



YEARS OF **DINING**

itv

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HELLO & WELCOME TO “70 YEARS OF...” YOUR POCKET-SIZED GUIDE TO 70 YEARS OF BRITISH CULTURAL CHANGE

This year marks 70 years of TV advertising in the UK and 70 years of ITV being on air. In order to celebrate this cultural landmark - ITV media will be taking advertisers on a journey through 70 years of British cultural change in order to better understand our ever changing present.

We'll be exploring how the adverts and shows on ITV have shaped, reflected and changed the consumer landscape of mainstream Britain, through the lens of four pillars of consumer behaviour - play, dining, spending and relationships.

In this second edition of '70 years of' we're turning our attention to the nation's third highest household expenditure ... Dining

AN EXPLORATION INTO HOW THE NATION DINES

We've utilised a blend of semiotic analysis, 70 years of ITV's subtitle data, expert interviews and national datasets to understand how the content on ITV has reflected, shaped and changed the nation's dining habits.

Why dining?

Over the past 70 years food has become a national obsession. Brits now spend an average of 34 days a year thinking about food, with **7/10 of us** talking with others about what we're having for dinner on a daily basis. Food programming makes up approximately 10 hours and 30 minutes of ITV's schedule per week - that's more time than is dedicated to the Soaps or Love Island.



What we eat and what we drink is deeply intertwined with our national identity - when asked what makes you proud to be British **'A full English/Welsh/Scottish breakfast'** ranked just behind 'our sense of humour' and the NHS. Gen Z recently ranked Greggs' Sausage Roll as the most important modern British cultural artefact - ahead of Love Island, Glastonbury and a Blue Peter badge.

This is all to say that what we eat and how we eat is a reflection of the society we live in. In order to understand the changes happening in the lives of modern British audiences, you need to first look at how they dine.

In the space of a few decades we have transformed from a nation of meat and two veggers to a nation where **Chinese cuisine is our favourite** takeaway treat, the **majority of Brits consider themselves to be good cooks** and **air fryers are used more often than ovens**. In this research we aim to explore the shifts in British food culture - alongside burning questions like: When did roast dinners become about protein? Why are mums so obsessed with picky bits? And is Big Zuu the new Fanny Cradock?

"FOOD, CULTURE, PEOPLE AND LANDSCAPE ARE ALL ABSOLUTELY INSEPARABLE."

FOOD BROADCASTER, ANTHONY BOURDAIN



3 CULTURAL SHIFTS

WHAT'S CHANGED IN HOW WE DINE?

In our research exploring 70 years of ITV's food programming we uncovered three significant shifts in how brits dine. In this section we'll dissect these social and cultural changes, exploring what this means for brands looking to tap into foodie trends.

1

FROM FOOD AS PERFORMANCE TO FOOD FOR PERFORMANCE

First, let's set the table and look at food's original role in Britain. Class and status were, and still are, marked by how you look, how you sound and, as we've learned, how you eat. This shift focuses on why we eat. We trace the role of dining as a way to impress others through hosting and cooking, to food becoming fuel for surviving daily life.

We see how the role of food becomes increasingly individualised, catering to personal ethics, special diets, and our individual sustenance.



1960s - 80s

SOCIAL CLIMBING AND STATUS

This period was the height of impressing others with your cooking skills. For housewives, the typical homemakers at the time, preparing an impressive spread for their diners was their top priority, often in-service of their husbands or trying to impress the mother-in-law. The food you served signalled the lifestyle you led and how you wanted your family to be perceived.

Food was essentially a form of social status and social performance. This period also saw mentions of '**diet**' actually peaked in 1966 and 1980 in Coronation Street. To be on a diet was aspirational and performative, rather than the slightly 'shameful' secret it is today.

The lofty social rules behind diets and dinner parties existed because etiquette far preceded enjoyment. This generation of homemakers were heavily influenced by **Fanny Cradock** (you're going to be hearing her name a lot!) who emphasised the aesthetic appeal of food. There was a lack of enthusiasm for flavour, let alone enjoyment of the food. **What was on your plate represented what you had, for example the cuts of meat you had signalled your wealth.**

Source: Fanny Cradock in her kitchen (1969)

1990s - 00s

ETHICAL EATING

When food was simply a social performance there was little care for the contents of the food, what was in it, where it came from, but as social political awareness around the food industry grew people started to question how their food got from farm to plate.

When **Mad Cow Disease, otherwise known as BSE** (Bovine spongiform encephalopathy), broke out, trust in food safety sharply declined. After beef had gone bad, we saw people open their minds to alternative lifestyles, cutting out meat completely. Going veggie became an identity and a political statement, a protest against what many deemed an unethical industry. We saw mentions of **'vegetarian'** skyrocketing on Coronation St in the 2000s.

What was in your meals became an expression of your identity and politics, whether you were a well travelled foodie, an all organic yummy mummy or an environmentally minded vegetarian.

Source: McDonalds, Planting (2008)

This shift in emphasis can be seen in food programming - cookery shows no longer just told us what to cook, but went behind the scenes food - exploring the provenance, ethics and social impact of particular ingredients. The 00s saw **Jamie Oliver** shift from cheeky chappy to ethical campaigner - from normalising free range eggs to bringing about the demise of turkey twizzlers! Even entertainment shows like **Ready Steady Cook**, saw chefs like Ainsley Harriott and James Martin, transfer their deep knowledge of ingredients and food providence onto the pan. Even the biggest brands began to shift their messaging - with the likes of **McDonalds** 2008 'Planting' focusing on the quality origins of their produce for the first time.



2010s - 2020s

MACROS & MICROBIOMES

So we've gone from a social performance to a statement of identity, but where did it go from here? In the 2010s to the role of food in the present day, education and awareness (almost paranoia) about what we put into our bodies only became more prevalent. An abundance of information and government initiatives such as "Change for Life" (2009) highlighting the importance of what was in our food as well as the Sugar Tax (2016) which impacted our relationship with processed foods. The cost of living crisis in the 2020s has put pressure on our food choices, with increasing **food insecurity and food inflation outpacing overall inflation rates.**

Food had gone back from being a vehicle for social good and performative identity to its base form, a necessity for survival. Food was now fuel – how our food choices impacted our health took precedent over how food choices impacted society. This explains why mentions of **"fuel"** rose by 206% between 2020 and 2025 and mentions of "protein" surged by almost 600% between 2022 and 2023 on ITV cooking shows, while mentions of "vegetarian" and "vegan" have been declining since 2023.

An increasingly obsessive health and fitness culture particularly among Gen-Z and younger millennials has only accelerated this shift. Food was now functional again, you eat for energy, to remedy deficiencies ('vitamins' increased by nearly 200% between 2020 and 2025) and ultimately get through the day. The 2020s in particular have become less about what the food is and more about what it does for you.



SO WHAT?

RESULTS NOT RECIPES

We've seen that the shift from food as performance to food for performance is down to the changing nature of social status and our wallets. People are prioritising the essentials in their fridge because they're tight on time and money, when thinking of food they don't want to think about the process of cooking. So if you're a convenience food double down on the results, not just recipes.

Weetabix's partnership with The Chase is a perfect example of a brand leaning into this cultural shift. By utilising the high pressure environment of the Chase, Weetabix were able to highlight the benefits 'having your Weetabix' has on everyday performance.



2

FROM DINING ROOM DINNERS TO INTUITIVE GRAZING

Food culture hasn't just changed in what we eat but in how we eat it. This second shift is all about the death of the dining room — the moment we stopped gathering at set times for family meals and started eating whenever (and wherever) we felt like it. What used to be “Dinner's ready!” has turned into “I'll grab something later,” and suddenly grazing throughout the day feels more normal than sitting down together.

Why does this matter? Because it shows how convenience and lifestyle have completely rewired our eating habits. The fridge and microwave have made it easier to stretch meals, and takeaways and ready meals have freed us from cooking altogether. Snacking culture gives us permission to do what we want when we want it rather than what's served.

In this shift we'll see the decline of strict meal times to the convenience-driven “pick-bitification” of meals, making dining more scattered than ever.



1960s – 70s TIME FOR DINNER!

Being called down for a meal is a familiar experience for most of us in Britain. We were used to eating around set times, adhering to table manners and, in some homes, even a technique and etiquette to dining and cooking. We would typically associate dining with the **role of the housewife** spending most of her time in the kitchen and making food as a service to others. It was ultimately the housewife's role to prep, cook and schedule mealtimes and this role was so ingrained in society that “Dinnertime!” or “Breakfast!” signalled to families that the food was prepared but also that mealtimes were set and to be respected.

However the homecook wasn't alone in these efforts, they had their trusty kitchen gadgets to make cooking a more efficient and less laborious task. Products like the fridge, microwave and electric mixers meant that meals could last longer and be prepared with ease shifting the focus on the effort put into meals. These labour-saving devices introduced a new found convenience in the kitchen, making domestic dining a less formal experience and in turn began to untether food from set time and place for home-cooked meals.



CORONATION ST.

1980s TAKEAWAY TAKEOVER

The 80s saw convenience continue to be sought after when it came to food. We weren't just preparing food faster, we were preparing food less altogether! In fact mentions of **'takeaway'** increased by 463% between 1986 and 2023 on Coronation Street. Subsequently, we saw the opening of the kebab shop Prima Doner and Pakistan takeaway Speed Daal open on **Coronation Street** in 2008 and 2018 respectively.

Takeaway culture began to shape our expectations of food so that even when preparing meals at home, every step of the process needed to be as convenient as possible without compromising on the quality. In 1979 household name Marks and Spencer revolutionised the industry with the UK's first chilled ready meal, a Chicken Kiev. Chilled meals met the expectations of diners accustomed to a new and extremely convenient dining experience.

Prima Doner, was first introduced to cobbles in 2008.



1990s - 2010s

SNACKAGGEDON: THE RISE OF CONVENIENT FOOD

The sanctity of mealtimes has been dismantled by technological advances, busy lifestyles and individualism. In the 90s the dinner table no longer the staple of the home it once was and meals aren't shared as often, unless we're perched on the sofa in front of the telly.

An increase in **long work hours in the 1990s** saw a more flexible approach taken to meal times - with meals on the go. **The increase of women in the workforce** (by 11% between the 1980s - late 1990s) meant that waiting for the homemaker and scheduled mealtime was increasingly a thing of the past; takeaway, ready meals and snacks empowered us to eat on our own terms - whenever we craved it and in quantities large and small.

Enter Snackaggedon. Snacking became the new smoke break, heralded by the iconic 1995 advert - as an aside the **Diet Coke break** is now known as going for a "fridge cigarette," a ritual of craving rather than sustenance.

1995

DIET COKE BREAK





2020s

PICKY-BITSIFICATION OF MEAL TIMES

In more recent years the convenience-driven downsizing of meal times has led to smaller, more frequent portions, directed by our lifestyle. **40%** of Brits eat small breakfasts and **38%** reported that they often skip breakfast (Mintel, 2024) largely due to our increasingly individualistic food choices, hyper-personalised lifestyles. No longer eating together and at set times broke down the consensus of the homemaker deciding the diet of the home – It's become a free for all. According to a recent 2025 study, just **one in three British families now eat together each day.**

The dinner table is no longer the theatre of entertainment like it was in the 60s and now even the sofa is struggling for its share. TV programming is typically scheduled around traditional meal times but with a multitude of content available across streaming platforms meal and show pairings become scattered throughout the day and night in an unpredictable way. Occasionally dinner may even be prepared at a set time but enjoyed in the bedroom, living room and kitchen by the same members of the household simultaneously.

“WE DON'T OFTEN SEE THOSE SCENES THAT YOU USED TO SEE 40 YEARS AGO OF THE FAMILY SAT AROUND A TABLE. IT'S NOW ABOUT CONVENIENCE; WE SEE OUR CHARACTERS IN THE SHOP AND LOTS OF TIMES SAYING “I'M LOOKING FOR A MEAL FOR ONE. I'M LOOKING FOR A READY MEAL. I'M LOOKING FOR A PIZZA.”

TOM PARFITT, EMMERDALE ARCHIVIST

SO WHAT?

FOOD MOODS: FOOD IS NOW A FEELING

We eat for far more than sustenance. It's about satisfying an emotional need with a sprinkle of spontaneity making food feel like a treat every time. Dining can feel like a chore in our busy lives so being able to eat on our own terms and when we feel like is equally more important than when we should. How can you create a food feeling and get us in the mood for food? We love to talk about what we're eating almost as much as we enjoy eating, so get the conversation going!

By leaning into and elevating the mood of a moment you can supercharge brand association and relevance. [Laithwaites](#) did just that by becoming the official wine partner of drama on ITV. The partnership showcased how Laithwaites wine elevated the late-night, lean-back drama viewing moment.



3

FROM A NATION OF HOME COOKS TO “EVERYONE’S A CHEF”

Today food expertise is not only democratised, it’s expected. We’ve gone from teaching housewives to master the staples to a nation of wannabe chefs cooking sophisticated cuisines from all corners of the globe.

This shift in cooking behaviour (as well as who is doing the cooking) correlates with increasingly personalised narratives around consumer choice. The dining decision making power is increasingly being placed in the hands of the consumer, rather than culinary institutions or experts. Our research found that **cooking is no longer about simply following recipes.** It’s about acting as your own personal chef - combining individual flair with vast food knowledge to prepare meals that deliver both nutritional value and lip smacking flavour.



“EMMERDALE HAS EVOLVED FROM WHERE WE WERE IN 1972. BACK THEN COOKING WAS A FEMALE-LED THING IT WAS THE MATRIARCH THAT WAS IN THE KITCHEN WITH HER DAUGHTER. NOW IN 2025 YOU HAVE CHARACTERS LIKE LIAM WHO IS A DOCTOR BUT HAS AN ESTABLISHED INTEREST AND KNOWLEDGE OF COOKING. WE’LL OFTEN SEE HIM IN THE SHOP ASKING IF THEY’VE GOT VERY SPECIFIC INGREDIENTS FOR AMBITIOUS MEALS”

TOM PARFITT, EMMERDALE ARCHIVIST

1960s – 1970s

HOUSEWIVES IN TRAINING

The reality of culinary programming in the 1960s was to educate the nation's housewives. In 1963's **Kitchen Magic** we see Fanny Cradock and her husband swoop in to save a hapless housewife whose burnt fish fingers aren't cutting the mustard. Flavour is seen as secondary; what really matters was using the 'proper' technique to produce aesthetically pleasing platters. ITV's **The Galloping Gourmet (1969)** marked a slight shift in culinary ambition with professional chef Graham Kerr teaching an audience of housewives how to recreate real restaurant dishes. Nonetheless the message was clear. Cooking was still about meeting an expected standard, not about experimentation.

1963

FANNY CRADOCK – KITCHEN MAGIC



1980s – 2000s

AN EXPLOSION OF FLAVOUR AND FLAIR

While the 60s and 70s were defined by the rule book, the 80s, 90s and 00s saw the rule book firmly thrown out.

Social and demographic changes ushered in a new era of culinary exploration. The 1990s marked the first moment in British history where **more people were recorded moving to the UK than leaving the UK**. This, alongside increases in international holidays, meant that Brits were increasingly exposed to new flavours, new techniques and new levels of spice. The result? The rise of fusion cuisine. 1995 saw the **first Pataks curry** ad air on ITV and in 2001 Chicken Tikka Masala was named Britain's national dish. This love affair with spice has continued well into the 2020s with mentions of “spices” in ITV cooking shows increasing by 30% in 3 years 2020-2023.

This explosion of flair was reflected in our cooking content. Shows like Ready, Steady, Cook emphasized off the cuff, creative cooking. While Jamie Oliver ushered in a new wave of casual cookery that made home cooking ‘cool’ again. ITV’s late night offering **‘Get Stuffed’ (1991-1994)** represented an archaic twist on the ‘chat and chop’ format showing real people in their own kitchens making adventurous meals like Mexican snapper and cornflake bakes.

This casual approach to cookery demystified and democratised the act of cooking for a whole new generation. Culminating in the launch of the cooking competition genre - with shows like MasterChef encouraging home cooks to showcase their own creations rather than simply replicating existing recipes.



2010s – 2020s

PRESSURE COOKING

Entering the 2010s the pressure ramped up – it was no longer good enough to be a competent cook, you had to be as good as an expert. Home cooks were now consistently referred to as ‘chefs’ – from 2020 to 2025 the mention of the word ‘chef’ increased by 61% on ITV cooking shows. Shows such as Next Level Chef (2023) pitted professional chefs, home cooks, and social media chefs against one another in a battle for culinary glory. While shows like Dinner Date and Come Dine With Me positioned everyday Brits as the ultimate culinary critics – partially doing away with the notion of ‘experts’.

This increase in pressure and assumed public knowledge is the direct result of increased democratisation of information. The 2010s saw the number of cooking shows on TV almost double, while the rise of platforms like Instagram and TikTok have put recipes, reviews and hacks into the hands of the general public. Leading to a current industry concern about a lack of distinction between Instagram and ‘real’ chefs.



“WE MUST BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT IS A CHEF, AND WHAT IS SOMEBODY WHO ASSEMBLES FOOD? A LOT OF PEOPLE ONLINE THINK THEY'RE COOKING WHEN ACTUALLY THEY'RE JUST DOING ASSEMBLY OF INGREDIENTS.”

FIONA LINDSAY, FOOD ENTERTAINMENT AGENT



SO WHAT?

THE POWER IS IN YOUR PANS

The power now sits in people's own kitchens. After decades of food shows, recipe content and social media hacks, the everyman has become the chef of their home. Confidence is no longer the barrier, skills and technique are widely understood – **the challenge is time.**

For brands there's an opportunity to make quick meals feel premium, empowering domestic chefs everywhere. It's about making quick meals feel quality. Could you pair a 5-minute meal with a premium drama for maximum mealtime or celebrate the simplicity of 3 ingredient meals?



A fantastic example of this is M&S's ad-funded TV show **Cooking with the Stars** – shown on ITV – that creates a direct pipeline from inspiration to irl purchase. Not only does the show showcase M&S's produce, it creates inspirational meals with it. Then, by highlighting these **recipes online** and in-store M&S creates a direct link between the content on show to in store purchases. Helping stressed out chefs take the time out of meal times, without compromising on quality and taste.



TIMELINE OF DINING

1960s

FROM SMASH TO SOPHISTICATION: THE DECADE WHERE DINNER PARTIES COLLIDED WITH CONVENIENCE

British attitudes to food in the 1960s were defined by a rejection of post-war austerity in favour of modernity. With women still leading in the domestic kitchen, this cultural shift created a dual food identity - For everyday life, there was a widespread embrace of 'scientific' convenience foods to save labour - In contrast, this decade saw the birth of the modern dinner party, where women were expected to perform culinary skill as a new status symbol. This aspirational cooking was fuelled by the first mainstream exposure to 'exotic' flavours, influenced by Commonwealth immigration and a growing obsession with continental Europe.



KEY MOMENTS

THE HOSTESS WITH THE MOSTESS

Iconic ITV show **The Galloping Gourmet** pushed women, master complex dishes and presentation for the increasingly popular dinner party.

SHORT CUTS TO SHOWING OFF

TV advertising for brands like **Smash** and **Oxo** promoted convenience, simplifying time consuming meals like the Sunday Roast.

TABLES ARE TURNING

The rise of competitive **supermarkets** (following the 1964 Resale Prices Act) and the **refrigerator** becoming a household staple (by 1967), paved the way for both elaborate host-worthy cooking and everyday convenience.

1970s

A CULINARY CROSSROADS OF CONVENIENCE, TRADITION, AND EMERGING GLOBAL TASTES

Attitudes to food were a mix of tradition and new influences. Economic pressures and more women working fuelled a boom in convenience foods like tinned pies and Angel Delight. In contrast, the aspirational dinner party introduced continental dishes such as prawn cocktail and Black Forest gâteau. Culturally, the decade was one of transformation and exploration: immigration popularised Indian and Chinese cuisine, while package holidays to Europe began to broaden palates with flavours like garlic and olive oil, laying the groundwork for modern British food.



TRADITIONS BECOME PERSONALISED

TV chefs like **Fanny Cradock (1975)** continued to treat home cooking as a performance, but with a new emphasis on mastering traditional meals with personal flair.

SAVING TIME AT DINNER TIME

The invention of the **gourmet ready meal (M&S Chicken Kiev, 1979)** allowed households to serve an aspirational dish with ultimate ease.

GLOBAL INFLUENCE

The arrival of American fast food (**McDonald's, 1974**), introduced a completely new, ultra-convenient model of eating out, marking a decade where British food choices began to radically diversify.

1980s A DECADE OF DIVISION, FROM MICROWAVE MEALS TO MANGE TOUT

British food in the 1980s was defined by a culinary divide. The microwave revolutionised home cooking, making ready meals like the Chicken Kiev a household staple. In contrast, an aspirational "foodie" culture emerged, influenced by "yuppies" restaurant cuisine and trendy new ingredients like rocket and sun-dried tomatoes. This is the decade where Italian food became mainstream and introduced us to charismatic TV chefs, such as Keith Floyd, who began making international cooking accessible to all.



FOOD BECOMES AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE

ITV Yorkshire's Farmhouse Kitchen continued to champion and reinforce a love for classic, home-cooked British food but focused on flavour and emphasised how home cooked food should be enjoyed and brings the family together. [Farmhouse Kitchen - Yorkshire TV 80's](#)

EUROPEAN CUISINE BECOMES MAINSTREAM

The obsession with continental sophistication went mainstream. This was no longer niche, but playfully marketed to the masses in iconic adverts like ["Just one Cornetto" \(1981\)](#), which positioned Italian culture as a marker of good taste.

MODERNITY AND INNOVATION IN THE KITCHEN BECOMES MORE ACCESSIBLE

The demand for ultimate convenience, powered by the [microwave oven skyrocketing](#) into more than 50% of homes.

1990s A PARADOX OF FOOD CRISIS AND CONFIDENCE IN THE KITCHEN

The 1990s was foodie era shaped by two cultural forces - On one hand, the BSE ('mad cow disease') crisis created widespread public fear, leading to a demand for organic food and traceability, while at the same time the rise of the celebrity chef and the gastropub, created unprecedented culinary confidence and making global foods like Thai green curry household staples.



THE CHEF AS ENTERTAINER

This was driven by a new style of television, where the focus moved from the recipe to the personality of the celebrity chef like national treasure Ainsley Harriott on ITV's [Can't Cook Won't Cook, \(1995\)](#). Cooking shows became less instructional and more about conversational, personality-led entertainment.

FOOD IS NO LONGER RESTRICTED TO MEALTIMES

Brands like Coca Cola became powerful lifestyle accessories- Brands were no longer just ingredients but were marketed as emotional "moments" outside of traditional mealtimes like the Diet Coke Break, (1995). Brands become deeply integrated into popular culture through groundbreaking sponsorships like [Cadbury's on Coronation Street](#) demonstrating a strong link to TV and key meal-times like dinner.

FOOD BECOMES A NEW MEDIA GENRE

ITV (Carlton as it was at the time) launched the UK's first dedicated food channel in 1996 cemented food's status as a standalone entertainment genre, capable of sustaining its own broadcast schedule.



2000s A DECADE OF DIVISION, FROM MICROWAVE MEALS TO MANGE TOUT

The 2000s saw a new food consciousness emerge, driven by a TV culture that saturated the national conversation. This ranged from the high-stakes kitchen drama of **Hell's Kitchen** to the relaxed weekend pleasure of **Saturday Kitchen**. This constant exposure to food culminated in powerful social campaigning, epitomised by **Jamie Oliver's School Dinners (2005)**, which sparked a national backlash against processed food and fuelled a boom in farmers' markets and organics



THE ASPIRATIONAL BUBBLE

ITV's Hell's Kitchen, from 2004 defined a new genre of high stakes and dramatic cooking, inspiring home cooks to privet into amateur chefs with an "I can do that!" mentality. This sparked the desire for superior-quality luxury for the home cook, epitomised by the iconic **M&S ad**.

THE REALITY CHECK

The 2008 financial crisis meant the harsh reality of soaring food inflation impacted the nation in a way we never thought possible- Freddos rose by 50 (10p to 15p%)

2010s A DECADE OF CONTRASTS: AUSTERITY AND AVOCADOS

The 2010s was a decade of culinary contrasts, shaped by post-crisis austerity and the rise of social media. Austerity fuelled a home-baking boom, championed by **The Great British Bake Off** and budget supermarkets. In parallel, **Instagram** turned food into a visual performance, driving "clean eating" trends and photogenic street food. This created a culture torn between frugal home comforts and aspirational public display. Oh and a little thing called Brexit happened.



FOOD AS SOCIAL & ROMANTIC CURRENCY

Cooking skills became a new status symbol, reframed as a desirable trait that boosted your value and appeal in the dating world like **ITV's Dinner Date**.

DEMOCRATISING "GOURMET"

Brands like Lurpak ads (**2015 Lurpak 'Adventure Awaits'**) celebrated that creativity and skill, not expensive ingredients, were the new markers of taste.

FOOD AS A MORAL IDENTITY

The mainstreaming of movements like **Veganuary (2014)** allowed people to signal their personal values through their diet.

2020s ANXIETY AND AIR FRYERS - THE DECADE WHERE COOKING BECAME AN ACT OF SELF CARE, RESILIENCE AND CONNECTION

The first half of the seismic cultural shocks the nation experienced thanks to COVID-19 forced a movement in home cooking, recipe boxes, and local shopping. This was immediately followed by the severe cost-of-living crisis, which has made thrift paramount and culturally canonised the air fryer as the decade's defining appliance. Meanwhile, TikTok has replaced Instagram as the engine of food trends, favouring simple, viral recipes over polished aesthetics and fostering a national mood focused on resilience, value, and resourcefulness. Food has become both function in terms of fuelling us, but also an act of emotional self care to get us through tough times. culture torn between frugal home comforts and aspirational public display. Oh and a little thing called Brexit happened.



FOOD AND COOKING AS SELF CARE

TV shows like **Cooking with the Stars** framed cooking as a fun, aspirational challenge to pursue for enjoyment when other activities were limited.

REALITY HITS HOME

The cost-of-living crisis, triggered by the **2022 invasion of Ukraine** and subsequent soaring food and energy prices, which hit a **45-year high in 2023**.

AN ICON OF THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS WAS BORN: THE AIRFRYER

The **Air Fryer boom (fuelled by the 2022 energy price hike)**, was driven not by culinary passion, but by the urgent, practical need to manage record-high bills.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE FUTURE OF DINING

If you're an advertiser interested in how consumers are going to be dining in the next few years then you've come to the right place. We're about to get into the Future of Dining, how consumers view food, what's inspiring their meals and when and how they're dining.

1

MEALMAXXING

In a cost of living crisis, consumers face continuous economic pressure and as a result we're making the most of the basics we have. Breaking food down into its constituent parts looking at what's important such as protein, sugar and caloric contents, which continue to dictate how we do our food shop. It's partly why whole foods have seen so much popularity – could it be the return of meat and two veg? How can you unlock the bare bones of a meal and celebrate basic ingredients by increasing awareness of nutrition and providence. Can we challenge our talent to “mealmaxx” on a budget, empowering viewers with real hacks from their faves? Or maybe it's an insight into the food shops of our **food experts?** Showing people that basics aren't so basic, they're the building blocks of a good meal.

2

MEAL MOMENTS ARE THE NEW MEALTIMES

Our occasions for eating have changed drastically and will continue to do so. The death of the dinner table shifted meals onto the sofa, the bedroom, and the kitchen counter. Single diners and collective diners are creating new moments that go beyond tradition. Friendsmas, Live Sport and reality TV like Love Island, birthweeks (as opposed to just birthdays) and supper clubs all require new modes of dining. Mealtimes are becoming moments and are increasingly dictated by our mood, making it the perfect opportunity to utilise **Automated Contextual Targeting** which allows to show up when viewers are in the mood for food. In conjunction with **Pause Ads** which act like digital billboards in your living room, you can be top of mind, or top of stomach in this case.



3

FANDOM AS A GETAWAY TO FLAVOUR

Fandom is an increasingly powerful force in defining the tastes of the nation. The rise in popularity of Kpop and K-dramas in the UK has directly contributed to the rise in popularity of Korean cuisine. 92% of fans have food and drink before watching their favourite content (ITV What Unites Fans, 2024). For brands aligning with content that inspires fandom - whether it be a reality hit, a sporting final or even an iconic drama - creates an opportunity to introduce consumers to new flavours, new techniques and new foodie experiences. A fantastic example of this in recent years has been Walkers' ongoing association with football - utilising Football icons to reintroduce their classic flavours to a captive audience of footie fans with limited edition packs as part of their [No Walkers, No Win campaign](#).



Upcoming cooking competition come reality show **The Heat** provides a unique opportunity for brands to align with not just a moment of fandom but also directly with inspiring foodie content. Hosted by broadcaster **Olivia Attwood**, The Heat sees ten ambitious chefs travel to Barcelona, working under multi Michelin Star award-winning chef Jean-Christophe Novelli, who is on a mission to find the next rising star. But this isn't just a straight-forward cooking competition - each day when the kitchen service is over, the cameras keep rolling with contestants living, working and even dating together - think Masterchef meets Big Brother!

THE HEAT

ITV2'S UPCOMING
COOKING REALITY SHOW





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RESEARCH & STRATEGY

Sarah Rangerji, Frankie Anthony, Flora Henry & Ruth Wakefield

DESIGN

Sophie Boyes

ANIMATION

Ellen Worrell

MARKETING

Kamaljit Bal & Eleanor Rogers

DATA ANALYSIS

Jasmine Albert

