

PLATE OF THE NATIONS



HELLO
FRESH

HelloFresh reveals the Plate of the Nations

2025 was the year we travelled the world from our kitchens

Executive summary

2025 marked the dawn of a new foodie frontier. Around the world, home cooks began looking far beyond their borders for dinner time inspiration.

The detailed analysis came from millions of meals picked by diners from 18 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, and the US - with almost all customers favouring international recipes over their own local dishes.

In this landmark report, HelloFresh explores how global culinary curiosity has become the new norm, and reveals the socio-economic and environmental factors that likely contributed to this. Discover how Asian cuisine's popularity has soared, and is now neck and neck with a long-standing European favourite. The Plate of the Nations report also looks ahead, forecasting the flavours and food trends poised to define 2026.



Key insights

Global culinary exploration from home

In 2025, home cooks around the world “travelled” the world through food, with 15,000 recipes from over 70 cuisines ordered by HelloFresh diners in 18 countries. Its analysis showed that almost all diners favoured foreign recipes over their own national dishes.

Family and social influence

Nearly three-quarters of families (70%) used cooking to explore new cultures, with social media and meal kits serving as key sources of inspiration. Children's taste development and the desire for novelty drove adventurous home cooking.

Economic, environmental, and lifestyle motivation

Rising economic pressures and being time-poor can affect people's decisions to cook adventurous meals at home. However, a quarter of people are using meal-kits to explore alternative cuisines demonstrating how HelloFresh can provide a cost-effective, convenient and sustainable way to enjoy culinary tourism from home.

Asian cuisine is the global comfort food

Almost half (45%) of home cooks are choosing Asian meals (particularly Japanese, Korean, Thai and Malaysian) - matching Italian as the most popular comfort food globally.

Introduction

In a year when kitchens became departure lounges as home cooks recreated exotic international cuisines from far-flung foodie destinations, the appetite for international flavours stretched far beyond the usual favourites. Surprising new culinary cravings emerged:

Dutch households took their taste buds to South America, with Surinamese-style Bami with Chicken ranking the top pick

In France, diners swapped their signature rich Gallic sauces for a taste of Japan, with teriyaki chicken strips with sautéed vegetables and rice the top order

New Zealanders' forks took a detour to Seoul, ordering more Korean sticky chicken with charred corn slaw and sriracha than any local dishes

Britons made Asian sticky beef the most popular order of the year



It was also a year that professional chefs embraced [cuisine curiosity](#)¹, experimenting with lesser-known culinary regions, street food, and fusion dishes, including menu mash-ups like jerk birria tacos and plantain soft serve. Likewise, [researchers reported](#)² home chefs, too, began demanding “interesting and authentic ingredients” for more travel-led home cooking.

Exclusive order data from HelloFresh, which delivered nearly a billion meals globally last year, demonstrates that families are ‘travelling’ the world through their dinner choices.

The trend chimes with holiday-makers’ decisions to put food at the centre of their trip to-do lists over the past 12 months. [Almost 7 in 10 UK travellers](#)³ named ‘food’ as a factor in choosing holiday destinations. Separate research found nearly a fifth of global tourists travel specifically to seek out new restaurants or culinary experiences⁴.

A decade ago, quinoa, sumac and jackfruit were three little-known foods in the Western diet. But the trend for travel-by-tastebuds helped turn the trio into store-cupboard staples for many home cooks in recent years. Now HelloFresh’s Plate of the Nations report considers the food trends we’ll be eating next year: could we be tucking into South Korean yakgwa, Eritrean cuisine or extreme fusion combinations like kimchi jollof?

We also dig into where today’s food inspiration comes from, what we ate in 2025, and why this year saw our dinnertime meal inspiration travel from Seoul to Stockholm, Penang to Porto and Lima to London.

Why we're cooking the world from home

Staying put while tasting the world

In 2025, [global economic pressures](#)⁵, together with growing [environmental concerns](#)⁶, reshaped how people approached both dining out and travel.

At the same time, workers around the world became “more holiday deprived”, [research showed](#)⁷, with Gen-Z globally taking less time off work for holidays compared to any other generation. This is due to “fomo” concerns about missing out at work, heavy mental loads, and other responsibilities. While Boomers take time off more frequently, 53% of Gen-Z workers go six months or more between holidays.

These two trends meant cooking at home – especially through convenient meal-kit services like HelloFresh – became a creative and wallet-friendly way to “travel” through our evening dinner.



Almost three quarters of those that took part in a Censuswide survey for HelloFresh said they used cooking to explore new cultures from the comfort of their kitchens.⁸

Preparing meals inspired by far-flung cuisines in their own kitchens allowed people to taste global flavours without the financial strain or carbon footprint of traditional travel. In 2025, home cooking became both an economic and environmentally conscious adventure.

And some nations took a multi-journey trip in one meal, as a nostalgic dash of fusion cooking came to the forefront. Mexico and Tokyo mingled in HelloFresh's Japanese mixed mince tacos with crispy cabbage salad and spicy chilli – a favourite for Norwegians this year. Louisiana, USA and Italy merged in Cajun chicken conchiglie with Italian-style cheese and chilli flakes – another Norwegian favourite – while chipotle beef and pork rigatoni – a Mexico-Italy mix – was gobbled up by Britons in 2025.

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Consumers today are looking for the best of both worlds – the comfort of familiar, local dishes they know and love, and the excitement of exploring authentic global flavours. We're seeing growing demand not only for classics from Indian, Vietnamese, and Mexican cuisines, but also for more niche and regional specialties, from Caribbean to Indonesian and even Szechuan. Our goal is to strike the right balance – offering enough local favourites to satisfy those seeking familiarity, while also curating truly authentic international dishes for the more adventurous palate.

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Dr. Nina Wagner,
Senior Vice President
of Global Product



Meals inspired by journeys

This was the year that holidays were intrinsically linked with culinary exploration.

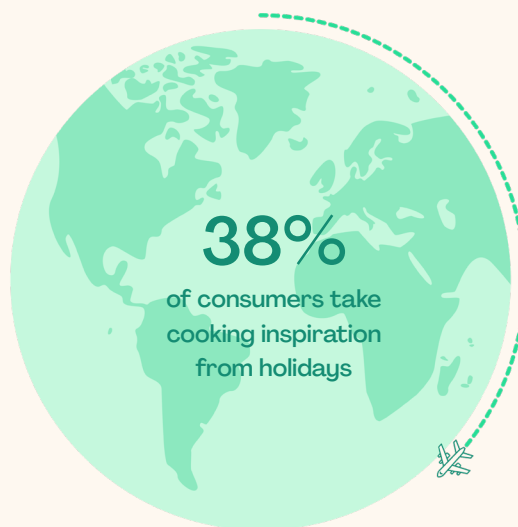
Eating habits away from home moved [“beyond fine-dining into a social media-fuelled treasure hunt”⁹](#), British Airways reported. Almost seven in ten travellers said that food was an important factor in choosing their holiday destination. “Holidaymakers are now crafting entire itineraries around viral dishes and local specialities, transforming everyday meals into shareable epicurean adventures,” the airline’s analysis showed.

From quirky convenience store snacks to street food sensations, “culinary tourism” became the new frontier for foodie explorers. [The global culinary tourism market is set to expand¹⁰](#) still further, with forecasts suggesting a climb to \$1.1 billion by the end of 2025 and a substantial leap to \$4.2 billion by 2033.

Research by online travel agency Skyscanner confirmed that [the top factor¹¹](#) affecting destination choice globally after cost was food – which was prioritised above weather, culture, attractions and natural landscape.

And when holiday-makers got home, they wanted to keep exploring the world via their tastebuds.

Over a third (38%) of respondents said they were inspired by holidays when choosing adventurous dishes to cook at home, as food tourism influences home cooking.



The ultimate comfort food? Look east

HelloFresh’s exclusive data reveals that Asian is fast becoming the world’s favourite comfort food for dinner in 2025.

Asian went head to head with Italian as the most popular cuisine, globally. This year saw more home cooks from around the world select meals from Japan, Thailand, Korea and Malaysia than any other major region. Although Asia spans a cornucopia of national influences, dishes from these four countries were the top choice for almost half – or 45% – of those surveyed.

Less popular was the smorgasbord of Scandinavian dishes: around 1% of those surveyed were keen to try Norwegian, Swedish, or Danish. Some HelloFresh customers, however, were curious: Norwegian-style salmon in a panko crust with roasted vegetables and lemon mayonnaise was in the top 10 bestsellers in Spain last year. That trend too seems to come from holiday-swaps: 2025 was the year that Spain strengthened its position as the [top tourist destination for Norwegians¹²](#) this year, with a 20% increase in spending from this market. Perhaps the sound of ‘taks’ and ‘heis’ around Madrid inspired a hankering for some Norwegian cuisine.

And in the US, international inspiration came from their near-neighbours. More than 54% of HelloFresh meals chosen by American diners were for Mexican dishes.

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We’re seeing a clear shift in consumer preferences. Italian cuisine, which was once the go-to comfort choice, is now giving way to the bold, vibrant flavours of Asian cooking. Diners are seeking more impact in their everyday meals: flavour, heat, and a sense of adventure that keeps mealtimes exciting.

The growing popularity of Thai, Japanese, and Korean dishes reflects this appetite for adventure and authenticity. As we look to expand our menu, this trend presents an exciting opportunity to introduce ingredients and dishes that deliver a flavourful Asian experience: easy to prepare, full of flavour, and perfect for the weekday dining table.

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Taryn Cairns
Head of Culinary, Nordics

A spirit of adventure

An impressive 78% of families are excited to try food from different cultures together, with a fifth - or 20% - using this as a way to expand their children's taste buds.



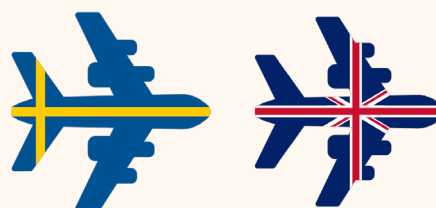
Over three quarters of families were excited by trying food from different cultures together

A fifth of Americans said that they had “not been able to travel as much, so they like to be more adventurous in the kitchen”.

Different nations took different views, however. In Canada, almost 80% of diners said they enjoy getting to experience other nations’ meals through tastes and foods native to those regions - but in its neighbouring US, only 40% reported the same motivation. Still, some Canadians just love to eat poutine, Tourtière and maple syrup: 6% of respondents said there were “no cuisines, besides my own, [that] I most enjoy cooking.”

The most internationally influenced home chefs are the Swedes: over three quarters (78%) of Swedish families said they were ‘travelling with their taste buds’, compared to 64% of British respondents.

Travel with their tastebuds

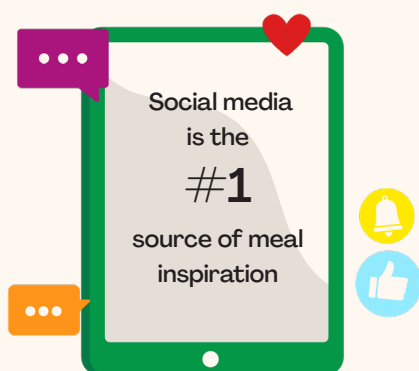


78%

64%

Italians were the group who said they most enjoy experiencing new cultures through food, rather than opting for their traditional homegrown cuisine, and almost two thirds of Americans said the same.

#Mealinspo



The most used source of meal inspiration was social media, with 40% of respondents watching reels and videos for recipe ideas. Closely followed by 30% of people taking inspiration from social food trends.

Meal kits weren't far behind, with those in the Netherlands (38%), UK (29%), Norway and Sweden (both 28%) most keen to use HelloFresh-style boxes to introduce new tastes and flavours within households.



The Joy of Missing Out

FOMO was the trend of the Noughties – but now it's JOMO that sees people around the world enjoying home comforts, hunkering down and ignoring what's outside their front door.

As researchers [The Food People¹³](#) put it, “who needs to go out when you can have restaurant quality meals, top notch cocktails, and barista grade coffee at home?”

The social media-fuelled embracement of JOMO in 2025 combined with a hunger for new spices and flavours, as the [Tastewise 2025¹⁴](#) report found, meant “significant growth in consumer interest in interesting and authentic ingredients such as Middle Eastern spice blends with Hawaii and black lime. But the JOMO way to enjoy them was at home – with adventurous, travel-led home cooking made easy by meal-kits.

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In the face of turbulent times and rising costs, JOMO is an emotional antidote and countercultural force. Leaning into home comforts is not just a means of retreat or escape – it's also a way to restore balance, and find joy in the 'here and now'. It's not a wholesale rejection of public life or socialising, but a recalibration.

'Staying in' has become an intentional and positive choice, as people realise they can satisfy their food cravings and curiosity in the comfort of home – without compromising on quality or enjoyment. In other words, 'nights in' are about so much more than box sets and baked potatoes; they are a source of fun, exploration and even 'food therapy'.

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Shokofeh Hejazi,
Head of Insight, Food People

Scared to be bold in the kitchen

The Censuswide research found that of those who felt held back from adventurous cooking at home, almost three quarters said the main reason was either not having the right ingredients (40%) or being time-poor during the week (31%).

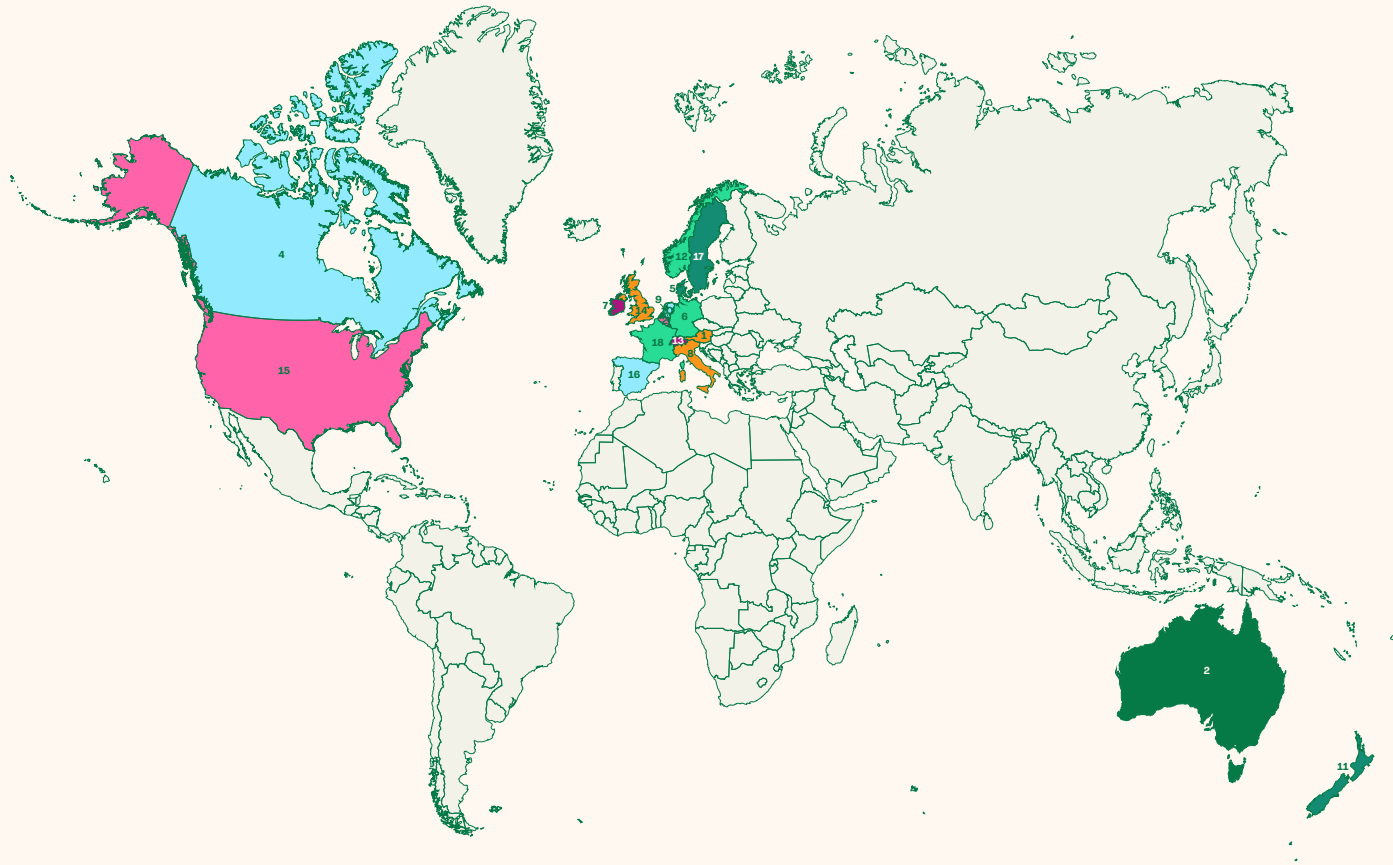
That's where meal-kits from HelloFresh come in – providing new recipes and convenient, measured-out ingredients to help bring dream dishes to life. Cooking dinner shifts from a daily chore to an exciting experience, with all the family able to enjoy getting involved.



A growing appetite for global cuisine: who's eating what?

HelloFresh dished up an incredible 15,000 recipes, spanning 70 different cuisines from Indian and Mediterranean to Scandinavian, Dutch and Malay.

The top dish in almost every major HelloFresh country is not native to that country. Data sourced in the fourth quarter of 2025 illustrated that international dishes featured in the top three dishes for each country, with a staggering 83% (15 out of 18) having a non-native dish as their number one bestseller.



So, who's eating what?

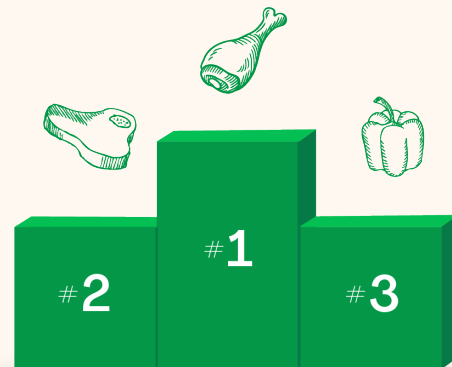
- 1 Austria to America for Grilled Chicken Burger with Potato Wedges and Sweet Chilli Mayonnaise
- 2 Australia to India for Indian Butter Chicken and Garlic Tortillas with Nutty Rice
- 3 Belgium to Italy for Speedy Chicken Linguine in Pesto Rosso Sauce with Spinach and Cherry Tomatoes
- 4 Canada to the Mediterranean for Roasted Salmon with Crispy Potatoes, Burst Tomatoes, and Green Beans
- 5 Denmark to Portugal for Portuguese Chicken Burger with Caramelised Onion and Crispy Fries
- 6 Germany to America for Grilled Chicken Burger with Potato Wedges and Sweet Chilli Mayonnaise
- 7 Ireland to Asia for Sesame Chicken Noodles with Green Beans and Chilli Pepper
- 8 Italy to Asia for Teriyaki-Glazed Chicken
- 9 Luxembourg to Mexico and Japan (fusion) with Panko Chicken Wraps with Mango Chutney and Crunchy Apple Slaw and Tomato
- 10 Netherlands to Suriname for Surinamese Bami Noodles with Chicken Thigh Strips and Quick-Pickled Cucumber with Crispy Onions
- 11 New Zealand to India for Chicken Korma and Wilted Greens with Garlic Rice and Yoghurt
- 12 Norway to Italy with Creamy Bacon Tagliatelle with Crisp Pangrattato and Italian cheese
- 13 Switzerland to Greece for Gyros with Greek Salad and Feta Cheese, served with Baked Potatoes and Tzatziki with Dill
- 14 UK to Asia for Sticky Beef with Rice and Pepper
- 15 US to Portugal for Garlicky Shrimp Couscous Bowls
- 16 Spain to Japan for Teriyaki Chicken with Stir Fried Vegetables (second most popular)
- 17 Sweden to Greece for Greek Beef Patty with Roasted Potato and Homemade Tzatziki (second most popular)
- 18 France to Japan for Teriyaki Chicken with Sautéed Vegetables and Rice (third most popular)

Trending ingredients

Trending meat

If you thought that French loved beef and Germans only hanker after pork sausage - think again. HelloFresh's order data for 2025 counters many national stereotypes.

The meal-kit company offers an incredible 50 different protein options to customers, but globally, chicken is the most-ordered choice, a key component of 36% of all meals ordered in 2025. Beef was second most-popular, making up 31% of orders, whilst vegetarian proteins were third. Pork was a strong contender, an ingredient in 18% of HelloFresh's 2025 meals. Just under 9% were fish or vegan.



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French consumers are becoming more health-conscious, while still being eager to indulge and eat gourmet food, even on a weeknight. Wellbeing, alongside the fun of discovery through bold flavours, lesser-known ingredients, and creative techniques, make every meal a small adventure.

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Emeline Sympat
Team Lead Recipe
Development, France

Smashing the stereotype, the French are going veggie

Proof of just how quickly plant-based diets are [growing in popularity](#)¹⁸ came from the recipe box food choices. In Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium - and, even surprisingly the famous meat-lovers of France - vegetarian meals were the most popular options in 2025.

Almost 24% of meals ordered in France in 2025 were veggie-based, such as the country's top bestseller Aubergine Parmigiana, while 23% were pork and 21% were chicken.

As French consumers become more health-conscious yet still eager to indulge and eat “gourmet-dishes” even on a weeknight, veggie recipes are taking centre stage. Thus bringing not just wellbeing, but the fun of discovery through bold flavours, new/lesser-known ingredients, and creative techniques that make every meal a small adventure.

Americans eat more pasta than Italians...

...if they're HelloFresh customers, that is. In the US, eight of diners' top ten veggie meals all involve some kind of pasta, including Ricotta Tomato Ravioli, Silky Sicilian Penne, Penne Rustica with a Kick, Triple Mushroom Truffle Penne and Lemony Spaghetti with Brussels Sprouts. But in Nonna's home of pasta, Italy? There, most of the bestselling meals involve rice or burger baps as their carb choice.



While the US loves seafood

HelloFresh data reveals a global gap in seafood popularity: across 18 countries, only two seafood dishes made the top-ten list of the 170 most-popular recipes recorded last year. These were, Chickpea and Garlic Prawn Stew with spinach sprouts, loved by Spaniards, and prawns in a coconut cream curry with basmati rice, ginger and courgettes - a favourite of Italians.

But in the US, shellfish was a clear favourite. Six of America's top 20 dishes included shrimp alone, such as Garlic Butter Shrimp Scampi, One-Pan Cantina Shrimp Fajitas, and Garlicky Shrimp Couscous Bowls as well as that Shrimp Spaghetti with a Kick.

Trending veggies

If the old wives' tale rings true, Belgians, Dutch and Luxembourgers should be able to see very well in the dark - for they are the nation which eats the most carrots, HelloFresh data shows. Benelux diners gobbled up the orange veg in 10% of their meals during 2025.

Elsewhere, zucchini (courgette) was the top choice in Canada, the French love tomatoes and mushrooms most, and for Italians it's surprisingly not tomatoes that take their top spot, but the humble bell pepper.

The Nordics and Spain put tomatoes in more of their meals than any other fresh veg (although it's actually classified as a fruit), while Brits love spinach more than anything else - perhaps it's the influence of old favourite Popeye - although his own nation, the US, went for green beans as their favourite vegetable in meal kits in 2025.

What's coming to our kitchens in 2026?

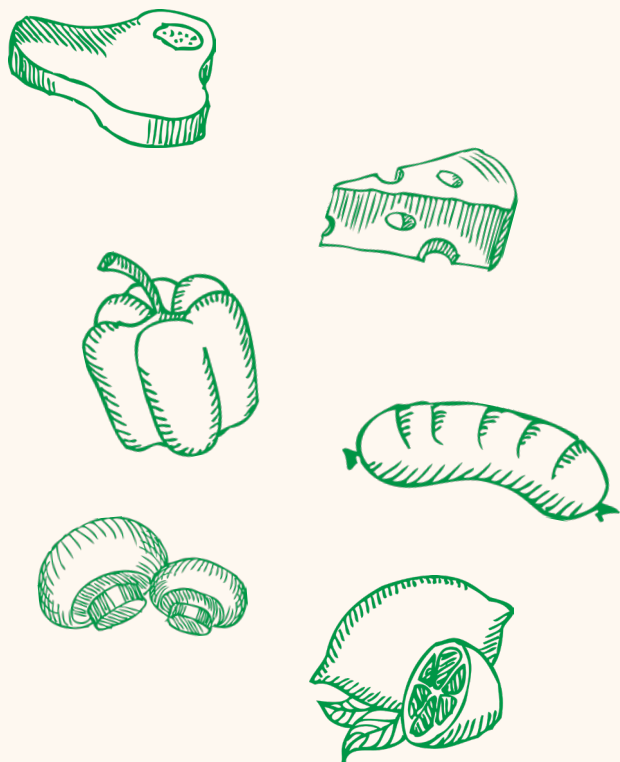
It's clear that adventurous diners were on the rise in 2025 – more than a third of HelloFresh users globally cooked up more meals from other countries over the last year.

But could 2025's plate-travelling adventures look timid compared to our cooking plans in the next 12 months?

Extreme culinary mash-ups

Trend-watchers say ultimate fusion foods are coming in 2026, as chefs worldwide swap and share flavours and techniques. Culinary prediction experts The Food People are looking out for jerk chicken burritos, lamb keema lasagna, pistachio guacamole and breakfast ramen as break-out [meals of the future](#)¹⁹; “anything goes, as long as respect and deliciousness are at the core.”

Swirling influences from Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas will see dishes like birria ramen – a tasty combo of Central American birria stew with Japan's ramen noodles and dashi spanakopita – Greek savoury pastry with Japan's umami stock, and suya tacos – crisscrossing Nigerian and Mexican flavours – take off. Could we see sushi latkes, kimchi jollof and currywurst pho?



Food of the future

Academics are getting excited about foods that sink greenhouse gases, rather than emit them, as reported in [HelloFresh's Dinner of the Future report](#)²⁰. Could 2026 be the year that theory becomes practice?

When tree crops including nuts, citrus, and olives are planted in barren areas, it works like reforestation. Another reason to sprinkle nuts on your morning granola. Kelp seaweed also photosynthesizes carbon in the atmosphere, with some thought to sink to the ocean floor and store carbon permanently. So, opting for a kelp-rich nori in your sushi could help save the planet. Shellfish too act as carbon sinks by sequestering carbon in their shells, and vertical ocean farming and sustainable aquaculture will become a major movement for the farming of mussels, oysters and clams.

New international cuisines come to prominence

African cuisine has been slowly growing in popularity, with food creators such as [Afroculinaria](#), and YouTubers like [SisiYemmieTV](#) showcasing recipes to the world. But 2026 could be the year the world tastes Africa's vast array of dishes and cuisines.

Already HelloFresh has seen regional spikes in demand for African dishes such as Ras-El-Hanout chicken with vegetables in yogurt sauce and West African Peanut Stew with sweet potato and bulgur wheat in Australia and Spain. Caribbean cooking is also preparing to enjoy some time in the sun, with Australia and New Zealand diners already queuing up for dishes such as Caribbean Lentils & Pineapple-Mint Salsa with Coconut Rice & Plant-Based Aioli and Caribbean chicken and slaw tacos.



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Our report has proven that home cooks don't want to settle for safe choices. Culinary tourism continues to evolve, with people inspired by food discovered on holiday and increasingly wanting to recreate those dishes at home. They want sharper shortcuts, new ingredients, bold flavours, and adventurous recipes. Food culture is moving fast, and culinary explorers are steering the ship. A third of people want to cook more adventurous dishes year on year, and this is likely to accelerate. One thing is for sure: 2026 promises even more culinary creativity and HelloFresh is the ultimate sous-chef in kitchens around the world.

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Bent Reinhardt,
Associate Director of
Global Culinary Strategy

Methodology

This report combines multiple data sources to provide a comprehensive view of evolving cooking behaviours in 2025, and what is driving these changes in global culinary curiosity.

Consumer data analysis

Data included was collected from multiple internal sources. 'Bestselling' recipes are determined through a blended metric that reflects shipped, swapped, repurchased and reviewed recipes across 17 HelloFresh markets, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK. The US market relies on a separate proprietary method that aligns with the global bestseller score. Bestseller data was sourced in October 2025. The report also draws on performance, volume share and customer behavior data for cuisines, proteins and vegetables across recipes sold from October 2024 to October 2025 in all 18 HelloFresh markets. Rankings and trends may change as customer behavior and data evolve.

Independent research

Independent research was conducted by Censuswide to understand consumer behaviours and motivations. The data sampled 17,004 general respondents across Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the UK, and the US. The data was collected between 16.10.2025 - 10.11.2025. Censuswide abides by and employs members of the Market Research Society and follows the MRS code of conduct and ESOMAR principles. Censuswide is also a member of the British Polling Council.



