



Key Trends from Sweets & Snacks 2025

The great and the good were in Indianapolis last week for Sweet & Snacks. A little calmer than Expo which led to longer, more engaging conversations, but still great attendance despite flights and hotels being jam-packed. We still don't know what else was going on in Indy (the Pacers were on the road!) Here's our seven key takeaways:

Seriously, Dubai Chocolate anyone? Your author first tried Dubai Chocolate at Christmas (um, before or after you?!) but talk about something, literally, going viral. You could not move for Dubai Chocolate; in its original bar form, individually wrapped singles, cones, and even drizzled on popcorn. We enjoyed sampling many but particularly enjoyed Promise Confection brand Edward Marc's take on the chocolate, pistachio and kadayif treat!

Flavor explosion. Dill and then some. Dill pickle, last year's break out flavor, was still going strong and we found it across multiple snacks. Everything seems to be getting fancier - it's not just cheese popcorn anymore but Smoked Gouda (Pop Daddy). Bravo to the team at Nomad for their beautiful pantry of flavored popcorns - Chimichurri, Ramen, Pad Thai and Parmesan & Pepper. Also, let's not forget about potato chips - elevated, of course. We particularly enjoyed Inessence's potato crisps from Spain (how about Black Caviar, Jamon Iberico or Manchego flavors?!) and Rustle's truffle chips from Croatia.

Popcorn and beyond. More than just new savory flavors, ubiquitous popcorn was also innovating on the sweet side and brand collaborations. We loved Snaxsational's new PB&J flavor - crunchy, sweet and salty - a lovely collab with Smucker's jam and JIF peanut butter. Beyond popcorn, we remain huge fans of Like Air Puffcorn. What a fun, better-for-you snack - great cinnamon bun flavor, and did you try the Thanksgiving Dinner flavor?! Talking of light, crispy, chewy, sweet and salty, we also loved trying Chunk Nibbles range of clusters.

Meat snacks. I can't do a food write up without mentioning protein of course. Meat sticks were everywhere, and the big guys were all well represented...Conagra's FATTY, Tillamook x Mike's Hot Honey collab and a Jack Links and Mr. Beast collab. On the smaller end we thought Fable Fish's Wild Alaskan Salmon Jerky was delicious, clean, and craveable. Fun, innovative and delicious, and unique as far as I could tell, was Riffs individually wrapped, shelf stable whole slice of bacon snack. High quality, sweet and salty!

Better For You. Avocado oil - no seed oils (Wild Fox nuts and trail mix); gluten free (Lyfe Chips - chips made from chicken breast!); low carb (Zesty Z pita chips); organic and simple ingredients (South Forty nut bars), and zero sugar (Hormbles Chormbles) all caught our eye this year.

Sometimes a little tradition goes a long way. Looking for innovation from a 130 year old brand? Look no further than Red Bird Candy. We all know the little red and white striped peppermints but it was cool to try their peppermint bark, drizzle popcorn and candy puffs. Along those lines, nothing says European vacation like classic Nutella crepes, but we also loved trying their brand new Peanut flavor.

The humble co-man. Last, but not least, we remember that many of the brands at Sweet & Snacks would not be there without their co-man partners. We enjoyed chatting with the likes of Chocolate Works, Weaver Popcorn, and Wyandot and hearing about what they can do for their brand and retailer partners.

Until next year! In the meantime, see you at IDDBA (New Orleans) and Summer Fancy Foods (New York).

D.A. DAVIDSON CONSUMER GROUP

Food & Beverage Team

FoodandBeverageTeam@dadco.com

dadavidson.com

D.A. Davidson & Co. Member SIPC