">Ancho Chile Sauce</a> , etc.)	35%	34%	<b>40%</b>	33%	32%
<b>Asian-style</b> spicy condiments (Rāyu, <a href="#">Sambal</a> , Sriracha, etc.)	28%	22%	<b>32%</b>	29%	23%
<b>South American-style</b> spicy condiments ( <a href="#">Aji Pesto</a> , Chimichurri, etc.)	17%	12%	<b>22%</b>	18%	13%
<b>European-style</b> spicy condiments ( <a href="#">Piri Piri</a> , Calabrian Chili Paste, etc.)	14%	11%	<b>16%</b>	15%	13%
<b>African-style</b> spicy condiments (Awaze, <a href="#">Moroccan Harissa</a> , etc.)	13%	13%	<b>15%</b>	11%	12%
<b>Middle Eastern-style</b> spicy condiments ( <a href="#">S'chug</a> , Chermoula, etc.)	12%	14%	<b>16%</b>	10%	8%



# Designing your next spicy signature sauce.

**56%**

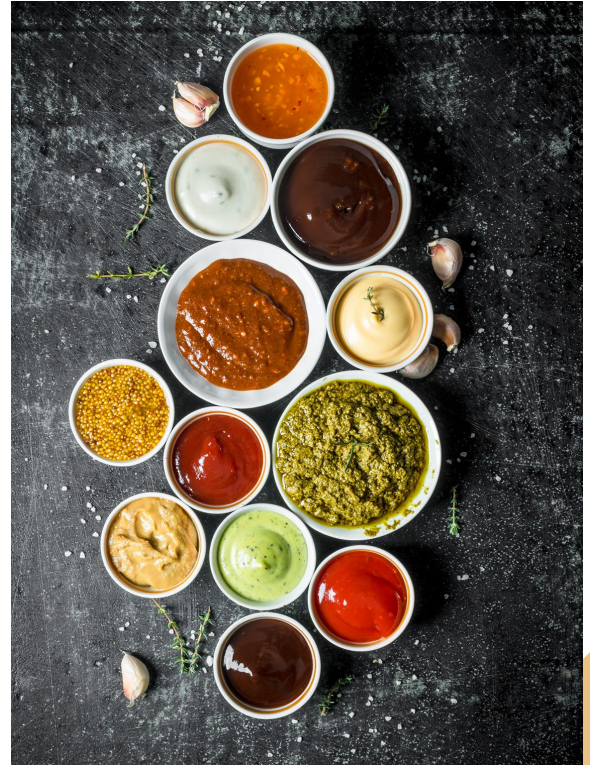
of operators say it's important to cross-utilize sauces in multiple items

**81%**

of operators say that the right sauce is essential to creating craveable dishes

**41%**

of operators say that trend-forward sauces help differentiate them from the competition



*Assorted Signature Sauces From Top National Restaurant Chains*

## U.S. SAUCE INSIGHTS

**26%**

of consumers are willing to pay more for a signature sauce

**19%**

of consumers are willing to pay more for a signature sauce with an innovative flavor

**46%**

of consumers look forward to getting a signature sauce at a particular restaurant

**+356%**

The four-year growth of "spicy mayo" on menus



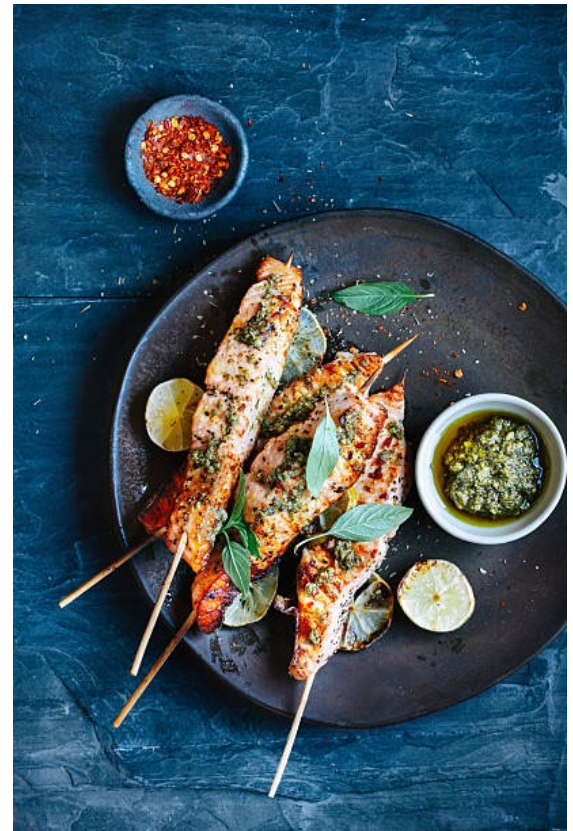
# Opportunities

**1 Reinvent menu items or retail products by creating spicy versions** of them, which appeal to most (71 percent) consumers. Fifteen percent of consumers prefer extremely or very spicy, while most consumers (56 percent) prefer moderately/mildly spicy.

**2** When offering hot sauces, add hot sauces with a **variety of heat/spice levels** to ensure you're providing condiments for all diner likings.

**3** Providing a variety of hot sauce types and brands **can increase restaurant patron loyalty, frequency of visits and word of mouth recommendations.**

**4 Consider expanding your spicy arsenal to include some earlier-stage hot sauces and peppers** to keep your menu items and retail products interesting and up-to-date on the latest cuisine trends.



*Mediterranean Salmon Skewers with Spicy S'chug Dipping Sauce*



*Consommé-Dipped Birria Nachos with Green & Red Jalapeños and Fresh Salsa Roja*

**5 When designing your next spicy item, consider exploring global spicy** condiments, sauces, seasonings, pastes and peppers, which especially appeal to Millennials.

**6 Offer a variety of spicy sauces for appetizers, fries, and other sides so that consumers can customize their own experience.** Fifty-six percent of operators say it's important to cross-utilize sauces in multiple menu items.

**7 Consider developing a signature spicy sauce.** Forty-four percent of consumers look forward to getting a signature sauce at a particular restaurant. This number jumps to 58 percent and 56 percent, respectively, for Gen Z and Millennials. Furthermore, 26 percent of consumers are willing to pay more for a sauce with premium ingredients, while 19 percent would pay more for an innovative flavor.

**8** With 81 percent of operators saying that the right sauce is essential to creating craveable dishes and 41 percent saying that trend-forward sauces (like spicy sauces) help differentiate them from the competition, sauces—**specifically signature sauces—have become a must have for consumers and operators alike.**





## FLAVOR ISN'T JUST WHAT WE DO, IT'S WHO WE ARE.

We supply fresh frozen culinary herbs, IQF specialty vegetables and globally-inspired culinary blends, pastes and sauces to award-winning restaurant chains and best-in-class food brands who are passionate about sourcing farm fresh flavor.



**SupHerb**  
**FARMS**



[marketing@supherbfarms.com](mailto:marketing@supherbfarms.com)



209-633-3600



[supherbfarms.com](http://supherbfarms.com)